

Customs Country Guide Germany

Used household goods and personal effects

All goods must have been owned and used for at least 6 months in the origin country to import duty and tax free. Furthermore, goods must be imported within 12 months after first registration date / actual move to Germany.

In case only one of the below mentioned documents is not available at time of shipment's arrival, customs authorities will impose an extremely high customs bond which needs to be handed over in cash to the customs officer by us. This can only be done when we have received the entire amount from the moving person / account upfront!

Documents Required: (in German or English – no other language)

Basic docs for all non-diplomatic consignments:

- Bill of Lading / Air Waybill
- Packing list – readable detailed and consecutively numbered (no PBO, Misc, basement or garage items, etc. are allowed)
- Passport copy (picture page only in legible condition)
- New residence registration certificate (called: Anmeldebestätigung).

Plus following additional documents specified as per citizenship and personal situation:

German or European Union citizen:

- Letter of employer or German Embassy / Consulate at origin, confirming clients stay abroad for at least the last 12 months, with exact time frame.
- If client didn't work abroad or was self-employed, we would need following docs:
 - # credit card settlements of all months, showing permanent transactions within the last year
 - # tax returns of the last two year
 - # purchase / vending of residence or lease contract
 - # every other official document proving clearly a stay abroad
 - # plus always an affirmation in lieu of oath about the length of his stay abroad
- If client didn't get de-registered when leaving Germany to overseas, we would need a registration certificate with actual date (called: Auszug aus dem Melderegister), and
- a self-explanation letter from client why they didn't de-register themselves before leaving Germany.

Foreign / non-European Union citizen

- Visa copy, or at least copy of visa application form
- Letter of employer confirming clients stay/work in Germany, mentioning also the first day of work
- Self-explanation if client is self-employed or only wants to live here

Students / Pupils

- De-registration when he/she left Germany
- Credit card settlements of all months, showing permanent transactions within the last year
- Letter from University / School confirming their stay abroad

Retiree

- Credit card settlements of all months, showing permanent transactions within the last year
- Tax returns of the last two years
- Pension approval certificate

Vehicle(s) (car and/or motorcycle)

- Copy of Certificate of Title - to proof ownership
- Copy of Certificate of registration - to proof use of the last 6 months before shipping
- Copy of De-registration Certificate or plates return confirmation – if this is not available a vehicle tax card must be issued in Germany and annual vehicle tax will be raised during customs clearance process.

If vehicle does not fulfill the import regulations, duties and taxes would be 10% (passenger car) and 22% (pick-up truck) on value and freight charges, plus 19% VAT on value, duties and freight charges.

Boats

- Copy of all available documents of the boat with hull ID
- Purchase invoice – to proof use of the last 6 months before shipping.
- Certificate of conformity of manufacturer (CE Certificate) to confirm boat is fulfilling the security standard of the European Union - absolutely mandatory for every type of boat! If this confirmation is missing it will be connected with high extra charges as a customs examination is necessary and this confirmation must be issued afterwards.
- Photo of the CE plate

Diplomatic cargo

- Bill of Lading / Air Waybill
- Packing list in English or German – detailed and consecutively numbered (no PBO, Misc, basement or garage items, etc. are allowed)
- Passport copy (picture page only in legible condition)
- 4x Original German customs form 0349 issued, signed and stamped by the Embassy in Germany

US Military cargo under NATO / SOFA status

- AE form 550-175A (household goods)
- AE form 190-1AA (vehicles)

Client has to obtain this/these form(s) from his Base / Military Police / his transport officer in Germany. He has to hand over them a copy of the B/L and packing list, to get this/these form(s). Once client has the AE form(s) in hand, we can advise client at which German customs office client must meet the truck driver to clear the shipment through customs. It's not possible to clear shipment already at the port of entry, as it's forbidden for client to handover this/these customs form(s) to anybody!!

Inheritance goods

- Copy of Certificate of Death
- Copy of Last will
- Certificate of inheritance from the German district court (called: Amtsgericht)

Import is only possible within 2 years of the inheritance judgement

Donation / Gift

Subject to duties & taxes

Documents to be determined

Returning goods

- Documents of previous export: export customs permit, BL and packing list
- Proof that stay abroad was planned for at least 12 month
- BL and packing list from current import shipment

To clear shipment as returning goods, weight and piece count must be nearly the same as per the exported shipment. This is only possible in a period of 3 years after export from Germany.

Alcohol

Can be imported but each bottle, even opened bottle, is subject to duties and taxes.

- Detailed alcohol inventory with kind of alcohol, quantity of bottles, information about liter, alcoholic percentage and value of each bottle (blank form can be obtained at our office)

Rough estimate: Wine is approx. 25%, liquor like Rum, Whiskey, etc. is approx. 70 – 80%.

Food

Only in appropriate European standard quantities allowed and only 'non-perishable goods' like durum noodles (no egg noodles!!), rice and canned goods – but no animal & organic origin.

Client must list the food stuff him/herself.

Living plants

Prohibited

Weapons

Can be imported but are subject to customs examination and high bureaucracy transactions and extraordinary charges.

Please contact us under all circumstances prior to shipping.

We need to know the exact 'name' and the certificate (called: Waffenbesitzkarte) of each weapon in original. Furthermore, a special permit of German Public Order Office (called: "Ordnungsamt") is necessary. Client won't have to pay duties and taxes for weapon(s) if he/she can proof the ownership of the last 6 months before shipping. It's recommendable to load the weapon(s) on the container doors for easy access.

It's strictly forbidden to import ammunition!

Drugs

Prohibited

Tobacco

Subject to duties and taxes

Need to know exact quantity, mark and value.

Perfumes and fragrances

Allowed in appropriate European standard quantities for duty and tax free import.

Medicine

Only remaining quantity of the medicine chest – but better to carry via hand baggage

Coffee

Subject to duties and taxes

Need to know exact quantity, mark and value

Hunting trophies / Mussels / Corals / Ivory

- Original Cites Certificate necessary
- Latin name / description

Clients must check by themselves before shipping, if the importation is allowed or not!

Be aware that customs and veterinary will do a physical exam of these goods and high additional charges will occur.

General information

Customs clearance in **Bremen / Bremerhaven** is possible prior to pick up of container / LCL shipment at terminal, but only possible once container / LCL shipment is discharged / arrived.

Normally we don't expect any problems during clearance at these both ports in case all documents are in order and in our hands in time.

We strongly recommend not to use **Hamburg** as port of entry, as the customs clearance process is much more expensive and complicated for us. Furthermore, the risk of an X-Ray is at nearly 100 %, compared to about 50 % in Bremerhaven. In addition, sometimes delays in customs clearance happen with incurring Demurrage / Storage costs in the port.

Also please take note that Hamburg customs requests a German packing list and more documents, beside the letter of employer, to proof clients stay abroad.

Customs regulations can change at any time with or without notice. This document is provided as a guide and for information only. Further information can also be obtained at www.zoll.de



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