

A GUIDE TO IMPORTATION OF PRIVATE MOTOR VEHICLES INTO THE USA

MIGRANTS

A migrant may import a motor vehicle duty free, subject to written EPA approval prior to shipment. The vehicle must be re-exported within one year of importation and may not be sold or otherwise disposed of in the US.

RETURNING US RESIDENTS

Returning US Residents may import returning US manufactured motor vehicles duty free if the owner can supply a copy of the export Bill Of Lading or US purchase invoice. Pre 1968 petrol fuelled autos and pre 1975 diesel fuelled autos must have an engine plate showing that the vehicle meets strict emission and safety standards. Returning US Residents may import foreign-made vehicles manufactured 25 years prior or more, whether new or used, either for personal use or for re-sale, subject to written EPA approval prior to shipment.

CUSTOMS DUTY

US Customs duty only applies to commercial importations of US models or classic cars. Where applicable, duty is levied on the price paid at the following rates:

Automobile	2.5%
Motor cycles	3% to 3.4%
Trucks	25%

Certain imported vehicles may be subject to gas-guzzler tax based on a combined urban/highway fuel-economy (miles per gallon) rating.

IMPORT TAX

All motor vehicle importations are subject to tax (Harbor Maintenance Fee and Merchandise Processing Fee), calculated at 0.335% of the declared value.

AGRICULTURE INSPECTION/STEAM CLEANING

To safeguard against the importation of dangerous pests, the US Department Of Agriculture requires that the undercarriage of imported cars be free of foreign soil and recommends that all motor vehicles are steam cleaned prior to shipment. Please ensure your vehicle is thoroughly cleaned and vacuumed prior to shipment, paying particular attention to the wheel arches, the underside and engine compartment and interior, passenger and boot compartments. In the event that the Department Of Agriculture fail the vehicle you will incur additional charges for local steam cleaning and subsequent re-inspection.

CUSTOMS CLEARANCE

For customs clearance you will need the shipper's or carrier's original bill of lading, the bill of sale, foreign registration (or Certificate Of Permanent Export if you have already notified DVLC), and any other documents covering the vehicle.

You will also need written prior approval from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which will be evident to the Customs inspector at the port of entry in the form of an approved letter from the EPA, or a manufacturer's label in English affixed to the car, stating that the vehicle meets with US emission requirements.

The EPA can be contacted by phone (734)214-4100 or Email Imports@epa.gov.

SAFETY, BUMPER AND THEFT PREVENTION STANDARDS

Motor vehicles not more than 25 years old must conform to Department Of Transport (DOT) motor vehicle safety standards that were in effect when the vehicle was manufactured. Passenger cars manufactured after September 1 1973 must also meet bumper standards. For further information contact: US Department Of Transportation, Office Of Vehicle Safety Compliance (NEF 32), 400 7th Street SW, Washington, D.C.20590 Tel 202 366 5313 or Fax 202 366 1024.

EMISSION STANDARDS

Motor vehicles must conform to EPA emission standards. You should contact the EPA directly for detailed requirements and options before shipping your vehicle:

U.S. Environment Protection Agency, Manufacturer's Operations Division 6405-J, Investigation/Imports Section, 401M Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20460, Tel 202 233 9660 or Fax 202 233 9596.

EXCEPTIONS

Motor vehicles belonging to members of foreign armed forces, foreign diplomatic personnel and members of public international organisations on assignment in the US for whom duty free entry has been authorised by the Department Of State, need not conform to safety or emission requirements but may not be sold in the US.

This information is not definitive and is intended as a guide only. Destination regulations can change without notice and for specific guidance we strongly recommend that you obtain direct rulings from the relevant authority.