



Hong Kong

CAPITAL

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OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

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CURRENCY

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This Country Guide reflects information believed to be correct at the time of publication. Regulations, procedures and charges are subject to change. IAM does not accept liability for errors, omissions, inaccuracies or misinterpretations in this guide. The information provided should not be considered as having been provided or sanctioned by the customs authorities of the country or territory concerned.

Overview

Duty-Free Eligibility

Free port status: Hong Kong is a free port. All used household goods and personal effects can be imported free of duty. There are no general tariffs on imports. Excise duty is levied only on four types of dutiable commodities: liquor with alcohol content above 30% by volume, tobacco, hydrocarbon oil, and methyl alcohol.

Documents

Required Documents

- **Copy of passport (identification pages only)**
- **Original bill of lading (OBL) or air waybill (AWB)**
- **Detailed inventory**
- **Owner's full contact details in Hong Kong (address, telephone, fax number, email address)**

Household Goods — Specific Information

No customs declaration for household goods: Because Hong Kong levies no duty on household goods, the import process is relatively straightforward compared to most jurisdictions. However, any dutiable items (alcohol above 30% ABV, tobacco) within a household goods shipment will attract duty.

ISPM 15: Wood packaging materials (crates, pallets) should comply with ISPM 15 standards as a general precaution, though enforcement is less stringent than in many other jurisdictions.

Prohibited / Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Illegal drugs and narcotics
- Firearms, explosives, and ammunition (without license from Hong Kong Police) PERMIT REQUIRED
- Knives and deadly weapons
- Controlled chemicals
- Pets and animals (without AFCD Special Permit) PERMIT REQUIRED
- Meat and poultry (without permit)
- Plants and plant products (without AFCD license) PERMIT REQUIRED
- Rough diamonds (without Kimberley Process Certificate) PERMIT REQUIRED
- Counterfeit goods
- Pornographic material
- Species protected under CITES (without permit) CITES

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Personal duty-free allowances (passengers aged 18+):

- 19 cigarettes (not packs; the IAM guide's figure of 10 is outdated)
- 1 cigar or 25 grams of cigar tobacco
- 25 grams of other manufactured tobacco
- 1 litre of alcoholic liquor with alcohol content above 30% by volume

Regulatory update (October 2024): The duty rate for spirits with an import price above HKD 200 has been reduced from 100% to 10% on the portion above HKD 200. The rate for the first HKD 200 (and for spirits priced at HKD 200 or below) remains at 100%.

Alcohol duty within household goods shipments: A detailed list showing quantity and CIF value is required. Duty treatment is as follows:

- Wine: duty-free (since 2008 exemption)
- Beer and liquor with 30% alcohol by volume or less: duty-free
- Liquor with more than 30% alcohol by volume: 100% duty on CIF value for the first HKD 200 per unit, 10% on the portion above HKD 200

Tobacco duty stamp system: Hong Kong is implementing a new duty stamp system for cigarettes. The first phase is planned for Q4 2026, with full implementation by Q2 2027.

Cash declaration: Currency (HKD 120,000 or equivalent) must be declared at customs.

Other restricted items:

- Plants and plant products (special license from AFCD required)
- Weapons and ammunition (special license from Hong Kong Police Department required)

Vehicles

Vehicle Documents

- **Original vehicle documentation**
- **Original purchase invoice**
- **Insurance certificate**
- **Certificate of registration (must show boat dimensions if importing a vessel)**
- **Import declaration**

Specific Information

Left-hand drive prohibition: Left-hand drive vehicles cannot be imported into Hong Kong (Hong Kong drives on the left, requiring right-hand drive vehicles).

First registration tax: All vehicles are subject to high first registration taxes designed to discourage personal vehicle imports. Rates for private cars are progressive based on taxable value:

- First HKD 150,000: 40%
- Next HKD 150,000: 75%
- Next HKD 200,000: 100%
- Remainder: 115%

Motorcycles are taxed at a flat rate of 35% of value.

Regulatory inspections: All vehicles are subject to strict regulatory inspections and must comply with Hong Kong's exhaust and noise emissions standards.

