



Sri Lanka

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.

Overview

Customs Clearance

Air shipments: 1-2 working days after transfer to the designated Container Freight Station (CFS); the transfer process itself takes 8-10 working days. FCL sea shipments: 2-3 working days after container discharge at Colombo port. LCL sea shipments: 2-3 working days after transfer to the designated CFS; transfer takes 12-14 working days.

Documents

Required Documents

- **Original passport (with valid residence visa — cargo must arrive after the owner has obtained a residence visa)**
- **Original Bill of Lading (OBL) or Airway Bill (AWB) — telex release is acceptable**
- **Detailed packing list and inventory (in English only)**

- **Insurance certificate**
- **Customs Declaration Form (provided by the local destination agent)**
- **Authorization Letters (provided by the local destination agent)**
- **Duty-Free Clearance Certificate, if applicable**
- **Import licence, if applicable**
- **Bank guarantee, if applicable**
- **Power of Attorney (if the owner is not present for Customs clearance): must be registered/legalized and submitted with a copy of the owner's passport**

For Diplomats

- **Duty-Free Clearance Certificate issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
- **Packing list/inventory**
- **OBL or AWB (telex release acceptable)**
- **Certified diplomatic ID card copy**
- **Certified true copy of passport**
- **Customs Declaration Form and Authorization Letter (from local agent)**

Household Goods — Specific Information

The owner of the goods should be present for Customs clearance in Sri Lanka. If unavailable, a registered and legalized Power of Attorney must be submitted with a copy of the owner's passport.

All shipments are subject to Customs physical inspection. Documents should be received by the destination agent at least 7 days before the shipment arrives.

All electrical items and furniture must be individually priced on the detailed inventory. If the total assessed value of electrical items and furniture exceeds USD 1,000, duty is payable on the excess. Only one electrical item of any type is permitted per consignment. Refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, dishwashers, dehumidifiers, air conditioners, and home theater systems are not classified as household goods and are therefore subject to full import duties and taxes.

All applicable fees must be paid before the shipment is released.

Diplomats may only clear duty-free upon presentation of the Duty-Free Clearance Certificate. Shipments with "A" Facility diplomatic status are not subject to physical Customs inspection.

ISPM 15 compliance is required for all wood packaging material.

Prohibited / Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Narcotics and controlled substances
- Pornographic materials
- Anti-religious materials
- Firearms, guns, and weapons (without specific authorization)
- Ammunition and explosives
- Currency (undeclared cash above permitted limits)
- Animal parts and products from protected species `CITES`
- Antiques and high-value items (subject to restriction and licensing)
- Live plants
- Counterfeit goods
- Materials that undermine national security or public order

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Sri Lanka has no free trade agreement framework applicable to household goods imports. All non-personal-effects items are assessed for duty.

Alcohol: Only 2 bottles of wine or spirits are permitted duty-free per consignment. Quantities above this are treated as a commercial quantity and are subject to full duties and taxes.

Brand new furniture: Subject to import duties and taxes; not treated as household goods.

Clothing and personal belongings: Duty-free in reasonable quantities.

Consumer electronics: Subject to duty. Only one unit of each type of electrical item is permitted. Refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, dishwashers, dehumidifiers, air conditioners, and home theater systems are not classified as household goods and attract full import duties.

Telecommunications equipment (satellites, remote control equipment, telephones, fax machines): Special prior approval from the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka (TRCSL) must be obtained before the shipment arrives. An operation manual must accompany each item.

Computer software, floppy discs, music discs, tapes, and video tapes: Subject to Customs examination and may be restricted.

Videos and CDs: Will be screened for content.

Vehicle parts: Restricted; contact destination agent.

Full details on applicable duty rates are available in Schedule B of Sri Lanka Customs:

<https://www.customs.gov.lk/about-us/customs-law/>

Vehicles

Vehicle Documents

- **Passport**
- **Import Control Licence from the Department of Import and Export Control, Sri Lanka**
- **Certificate of title/registration**
- **Proof of ownership (details of vehicle, make, model, year)**
- **Purchase receipt/invoice**
- **Additional documents prepared by the local agent (require customer signature and company seal)**
- **Appropriate application forms (contact destination agent for the correct form applicable to the importer's category)**

Specific Information

All vehicles imported into Sri Lanka must be right-hand drive.

Vehicle importation is heavily regulated and duty structures are complex. Diplomatic personnel, UN officials, and some NGO organizations may import a motor vehicle duty-free, provided they hold a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sri Lankan government or an official duty-free facility. For all other importers, duties and taxes apply to all vehicle imports.

It is strongly not recommended for private individuals to import used or new vehicles under personal effects. The destination agent must be consulted to determine the correct applicable form, duty category, and required vehicle specifications before any commitment is made.

