



# Import Clearance Guidelines for FedEx Express Shipments to Japan

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This guideline introduces the preliminary knowledges that you should know before shipping package to Japan in order to avoid unnecessary clearance troubles and delays.

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# **I. Fundamental Rules**

## **A: Import Customs Clearance in Japan**

- ❖ "Import customs clearance" is a series of steps: 1.import declaration to Japan customs by importer's name, 2.through the inspection by authorities (if required), 3.paying customs duties/consumption tax, etc., then 4.receiving an import permit.
- ❖ If import package is restricted by Japan laws and regulations, it is necessary to obtain permission and approval prior to import declaration.
- ❖ The importer will be taking a responsibility for ensuring customs compliance and safety of your shipping package.

## **B: Commercial Invoice**

### **Importer/Consignee:**

- ✓ Importer's (Consignee's) full name is required for personal/business shipments.
- ✓ Importer's (Consignee's) valid phone number must be given on shipping documents.
- ✓ All the information stated in Commercial Invoice must be filled in English.

### **Description:**

- ❖ Introduce description examples of typical items.
- 1. **Shoes** --- The material of the outer sole and upper (Leather, Plastic, Rubber, etc.), type of shoes (Sports, Ski, etc.), gender (man, woman etc.), and quantity in pairs are required. For leather scientific name of the species is required according to CITES.(NOTE) Leather shoes are subject to high tariffs, but if there is a Tariff Quota (TQ) by the importer, a lower tariff will be imposed.
- 2. **Garments** --- The material (Cotton 100%, Nylon 20%/ Wool 80%, etc.), type of garment (Skirt, Blouse, Jacket, etc.), Knitted or Woven, gender (man, woman, etc.) are required.
- 3. **Bag** --- Type of bag and material are required. For leather item, scientific name of the species is required according to CITES.
- 4. **Watch** --- Type of case (e.g. 18K, Metal, Stainless steel), type of watch (e.g. Automatic, Quartz), material of strap (e.g. Steel, leather) are required. For leather item, scientific name of the species is required according to CITES.
- 5. **Parts (any kinds)** --- What parts it's made of and what it's used for.
- 6. **Accessory, Furniture, Ornament, etc.** --- Specific commodity name and the material of the item are required.
- 7. **Gift, Sample, Souvenir** --- Detailed description (name of each item, material, etc.) and a value breakdown are required. Descriptions such as "Gift", "Sample" or "Souvenir" only are insufficient.
- 8. **Jewelry** --- Type of Product (e.g. Ring, Necklace) and material name (e.g. 18K Gold, Platinum, 925 Silver) are required. If the product has a Pearl, Stones, Metals etc., the material name is required additionally.
- 9. **Fabric** --- The material name & content % (e.g. Cotton 100%), Knit or Woven, Size (width & length, weight per square meter) are required. If the fabric is colored, describe the type. (e.g. Bleached, Dyed of Yarn of Different colors, Printed)
- 10. **Knife** --- It is necessary to describe the shape (fixed Blade, Foldable type, etc.) and blade length (cm). (e.g. Fixed Knife/Blade 12cm)

### **Declared Values:**

- ✓ Whether it is a paid product (commercial) or a free product (non-commercial), fair market value must be written on the Commercial Invoice. It is illegal to deliberately declare a product of obvious value at a low price.
- ✓ Even if it is a free or non-commercial value, the amount 0 (e.g. ¥0, \$0.00, etc.) will not be accepted upon customs declaration.

#### **Examples of non-commercial products:**

samples for research and evaluation, replacements for defective products, transfers to individuals, etc.

## **C: Importer of Record (IOR)**

- ❖ IOR (Importer of record), the synonym of "Importer" is the owner or purchaser of the products being imported into a destination country who holds accountabilities for local law regulations/customs compliances. It is extremely important to address IOR (Importer) information correctly upon shipping package to Japan.

### **IOR is resident in Japan:**

- ✓ Shipper must ensure the importer name who is stated on invoice can act as IOR of the shipment before shipping to Japan.
- ✓ Abbreviation, spelling errors and any other expression which is likely to be mistaken upon import declaration should be avoided.