Environmental Protection Department: Approval or exemption from the Environmental Protection Department should be obtained before shipping a vehicle into Hong Kong.

Insurance for older vehicles: It is difficult to obtain insurance for vehicles older than 10 years in Hong Kong.

Marine Department (vessels): For boats, the certificate of registration must be submitted to the Marine Department for application of an import permit within 24 hours of arrival.

Strong recommendation: Given the extremely high registration taxes and strict regulatory requirements, it is highly recommended to obtain a detailed cost estimate before shipping any vehicle to Hong Kong. In most cases, purchasing a vehicle locally is more cost-effective.

Pets

Requirements

- **Special Permit (import permit) from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)**
- **Health certificate from the origin country, endorsed by the government veterinary authority**
- **Rabies vaccination certificate (for pets from Group II and III countries)**
- **Captain's affidavit (airline personnel certificate confirming the pet did not leave its crate during transit)**

Specific Information

Country classification system: Hong Kong classifies origin countries into groups based on rabies status. Requirements and quarantine periods differ by group:

Group I (rabies-free): Australia, Fiji, Hawaii, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Bailiwick of Jersey. Pet must have been born in or continuously resided in a Group I country for at least 6 months before import. No quarantine required.

Group II (rabies-controlled): Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Belgium, Bermuda, Brunei, Canada, Cayman Islands, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Gibraltar, Iceland, Italy, Jamaica, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Netherlands, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Portugal, Seychelles, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, United States (mainland), Vanuatu, Virgin Islands. Pet must have been born in or continuously resided in a Group I or II country for at least 4 months. No quarantine required if all requirements are met.

Group IIIA: Lithuania, Macao SAR, Mainland China. Pet must have been born in or continuously resided for at least 4 months. Mandatory 30-day quarantine.

Group IIIB: All other countries not in Groups I, II, or IIIA. Mandatory 120-day quarantine.

Import permit: A Special Permit from AFCD is required for all dog and cat imports (including transit). The permit is valid for 6 months and covers one animal.

Microchip: Required. A 9-digit or 15-digit ISO-compliant microchip must be implanted before (or at the same time as) the rabies vaccination. All documents must reflect the microchip number.

Rabies vaccination: Required for pets from Group II and III countries. Must be administered between 30 days and 12 months before entry. The pet must be at least 90 days old at the time of vaccination. The primary vaccination is valid for one year; multi-year vaccines are acceptable for boosters. Vaccination is optional but recommended for Group I pets.

Rabies titer test: Not required from any country. However, service (disability assistance) dogs from any country can avoid quarantine by having a titer test no sooner than 30 days after the primary vaccination and at least 6 months before entry. The test is valid for one year.

Other vaccinations: Dogs must be vaccinated against canine distemper, infectious canine hepatitis, and canine parvovirus. Cats must be vaccinated against feline panleukopenia (infectious enteritis) and feline respiratory disease complex.

Parasite treatments: Required. Pets must be treated against ticks, tapeworm, nematodes, and cestodes before entry.

Health certificate: Must be issued within 14 days of entry by an accredited veterinarian and endorsed by the government veterinary authority in the country of origin. Two originals required.

Residency certificate: Pets from Group I countries need a certificate confirming continuous residence in the Group I country for 180 days before export (or since birth, or since direct export from Hong Kong). Pets from Group II countries need a certificate confirming the area within 10 km of the pet's residence has not reported rabies in any species (excluding bats) for at least 180 days

before export.

Captain's affidavit: Required for all pets. Airline personnel must certify that the pet traveled the entire journey without leaving its crate and did not contact other animals. For transit flights, the pet must not have left the cargo area of the transit airport. Pets may be detained if these conditions are not met.

Entry requirements: Pets must enter Hong Kong as air cargo at Hong Kong International Airport. The AFCD Duty Officer must be notified at least 24 hours before arrival. Transit permits are required for pets in transit for more than 6 hours or changing aircraft. Pets from mainland China must enter through designated land border control points (Shenzhen Bay, Lok Ma Chau, or Heung Yuen Wai) between 9am and 5pm.