Pets

Requirements

- **Copy of owner's passport**
- **Copy of Airway Bill**
- **ISO 11784/11785-compliant 15-digit microchip certificate**
- **Vaccination records: rabies (administered between 30 days and 11 months before entry); DHLPP for dogs (distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, parvovirus — administered between 21 days and 10 months before import); TRICAT/FVRCP for cats (feline viral rhinotracheitis, panleukopenia, feline leukemia — administered between 30 days and 10 months before import)**
- **Blood test results (dogs must show negative results for Heartworm Antigen, Heartworm Microfilaria, and Leishmaniasis — samples taken within 30 days of import)**
- **Parasite treatment records (internal and external, administered within 14 days before entry)**
- **International Zoo Sanitary Veterinary Health Certificate / official health certificate, completed within 10 days of entry, issued or endorsed by a government veterinarian in the country of origin**
- **Import Permit from the Department of Animal Production and Health (DAPH), obtained at least 2 weeks before importation — valid for 90 days from date of issue**
- **Import Control Licence (required when importing 3 or more pets)**

Specific Information

Sri Lanka requires an Import Permit from the Director General of the Department of Animal Production and Health (DAPH) before any live animal is imported. Applications must be submitted at least 2 weeks in advance.

Pets may only be imported from countries, or areas within countries, that are free from rabies according to Sri Lankan regulations, or from areas not within 25 km of a known rabies case in the 6 months prior to travel. The health certificate must confirm the pet has resided in the exporting country for a minimum of 6 months prior to transport.

All dogs and cats are subject to 30 days of home quarantine upon arrival, even when all requirements are met. The owner's full address and telephone number must be provided on the

Quarantine Surveillance Agreement. Customs clearance and quarantine inspection take place at Colombo's Bandaranaike International Airport; animals may be held at the airport animal lodge for a minimum of 24 hours while quarantine requirements are processed.

Microchip must be ISO 11784/11785-compliant. If the microchip is not compliant, the importer must bring a compatible scanner.

Sri Lanka does not require a rabies titer test, but the blood tests for heartworm and leishmaniasis (dogs) must be completed. If the exporting country is officially free of these diseases, a statement to that effect on the health certificate satisfies the requirement.

Pets arriving as air cargo are subject to a significant import tax. Accompanying pets (cabin or checked baggage) are subject to a lighter tax. Advance notice of at least 2 days must be given to veterinary officials at the entry airport. Pets not in apparent good health may require further examination at the owner's expense.

Pets traveling via a layover in the European Union will face additional EU transit requirements. Direct flights to Colombo are strongly preferred.

Consignment Instructions

Contact the destination agent to ensure all requirements have been met prior to import, especially for differences between air, FCL sea, and LCL sea shipments.

Documents must reach the destination agent at least 7 days before the shipment arrives. All fees must be paid before the shipment is cleared and released. The owner should be present at Customs, or a legalized Power of Attorney must be provided.

All inventories must be in English, itemized, and individually priced. Items such as electrical appliances are subject to strict quantity limits and value thresholds.

Clearance timelines are significantly affected by transfer time to the designated Container Freight Station (CFS) — particularly for air (8–10 working days) and LCL sea (12–14 working days) — before the formal 1–3 working day clearance process begins. Plan accordingly and avoid tight delivery deadlines.

ISPM 15 compliance is required for all wood packaging materials.

Cultural & Other Information

Sri Lanka — officially the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka — is an island nation in the Indian Ocean, located off the southeastern tip of the Indian subcontinent. It has a population of

approximately 22 million. The capital is Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte (administrative) with Colombo serving as the commercial capital and main port city. Major entry points for international cargo are Colombo Port and Bandaranaike International Airport in Katunayake.

Sinhalese and Tamil are the official languages; English is widely used in commerce and government. The currency is the Sri Lankan Rupee (LKR). The country experienced a severe economic crisis in 2022 but has been on a path of recovery since 2023.

- [Sri Lanka — OpenFactBook](#)
- [Sri Lanka — Wikipedia](#)
- [Sri Lanka Customs](#) *(Customs law and Schedule B duty rates)*
- [Department of Animal Production and Health — DAPH](#) *(WAF-protected; accessible in browser)*
- [Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sri Lanka](#) *(WAF-protected; accessible in browser)*
- [Department of Import and Export Control](#) *(WAF-protected; accessible in browser)*
- [FIDI Import Customs Guide — Sri Lanka \(November 2025\)](#)
- [PetTravel.com — Sri Lanka Pet Import Requirements](#)

Quick Links & Resources

- [Find Movers in Sri Lanka](#)
<https://iamovers.mobilityex.com/index.html#/search?loc=Sri%20Lanka&lat=7.87&lng=80.77&range=50&assocs=800&fvw=c&ctry=Sri%20Lanka>
- [Foreign Embassies in Sri Lanka](#)
<https://www.embassypages.com/srilanka>
- [Sri Lanka's Embassies Abroad](#)
<https://www.mfa.gov.lk>