### **IOR is non-resident in Japan:**

- ✓ In case if a person who does not reside in Japan performs importing goods, ACP (Attorney for customs procedure) must be appointed and pre-registered to Japan customs.
- ✓ ACP performs the import declaration, witness the inspection, pay the customs duties and taxes, etc. on behalf of non-resident. ACP must have address or residency in Japan, pre-registered by Japan customs. FedEx Japan cannot act as an ACP for any customers.
- ✓ Please reference the following Japan customs web site about non-resident IOR application.

URL: [https://www.customs.go.jp/english/c-answer\\_e/sonota/9601\\_e.htm](https://www.customs.go.jp/english/c-answer_e/sonota/9601_e.htm)

# **II. Import-related Other Laws and Regulations**

## **D: Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Act**

### **Typical commodities:**

- ✓ Medicine, Vaccine, Contact lenses, Injection syringe, Massaging tools, Clinical thermometer, Soap, Lipsticks, Hand cream, Perfume, Glasses, Dental equipment, Toothpaste, Hair shampoo & rinse, Vitamin, Supplements

### **Requirements:**

- **For commercial use** --- Pharmaceutical or Cosmetic License issued by the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare both to the importer and to the item are required. Authorized importers can only import the authorized item.
- **For sample, research, or training use** --- Pharmaceutical temporary permit issued by the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare to the item of the shipment is required. The importer must apply for and obtain a permit of the item for the shipment. For cosmetic sample up to 36 pcs per item a PERMIT FOR THE ITEM is NOT required but the importer must have a Cosmetic Manufacturing and Sales License.
- **For clinical trial** --- The importer must submit 'Notification of Clinical Trial Plan' authorized by the Ministry of Health, Labor & Welfare and 'Import Progress List'. The importer must record the imported quantity vs. the planned quantity each time of import.
- **For doctor or hospital use** --- Pharmaceutical temporary permit issued by the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare to the item of the shipment is required. The importer must apply for and obtain a permit of the item for the shipment. But up to 3 pcs of medical devices for doctor's personal use are cleared with the doctor's license. Medical drugs are required with the pharmaceutical temporary permit regardless of quantity.
- **For personal use** --- license/permit are not required if met with one of following a.- d. conditions:
  - a. Medical device or dental equipment --- up to 1 set or 1 pair
  - b. Medicine --- up to 2-month supply
  - c. Prescribed medicine --- up to 1-month supply
  - d. Cosmetics --- up to 24 pcs per item

## E: Food Sanitation Act

### Typical commodities:

- ✓ Foods, Water, Food additive, Cups, Preservative, Fork, Chopsticks, Wine, Beer, Coffee brewer, Infants' toys, Confectionery, Soft drink, Cutting board, Tableware, Kitchen utensil, Supplements

### Requirements:

- **For commercial use** --- Food application process is required to obtain a food import certificate from the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare. Clearance ancillary service will be required for import clearance.
- **For personal use, commercial sample or laboratory testing** --- Food application process may NOT be required if the net weight is less than 22 lbs (10kgs) and under these purposes.  
Note:  
Supplements and Vitamins are classified either foods or medical drugs depending on the ingredients or the effects stated on the label of the products.

## F: CITES

### Typical commodities:

- ✓ Crocodile, Alligator, Lizard (Watchstrap, Handbag, Belt), Ivories, Ostrich, India pythons, Chinchilla (Fur coat), Leopard (Carpet), Tiger bone, Musk, Saussurea radix (Chinese herbal medicine), Polar bear, Peacock feather, Coral, Rose wood, Mahogany, Orchid, Cactus, Caviar(include extract).

#### Note:

Leather or Fur items need scientific species name for CITES.

### Three Appendices:

- Appendix I --- species threatened with extinction. Trade in specimens of these species is permitted only in exceptional circumstances.
- Appendix II --- species not necessarily threatened with extinction, but in which trade must be controlled in order to avoid utilization incompatible with their survival.
- Appendix III --- species that are protected in at least one country, which has asked other CITES Parties for assistance in controlling the trade.

### Requirements for shipper:

- CITES form (original)

### Requirements for importer:

- Appendix I Import license issued by METI (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry)
- Appendix II / III Pro-Confirmation note issued by METI

## G: High Pressure Gas Safety Act

### Typical commodities:

- ✓ Aerosols, Fire extinguishers, Airbags, Lighters, CO2 cartridges in general. These items fall under this law depending on the degree of pressure.

