



Rwanda

CAPITAL

—

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

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CURRENCY

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Guide version: V2 draft**Disclaimer**

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.

Documents

For All Importers (Employees / Transferring Residents)

- **Copy of passport**
- **Original bill of lading (OBL) -- express/telex release is not accepted; original OBL required. For air shipments, copy of air waybill (AWB).**
- **Original valued inventory in English or French, dated and signed by the owner of the goods**
- **Detailed packing list**
- **Letter of employment**
- **Long-term visa or work permit**
- **Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) issued by the Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA) -- required even for categories that qualify for duty-free treatment**

For NGO / Non-Profit Staff

- **All documents listed above**

- **Non-governmental organization registration certificate or copy of work contract**

Household Goods — Specific Information

Rwanda administers customs through the Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA). All importers, including those qualifying for duty exemptions, must register for a TIN with the RRA before shipment arrives. The TIN registration process should be initiated as early as possible -- the destination agent can assist with this, but it requires the client's physical presence or a notarized power of attorney.

Used household goods and personal effects imported by persons transferring their residence to Rwanda may qualify for duty-free treatment, subject to eligibility criteria and documentation. Proof that the goods are genuinely used (not new) and belong to the transferring resident is required. Diplomatic and NGO staff may benefit from additional exemptions; confirm the applicable category with the destination agent and the relevant Rwandan ministry at the time of transfer.

The original valued inventory must be in English or French, signed and dated by the shipper. It should include item descriptions, quantities, and declared values. Items of significant value -- electronics, jewelry, artwork -- should be individually listed with accurate valuations.

Rwanda is a landlocked country. Most containerized freight arrives via the port of Mombasa (Kenya) or Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), then by road through Uganda or Tanzania. Transit times and documentation requirements for cross-border trucking should be factored into planning. Confirm current land border crossing procedures and any transit country documentation requirements with the destination agent.

All solid wood packing materials must comply with ISPM 15 phytosanitary treatment standards.

Prohibited / Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

The following items are prohibited from import into Rwanda:

- Illegal drugs and controlled narcotics
- Pornographic materials
- Transmission and radio communication equipment (without authorization) **[PERMIT REQUIRED]**

- Items infringing on intellectual property rights or copyrights
- Live or dead animals and foodstuffs originating from countries where an epidemic has been declared a health risk by Rwandan authorities **[CITES -- contact nearest Rwandan embassy for current country-specific restrictions]**
- Counterfeit goods and currency
- Plastic bags (single-use plastic bags are banned in Rwanda)

Note: Rwanda has a comprehensive ban on single-use plastic bags. This includes packaging materials. Household goods shipments should not contain single-use plastic bags, and packing methods should conform to this requirement. Customs inspectors enforce this rule; non-compliant materials will be confiscated.

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Accompanied baggage allowances (duty-free, persons 16 years and older):

Cigarettes (2 cartons) and alcoholic beverages (2 litres) may be imported duty-free as accompanied personal baggage.

Alcohol in household goods shipments:

Only "Fond de Cave" (personal cellar stock) is acceptable within a household goods shipment, and is limited to fewer than 15 bottles. If the declared value of goods exceeds USD 5,000, the owner must apply for an import license and a pre-shipment inspection must be conducted at origin. Alcohol should be packed and shipped separately from the main household goods consignment.

Currency:

Local currency (Rwandan francs) may be imported up to a maximum of RWF 5,000. Foreign currency imports should be declared on arrival; large amounts may require documentation.

Firearms and ammunition:

Importation requires authorization from the relevant territorial administration authority. This must be arranged in advance of shipment. Members should advise clients to initiate this process as early as possible and to confirm current licensing procedures with the destination agent.

Vehicles

Vehicle Documents

- **Copy of passport**

- **Original vehicle registration card (from country of origin)**
- **Original purchase invoice or proof of ownership**
- **Insurance certificate**
- **Original bill of lading (must include chassis number, engine number, cubic capacity, year of manufacture, brand, and model)**

Specific Information

The owner of the goods must have owned and used the vehicle for a minimum of 12 months prior to import for it to be considered a used personal vehicle. Proof of ownership for the full 12-month period must be provided. Vehicles not meeting this requirement are assessed at full commercial import duty rates.

Import duties on vehicles are assessed based on vehicle age, engine displacement (cubic capacity), and customs value. Rates vary and can be significant; confirm current duty calculations with the destination agent before committing to vehicle import. Rwanda applies the East African Community (EAC) Common External Tariff framework for vehicle imports, and rates are subject to periodic revision.

Rwanda generally restricts the import of right-hand drive vehicles. Left-hand drive vehicles are the standard for Rwanda (traffic drives on the right). Members should confirm current RHD/LHD policy with the destination agent, as enforcement and exceptions can vary.

