



Australia Vehicle Import Guide

Our complete guide to shipping your car or motorbike to Australia

Information on Australian import duties and taxes (GST) and get the facts about shipping your vehicle to Australia and know before you go to avoid delays and problems.

We hope the information provided here will assist you in shipping your car to Australia, we also have an experienced team of professionals who will guide you through the process to ensure the safe and secure shipping of your vehicle.

Regulations – Important to Note

To import a vehicle into Australia there are regulations with which vehicles must comply. The age and origin of the vehicle (based on original manufacture) along with the status of the importer play an important role in whether a vehicle can be imported into Australia and the documentation that may be required.

While Australia has very strict safety and emissions standards and modification work that may be required to bring non-compliant vehicles in line with required standards can be expensive, conversion or modification work is not required for vehicles falling into any one of the below categories:

- The vehicle has been owned and used in the country of origin for a period of more than twelve months by the person importing the vehicle into Australia.
- The vehicle was originally manufactured or sold in Australia and carries the compliance plate fitted at the time of original manufacture.
- The vehicle's date of manufacture is prior to January 1st 1989
- The vehicle is older than 25 years
- The vehicle was newly purchased having been manufactured to comply with Australian safety and emission standards.

To find out which import option best suits your requirements, there is an Eligibility Assessment on the [Australian Department of Infrastructure and Transport website](#) which assists you in assessing which option may be the most appropriate for you.

Vehicle Import Approval (VIA)

Applications normally take between 4-6 weeks to be processed and returned. Vehicles cannot be shipped from the UK until the import approval has been issued. If your vehicle arrives in Australia before the VIA is

issued you may incur storage costs and other charges, and if a VIA is not issued your vehicle will need to be exported or destroyed at your expense.

Import approval will only be granted to private individuals with a full residency visa or to Australian or New Zealand nationals eligible to drive a vehicle in Australia. If you are arriving in the country before you arrange shipment of your vehicle, please be aware that you must apply for your VIA within 6 months of your arrival into Australia.

Applying for Your VIA

Vehicle Import Approval applications must be made to the [Australian Department of Infrastructure and Transport](#). The quickest way of submitting your application is by using their online portal that can be found [here](#). When you make your application online you will need to make a payment of AU\$50 to cover the application fee and have scanned copies of required documentation to attach to and submit with your application.

Additional Addendum forms covering applications to import other types of vehicles (such as small road trailers or for vehicles manufactured before 1989) or for vehicles for a use other than domestic road use (such as non-road vehicles, special purpose vehicles or vehicles imported for exhibition) can be found on the Australian Department of Infrastructure and Transport website.

Preparation for Quarantine inspection

Before your vehicle is shipped you should make sure that it is well cleaned. On arrival in Australia all vehicles are inspected by the [Australian Department of Agriculture](#) for 'cleanliness'. Typical areas that are frequently overlooked when cleaning a vehicle for shipment are:

- Wheels/tyres, Wheel arches and Mud guards
- Spare tyre, Spare wheel housing and Boot

Before release from customs control, Biosecurity Officers from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment inspect road vehicles for cleanliness on arrival in Australia. Please note that you are responsible for all inspection charges.

More detailed information about quarantine regulations along with contact details can be obtained from the DAFF web site [here](#).

Documentation We Need Before Export

To ship your vehicle to Australia there are a few things that you will need to provide us with:

- A copy of the vehicles licence document (the V5)
- A copy of the VIA
- A copy of a valid MOT certificate will only be needed if you would like us to arrange collection of your vehicle in the UK using an insured driver. If your vehicle does not have a valid MOT, or if you would simply prefer, we also offer a collection service using car transporters or a fully enclosed collection vehicle.

We are unable to process any bookings for Australia until you have the VIA in place.

On arrival in Australia

Shortly after departure from the UK we will provide you with copy shipping documentation (the Bill of Lading) covering transport of your vehicle to Australia along with anticipated arrival date and contact details for our agents. Our agents will be in contact with you prior to your vehicle's arrival to make arrangements for completion of local import formalities.

Port and Shipping Line Destination Charges

When your vehicle arrives in Australia there are some standard costs you should expect to pay in relation to fees levied by the port and local agent in respect of handling your vehicle at the port and for the completion of customs Clearance formalities. We have negotiated preferential rates for discharge, and handling in Australia for our customers and are pleased to provide an indication of these costs below:

Car Import Charges in Australia		
Details of Service	RoRo Costs	Shared Container Costs
Port service charges container trucking, container unpacking, 1st AQIS inspection	n/a	Car AU\$ 900
		SUV AU\$ 1400
Port service charges and handling	Car AU\$ 220	n/a
	SUV AU\$ 265	
Valuation fee	AU\$ 330	AU\$ 320
Customs Clearance	AU\$ 220	AU\$ 250
Declaration processing fee	n/a	AU\$ 210
Quarantine fee	AU\$ 140	AU\$ 239
AQIS attendance fee	AU\$ 120	AU\$ 110
Sea cargo automation	AU\$ 45	AU\$ 55
Delivery order fee	AU\$ 85	AU\$ 65
Personal effects surcharge (if effects in vehicle)	n/a	AU\$ 90
Total (R-Rak total excl. personal effects surcharge)	Car AU\$ 1160	Car AU\$ 2149
	SUV AU\$ 1205	SUV AU\$ 2649
Charges correct at the time of publishing based on an average vehicle size.		