Quarantine reservations: For Group III countries, advance reservations with the quarantine center are required. The estimated waiting time for quarantine space is 12 to 15 months, so owners should reserve space well before travel.

Puppies and kittens: From Group I countries, unvaccinated puppies/kittens must be at least 60 days old. From all other countries, puppies/kittens cannot enter younger than 5 months and must be vaccinated for rabies no sooner than 90 days of age. Pets more than 4 months pregnant are not permitted entry.

Banned breeds: The following breeds and their crosses are banned from import: Pit Bull Terrier (including American Staffordshire Terrier), Japanese Tosa, Dogo Argentino, and Fila Brasileiro. Staffordshire Bull Terriers may require a statutory declaration attesting to breed. This restriction also applies to service and emotional support animals.

Birds: Require an import permit and health certificate. Birds are not permitted from the US, Vietnam, the Netherlands, Korea, Indonesia, South Africa, Ivory Coast, or India. The commercial import of rodents and rabbits from all countries has been suspended.

CDC note: Hong Kong is NOT on the U.S. CDC high-risk countries list for dog rabies (it is explicitly excluded from the China listing along with Macau and Taiwan). Dogs returning to the U.S. from Hong Kong follow standard (non-high-risk) CDC import procedures.

Common Mistakes

- Failing to reserve quarantine space far enough in advance (12-15 month wait for Group III countries)
- Not obtaining the Special Permit from AFCD before shipping the pet
- Attempting to bring a pet in-cabin or as checked baggage (pets must enter as air cargo)

- Transit through a high-rabies country, which may affect eligibility
- Importing a banned breed or cross
- Not having the Captain's affidavit from airline personnel

Sources Consulted

1. **IAM Country Guide: Hong Kong** (August 19, 2016) -- baseline for document requirements, vehicle first registration tax rates, pet import permit, restricted/prohibited items
2. **FIDI Global Alliance** -- no dedicated Hong Kong customs guide found (404)
3. **VisaHQ Hong Kong Customs** -- duty-free allowances, prohibited/restricted items, pet import requirements summary
4. **PetTravel.com Hong Kong Pet Import Requirements** (updated 2026) -- detailed multi-step import process including country group classifications, microchip, vaccination, titer test, parasite treatment, health certificate, Captain's affidavit, quarantine periods, banned breeds, puppies/kittens age requirements
5. **Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department (official)** -- confirmed 19-cigarette duty-free allowance, alcohol duty rates, dutiable commodities categories, duty stamp system timeline
6. **Hong Kong 2024 Policy Address** -- confirmed spirits duty reduction (October 2024): 100% on first HKD 200, 10% on portion above HKD 200
7. **USDA Foreign Agricultural Service** -- confirmed wine and beer are duty-free in Hong Kong; spirits above 30% ABV are dutiable
8. **HK City Guide** -- confirmed current allowances (19 cigarettes, 1 litre spirits >30%), HKD 120,000 cash declaration threshold
9. **CDC High-Risk Countries for Dog Rabies** -- Hong Kong explicitly excluded from China listing
10. **Trade.gov** -- no Hong Kong-specific import requirements page found (404)
11. **Hinterland Travel** -- Hong Kong customs page returned 503

Discrepancies

- **Tobacco duty-free allowance:** The IAM guide (2016) states 10 cigarettes, 1 cigar or 25 grams, 25 grams other tobacco. VisaHQ states 19 cigarettes, 25 cigars, 25 grams tobacco. The official Hong Kong Customs website and the Hong Kong government's Legislative Council record confirm the current allowance is 19 cigarettes. The VisaHQ figure of "25 cigars" appears

incorrect; the official figure is 1 cigar or 25 grams. The IAM guide's figure of 10 cigarettes is outdated.

- **Alcohol duty on spirits:** The IAM guide (2016) states 100% duty on liquor above 30% ABV. This was accurate at the time but was partially reduced in October 2024 per the Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address. The current rate is 100% on the first HKD 200 import price and 10% on the portion above HKD 200.
- **Vehicle first registration tax rates:** The IAM guide lists specific tax brackets. These could not be independently confirmed against a current government source via this research (the Transport Department page is live but the specific rate schedule was not extracted). The rates listed are included as reported in the IAM guide and should be confirmed with the destination agent for current figures.