Vehicles must undergo roadworthiness inspection and registration with the Rwanda National Police / Rwanda Transport Development Agency (RTDA) after customs clearance. The customs declaration document is required for this registration process.

Pets

Requirements

- **ISO-compliant microchip (ISO 11784/11785) -- must be implanted before vaccination**
- **Rabies vaccination certificate (administered between 30 days and 12 months before entry)**
- **International veterinary health certificate, issued by a licensed veterinarian and endorsed by the government veterinary authority of the originating country, within 14 days of entry**

- **Import permit from the Rwanda Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) -- must be obtained in advance by mail; allow significant lead time**
- **Proof of ownership**
- **Records of treatment for internal and external parasites (fleas, ticks, and Echinococcus where applicable)**

Specific Information

Microchipping must be carried out before vaccination. All documentation must reflect the microchip number. The microchip must comply with ISO standard 11784 or Annex A of ISO 11785.

Rabies vaccination is required for all dogs and cats. The vaccination must have been administered no less than 30 days and no more than 12 months before entry into Rwanda. Puppies and kittens under three months of age that have not yet been vaccinated for rabies must be vaccinated at three months and wait the full 30-day period before entry.

A government veterinarian in the originating country must issue or officially endorse the health certificate. The certificate must be completed within 14 days of the pet's arrival date and must include vaccination records, parasite treatment records, and attestations regarding freedom from signs of communicable disease.

An import permit from the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources is required. Applications must be submitted by mail in advance -- allow at least four to six weeks for processing. All pets must enter Rwanda through Kigali International Airport. Prior notice to veterinary officials at the airport is recommended so that inspection personnel are available on arrival.

Rwanda does not publish a list of breed-specific bans. All pets not meeting import requirements are subject to quarantine, return to origin, or euthanasia at the owner's expense.

Birds, reptiles, and all animals other than domestic dogs and cats require separate prior approval from the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources before import.

Rwanda does not require a rabies titer test for entry. However, Rwanda is classified by the World Organization for Animal Health as a high-rabies-risk country. If the pet will return to its country of origin after the stay in Rwanda, a titer test may be required for re-entry -- check return-country requirements in advance.

Consignment Instructions

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

Original bills of lading are required -- Rwanda Customs does not accept express or telex release for household goods. Ensure original documents are couriered separately and arrive before or simultaneously with the shipment.

Rwanda is landlocked. Most shipments transit through Mombasa (Kenya) via Mombasa-Kampala-Kigali road, or through Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) via the Central Corridor. Transit country documentation, cross-border permits, and road transit charges add time and cost to the move. Confirm current transit routes and procedures with the destination agent, as conditions along these corridors can change.

The client's TIN registration with the Rwanda Revenue Authority must be completed before the shipment arrives. Delays in TIN registration will result in shipment demurrage. The destination agent should be engaged early to initiate this process.

Customs inspections are common. The inventory and packing list must be accurate and consistent with the actual contents. Discrepancies between declared and actual contents can result in significant delays and penalties.

Plastic single-use packaging should be avoided entirely in packing materials, as Rwandan customs will confiscate prohibited plastic items.

Cultural & Other Information

Rwanda is a small, densely populated, landlocked country in Central/East Africa, bordered by Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The capital and largest city is Kigali. Rwanda has three official languages -- Kinyarwanda, English, and French -- with English being widely used in government, business, and education since Rwanda joined the East African Community and the Commonwealth in 2009. The currency is the Rwandan franc (RWF).

Rwanda is widely recognized for its remarkable post-genocide recovery and is often cited as one of Africa's fastest-growing economies and most effectively governed states. The country has a strong emphasis on cleanliness, order, and environmental sustainability, reflected in policies such as the plastic bag ban and regular community clean-up days (Umuganda). Kigali is consistently ranked among the cleanest cities in Africa.

Reference links:

- [OpenFactBook -- Rwanda](#)
- [Wikipedia -- Rwanda](#)
- [Rwanda Revenue Authority \(RRA\) -- Customs](#)
- [Rwanda Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources \(MINAGRI\)](#)

- [Rwanda Ministry of Foreign Affairs -- Embassies Abroad](#)

Quick Links & Resources

- [Find Movers in Rwanda](#)

<https://iamovers.mobilityex.com/index.html#/search?loc=Rwanda&lat=-1.940278&lng=29.873888&range=50&assocs=800&fvw=c&ctry=Rwanda>

- [Foreign Embassies in Rwanda](#)

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

- [Rwanda's Embassies Abroad](#)

<https://www.minaffet.gov.rw/index.php?id=490>

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