Note: Some air conditioning systems contain prohibited gasses and may need to be degassed prior to shipment.

Please note that the above charges are excluding of GST or Duty, see below, and are up to first AQIS Inspection only. Additional charges might apply if the cargo fails the AQIS inspection. Customs cleaning and re-inspection will then be necessary and additional charges apply.

Destination charges aside, if you'd like more information on car shipping costs to Australia, see '[how much does it cost to ship a car to Australia](#)' for a breakdown.

Duties and Taxes

The table below provides a summary of Duty and GST rates applied by Australian customs: Import Duty is calculated at the rates shown below based purely on the value placed on your vehicle following its valuation by Australian Authorities.

GST is calculated at the below rate and is based on the Value of the Taxable Importation (VoTI) and this is calculated as: Customs Value + Duty + Shipping and Insurance costs of transporting your vehicle to Australia.

	Duty	GST
Vehicles over 30 years old and motorcycles	0%	10%
Vehicles up to 30 years old including 4x4, off road vehicles and commercial vehicles	5%	10%

Luxury Car Tax (LCT)

Australian customs may apply this additional charge for higher specification or valuation vehicles. The current LCT rate is 33% and the threshold is currently \$77,565 for fuel efficient Vehicles and \$68,740 for other vehicles (landed value, which means that ocean freight etc is added as in above calculation).

Most of the information including calculations is available on the [Australian Taxation Office \(ATO\) website](#).

Registration

Once a vehicle has been customs cleared into Australia and customs duties and GST have been paid, it must be checked by the State department Motor Vehicle Registration service who will examine the vehicles (similar to an MOT) and issue a road worthiness certificate.

This should be presented along with other vehicle documentation at the registration counter who on payment of registration and roadworthy examination fees provide the yearly registration label to be displayed in the vehicle's windscreen (similar to a tax disc) and will also provide the Australian number plates assigned to the vehicle. When registering your vehicle, stamp duty fees are payable to the local state registration authorities.

Cars with Air-conditioners or a Refrigeration System

Cars (and other equipment such as boats and caravans) equipped with an air-conditioner or a refrigeration system might require an import licence for ozone depleting substances (ODS) and synthetic greenhouse gases (SGG).

Before importing a road vehicle with an air-conditioner or refrigeration system, you must find out the type and quantity of gas contained in the equipment (if gassed) so that you can complete licensing and reporting requirements.

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment website provide more information about [Importing vehicles, boats, caravans or and other equipment that may contain refrigerant gas into Australia](#), including how to apply for a licence and exceptions.

Asbestos in Vehicle Parts and Components

The importation of asbestos into Australia is strictly prohibited. You must ensure your vehicle does not contain any asbestos before you ship it to Australia.

If the Australian Border Force (ABF) decide that your vehicle is a risk of containing asbestos, they will require assurances that parts or components do not contain asbestos. If adequate assurance is not provided, you could face delays and will be responsible for costs incurred if the vehicle is held at the border for the purposes of sampling and testing.

Please find more information regarding asbestos [here](#) and the ABF have a factsheet "[Managing the risk of asbestos when importing a motor vehicle](#)" with further information regarding asbestos when importing vehicles.

Tourists and temporary residents

Tourists or temporary residents can import road vehicles into Australia on a temporary basis without the requirement to pay duty and taxes, provided certain conditions are met. The temporary import is possible for a period of 12 months, and if you temporarily import your vehicle using a CPD carnet you do not require a VIA.

Please find more information on temporary imports [here](#).

Visiting Military Forces Importing Vehicles into Australia

If you are a member of a "visiting force" that is subject to a [Status of Forces Agreement \(SOFA\)](#) then you do not need to apply for a VIA to import your vehicle.

You may also be able to claim a preferential rate for customs duty and taxes, again provided certain conditions are met. This would be under item 11 of [schedule 4](#) to the customs tariff act.

Essential links:

[Car Shipping Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\) | Autoshippers](#)

[Importing a motor vehicle \(abf.gov.au\)](#)

[Australia Application for Importing a Vehicle | Autoshippers](#)

[8 steps to import a vehicle \(infrastructure.gov.au\)](#)

[Guide to The Valuation of Imported Road vehicles | Autoshippers](#)

[Get Prepared With Our Car Shipping Checklist | Autoshippers Blog](#)

Please contact us on [0800 3890784](tel:08003890784) for any further information.