

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING U.S. CUSTOMS

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is one of the world's largest law enforcement organizations and is charged with keeping terrorists and their weapons out of the U.S. while facilitating lawful international travel and trade.

THE PROCESS

Every item entering the U.S. must pass through U.S. Customs and an entry must be completed. This process varies based on several factors, including...



What the item is



Who it's intended for



The item's purpose



Which other government agencies would be involved in bringing it into the U.S.

Certain items cannot be admitted by an average person, such as nuclear material, which is heavily regulated.

Examples of special requirements:

- Obtaining special permits prior to import
- Having a registered importer
- Originating from an approved overseas manufacturing facility

It's best to research importing into the U.S. prior to sending items.

THE RULES

U.S. CONGRESS

The legislature responsible for establishing the rules governing CBP. Congress sets these rules by passing laws and trade agreements.



Changing the rules

Rules and regulations can change when situations occur such as changing political environment, shifts in manufacturing countries or countries sending items into the U.S. below cost. Stay up-to-date by...



1

The trade community proposes ideas regarding international trade to their congressional representatives.



2

These ideas are debated within Congress.



3

The ideas are either moved forward or abandoned.



Signing up for regular updates online



Keeping in touch with your customs broker



Attending webinars or industry events



Checking CBP's website: www.cbp.gov

What is "duty"?

Duty is essentially a tariff, which is a tax on imports or exports between Sovereign States. The purpose of duty is a consumption tax on imported goods.

A duty could be assessed to ensure imported and domestic goods are similar in price.

Source: coleintl.com



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