Unverified Items

- The specific first registration tax bracket amounts and percentages may have changed since 2016. The Transport Department website is live but current rates should be confirmed with the destination agent.
- The quarantine waiting time of 12-15 months (from PetTravel) for Group III countries could not be independently verified against the AFCD website in this research. This may vary based on demand.

Consignment Instructions

Recommended: Contact the destination agent to ensure all requirements have been met prior to import, especially for differences regarding air and sea shipments.

Free port advantages: Hong Kong's free port status means household goods and personal effects clear customs relatively quickly and without duty. The main delays are associated with port handling, container availability, and dutiable items within shipments.

Dutiable items: If the shipment contains alcohol above 30% ABV or tobacco, these items must be separately declared and duty paid. This can delay clearance. Consider shipping dutiable items separately or declaring them in advance.

Ports of entry: Sea cargo arrives at Kwai Tsing Container Terminals or other terminals in Hong Kong harbour. Air cargo clears through Hong Kong International Airport (Chek Lap Kok).

Vehicle imports: Given the extremely high first registration taxes and strict emissions/safety standards, contact the destination agent for a full cost assessment before shipping any vehicle. The Transport Department handles vehicle registration.

Pet imports: Must be coordinated with AFCD well in advance. The Special Permit, quarantine reservation (for Group III countries), and Captain's affidavit are all essential. Pets must arrive as air cargo.

Cultural & Other Information

- **OpenFactBook (replaces CIA World Factbook):** <https://www.openfactbook.org/countries/hong-kong/> (verified 200)
- **Wikipedia -- Hong Kong:** https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hong_Kong (verified 403 to bots; works in browser)
- **Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department:** <https://www.customs.gov.hk/> (returns 503 to this proxy; resolves and TLS-connects normally -- WAF block, browser-accessible)
- **Duty-Free Concessions (official):** <https://www.customs.gov.hk/en/service-enforcement-information/passenger-clearance/duty-free-concessions/index.html> (verified 200)
- **Types and Duty Rates (official):** <https://www.customs.gov.hk/en/service-enforcement-information/trade-facilitation/dutiable-commodities/types-and-duty-rates/index.html> (verified 200)
- **AFCD (Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department):** <https://www.afcd.gov.hk/english/> (verified 200)
- **AFCD Pet Import Information:** https://www.afcd.gov.hk/english/quarantine/qua_ie/qua_ie_ipab/qua_ie_ipab.html (verified 200)
- **Transport Department:** <https://www.td.gov.hk/> (verified 200)
- **Transport Department -- Vehicle First Registration:** https://www.td.gov.hk/en/public_services/licences_and_permits/vehicle_first_registration/index.html (verified 200)
- **Immigration Department:** <https://www.immd.gov.hk/eng/> (verified 200)
- **Inland Revenue Department:** <https://www.ird.gov.hk/eng/> (verified 200)
- **PetTravel.com -- Hong Kong:** <https://www.pettravel.com/information/pet-passports/hong-kong-pet-import-requirements/> (verified 200)
- **VisaHQ -- Hong Kong Customs:** <https://www.visahq.com/hong-kong/customs/> (verified 200)

Quick Links & Resources

- [Find Movers in Hong Kong](#)

<https://iamovers.mobilityex.com/index.html#/search?loc=Hong%20Kong&lat=22.3193&lng=114.1694&range=50&assocs=800&fvw=c&ctry=Hong%20Kong>

- [Foreign Consulates in Hong Kong](#)

<https://www.embassypages.com/hongkong>

- [Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department](#)

<https://www.customs.gov.hk/>

- [Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department \(AFCD\)](#)

<https://www.afcd.gov.hk/english/>

- [Transport Department](#)

<https://www.td.gov.hk/>

- [OpenFactBook \(replaces CIA World Factbook\)](#)

<https://www.openfactbook.org/countries/hong-kong/>