

IMPORTING GOODS INTO THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

PERSONAL EFFECTS AND HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

DUTY-FREE ENTRY MAY BE PERMITTED IF THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS ARE MET:

- The goods are used
- The value of the goods is under SR 10,000. If the value exceeds this amount (which is subject to change), then duty will be assessed based upon CIF value. The following are the rates being assessed:
 - Electrical Appliances: 12%
 - Audio Video: 12%
 - Furniture: 12%
 - Carpets: 12%
- Books are exempt from duties

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Shipper must be present at the time of customs clearance
- New items must have a bill of sale attached. If the bill of sale (receipt) is not available, customs authorities will assess the items themselves and charge the appropriate duty
- Shipment is subject to close scrutiny of Saudi Arabia customs officials who usually perform a thorough inspection. Customs regulations are regularly modified
- All goods must have a country of origin mark or relevant paperwork. If a similar item is produced in Saudi Arabia then the goods may be subject to 20% duty
- All documents must have the shippers name as it appears in the passport. Don't use any abbreviations or initials
- Importation of prohibited articles will subject the offender to fines, imprisonment and / or deportation. Offenders convicted of drug smuggling are subject to the death penalty

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

- Original Bill of Lading or Air Waybill
- Copy of passport/IQAMA with entry visa
- Letter of undertaking authorising an agent to perform the customs clearance
- Valid passport and visa
- Residence and work permits
- Declaration of sponsorship by the shipper's employer
- Health certificate (when requested)
- Detailed, valued original inventory with complete descriptions and contents of cartons. Terms such as "packed by owner", "Contents Unknown" or "Miscellaneous" MUST NOT be used
- Purchase receipt for any major household items
- New items require Certificate of Origin - Itemised, valued and legalised by the Saudi Embassy or Consulate and a copy translated into Arabic
- Certificate of Insurance where applicable
- Electrical items require SASO Certificate of Conformity (Saudi Arabia Standards Organisation)

PROHIBITED ITEMS FOR IMPORT:

- All games of chance including chess sets, dice, cards, backgammon and the like
- Weapons and firearms (real or ornamental) including guns, ammunition, fireworks, spears, etc. If imported the owner will be subject to investigation that may result in fines and / or prison - this includes such items as knives and spear guns associated with sport
- Military uniforms or equipment of any kind

PROHIBITED ITEMS FOR IMPORT (CONT.):

- Alcoholic beverages, including food items which may contain alcohol such as Vanilla extract, cooking wines etc.
- Wine making kits and any other equipment used in the preparation of alcoholic beverages including books on the manufacture of such drinks
- Any kind of narcotics - You may be subject to the death penalty if you are found to be in possession of any such items
- Prescribed drugs may be brought into the Kingdom but must not be transported in cargo. They must be carried on your person with a doctor's prescription. Please be aware that some over the counter medicines may be illegal so should not be carried into the country. Most generally available medications are freely available at pharmacies and should be purchased here
- Any type of radio transmitter or communications equipment (including receivers, VHF, marine or police bands) - please note that this would include children's toys such as walkie talkies etc.
- Statues, figurines, carvings or objects of the human or animal form
- Pornographic material of any nature, i.e. books, DVD's, CD's or tapes etc.
- All food stuffs - Pork and its various products are completely illegal in the kingdom
- Any material (Literature, pictures, statues, painting, etc.) of a religious, political or sexual nature that is contrary to Muslim beliefs and morality or Saudi traditions - please note that this includes Christmas trees and decorations
- Printed materials, including Bibles and any symbols associated with a faith other than Islam. This includes crosses, rosaries and all items associated with Christmas - Please note that the laws have relaxed slightly and that as long as you only bring a bible or other religious article, providing you keep it private / in the home, the authorities will usually allow this
- Exposed film including prints, slides, movies and video tape
- Binoculars and telescopic equipment
- Stuffed animals
- Artificial Pearls
- Hazardous Materials are not to be accepted for shipment. The following items are commonly associated with personal effect but is not a definitive list:
 - **Combustible Liquids** - Alcohol's, lubricants, anti-freeze (as if you need it here), compounds, cleaning materials
 - **Corrosives** - Acids, drain cleaners, photographic acids used in developing film, iron/steel rust preventing compounds, bleach, batteries (wet or dry), water-purification agents, such as those commonly used on swimming pools
 - **Explosives** - Fireworks, small arms ammunition, flash bulbs
 - **Filled Compressed Gas Containers** - Aerosol cans, fire extinguishers, scuba diving tanks, gas barbecue tanks
 - **Flammables** - Lighter fluid, matches, wood oil stains, show and furniture polish / wax, petrochemical based garden sprays, glues, or adhesive's, paint or varnish, butane / propane / petrol, signal flares, charcoal briquettes, etc.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

This is not a complete list and the prohibited items list can change with very little notice. IT IS ADVISED THAT THE SHIPPER MUST CONSULT WITH THE SAUDI ARABIAN CONSULATE FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION!

RESTRICTED ITEMS:

- Fax machines
- Live plants, seeds, fresh fruit or flowers
- Pharmaceuticals require a certificate from the origin country's health department
- The following items will be subject to censorship by the Ministry of Information:
 - Videos
 - Tapes
 - DVD's
 - CD's
 - Laser disks
 - Films
 - Records
 - Computer recording devices
 - Photographs
 - Books
 - Magazines
 - Periodicals
 - Exposed film of any kind
 - Computers
 - Any form of recording device
 - Any other printed matter

It is important to make sure all goods are listed on the valuation inventory. Please make sure that all the items listed above are packed together so as not to delay your entire shipment. It is advisable to make sure you keep a separate record of all items that are subject to censorship to be able to ascertain what items have been withheld. **ANY ITEM CONFISCATED WILL BE**

SUBJECT TO A FINE AND ONCE INSPECTED THE GOODS WILL BE RETURNED AT COST TO THE CUSTOMER.

- All suitcases, tool boxes or locked containers must have keys available to allow inspection by customs officials

IMPORTATION OF A MOTOR VEHICLE:

- Vehicles are permitted but are subject to customs duties
- All vehicles must comply with Saudi emission controls
- Driving can be very hazardous in the Kingdom and the consequences of minor accidents can be hefty including fines and imprisonment

- One car per family is allowed for importation
- Vehicles older than 1974 are prohibited
- Vehicle must be registered shortly after clearance which will require a Saudi driving licence
- Right hand drive vehicles are illegal in the Kingdom

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

- National and International Driving Licence - Please remember women are not permitted to drive
- Title or proof of ownership
- SASO certificate
- Ocean Bill of Lading
- Legalised Purchase invoice and Certificate of Origin
- Proof of insurance
- Letter from the car owner to customs duly attested by the local sponsor authorising the destination agent for clearance
- Copy of Passport and IQAMA
- Customs fee declaration
- Landing authorisation
- Used cars require a certificate from the origin country's police or Interpol stating the vehicle has not been involved in an ongoing investigation

IMPORTATION OF PETS:

- Pets may be imported but are subject to quarantine in an IATA approved kennel
- They must have a Vaccination Certificate
- Health Certificate

All the information provided here is based on customs data available at this time. Due to the nature of the Saudi Arabian customs service, this information changes on a regular basis and without prior notice. It is the responsibility of the owner or importer of the household goods to comply with all the current customs regulations and duties applicable. It is highly recommended that any person shipping goods should contact the Saudi Arabian Consulate to ensure that the most recent customs requirements are met and that all restrictions are current and up to date.

Information supplied by various Ministry websites and www.the-saudi.net/saudi-arabia/saudi-customs.htm (2008)