### Requirements:

- Importer must apply for import inspection to the High Pressure Gas Safety Association of each prefecture and obtain a certificate, and this procedure is difficult without specialized knowledge. Meanwhile, Gas springs, Shock absorbers for automobiles, Airbag gas generators, and Aerosol products can be imported by submitting the Import Regulation Exemption Confirmation Certificate (TEST CERTIFICATE) established by the METI (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry).

#### Note:

Regulated high pressure gas shipment is acceptable by Broker Selection Option (BSO).

## H: Chemical Substances Control Law

### Requirements:

- Chemical Identity (Name and CAS registration number) on the commercial invoice.
- **For existing chemicals:**  
METI (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry) registration number is required.
- **For new chemical substances:**  
For test, laboratory or reagent use --- Confirmation procedures required in accordance with the law relating to regulations of the evaluation and manufacturing of chemical substances.  
For commercial use --- Certificate copy issued in advance by the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare, the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry and the Minister of the Environment.  
\*Cumulative quantities confirmation of import of new chemical substance for small amount or low production volume chemicals.

## I: Quarantine items (Act on Domestic Animal Infectious Diseases Control, Plant Protection Act)

### Typical commodities:

- ✓ Animal Quarantine---Animal by-products NOT for human consumption (Serum, Anti-bodies, Semen), Pet food, Feed, Dairy products, Gelatin, etc.
- ✓ Plant Quarantine---Barley, Beans, Chia seeds, Flour, Ginseng, Grain, Green coffee, Herb, Malt, Moss, Nut, Potpourri, Quinoa, Seeds, Soil additive, Spices, Wheat, etc.

### Requirements:

- Inspection certificate issued by the government of exporting country must be accompanied with the packages. FedEx offers ancillary service for quarantine application.  
<Attention>
  - ◆ Following items are prohibited from FedEx standard conditions of carriage (Live animal/insect, Perishable foodstuffs and foods and beverages requiring refrigeration or other environmental control, Plants and plant material including cut flowers).
  - ◆ Some quarantine items may not be accepted to ship to Japan. Please refer to "III. Prohibited Items".
  - ◆ If the result of the inspection will require disinfection, disposal or return, actual cost for those additional process will be charged to the customer.  
(Animal quarantine service)  
URL: <https://www.maff.go.jp/aqs/languages/info.html>  
(Plant quarantine service)  
URL: [https://www.maff.go.jp/pps/j/information/language\\_top.html](https://www.maff.go.jp/pps/j/information/language_top.html)

## III. Prohibited Items

- ❖ Federal Express Japan does not accept the following items (typical name and is not only limited to this) import into Japan in addition to the FedEx Express global prohibited items.
- ✓ **Arms** --- Firearms, explosives, weapons and their body/parts craft machines
- ✓ **Swords/Knife** ---Single-edged 15 cm or more or double-edged 5.5 cm or more
- ✓ **Drugs** --- Awakening (Stimulants), Marijuana, Narcotic, Opium, Poppy Straw, Psychotropic
- ✓ **Import prohibition by animal/plant quarantine services and part of quarantine items subject to the regulation** ---- Meat, Jerky, Sausage, Ham, Bacon, Embryos, Animal blood, Feather, Straw, Raw wool & leather, Soil, Fungus, Virus, Infectious Substance, Live Insect, Flower, Fruits, Vegetables, Honeybee, Seeding, Aquatic plants

- ✓ **Electronic tobacco, Tobacco & Tobacco products** ---  
Cigarettes, Cigars, chopped/smokeless Tobacco and Hookah.
- ✓ **Counterfeit Goods** --- including, but not limited to, goods under a trademark that is identical to or substantially indistinguishable from a registered trademark, without the approval or oversight of the registered trademark owner (also commonly referred to as "fake goods" or "knock-offs").
- ✓ **Personal Effects** --- Unaccompanied Baggage declaration
- ✓ Cash or Collection Coins/Bills/Stamps
- ✓ Products made in North Korea
- ✓ Movie Films (35mm & 70mm)

## IV. **Reference**

### **Japan Customs Tariff**

- ❖ Web Tariff is a "tariff search service" maintained by the Japan Customs Association, where you can search for information on product's HS codes, tariff rates (MFN, EPA, FTA) and each of import laws and regulations in Japan.

URL: <https://www.kanzei.or.jp/statistical/tariff/top/index/e>