



# Importing Personal Property Into The UNITED KINGDOM

## HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND PERSONAL EFFECTS

### DUTY-FREE ENTRY IS PERMITTED IF THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS ARE MET:

- The shipper is moving or returning to the EC (European Community) after having lived outside the EC for at least 12 continuous months.
- The goods have been in the shipper's possession and use outside of the EC for at least 6 months prior to importation.
- The items may be imported up to 6 months in advance of the transfer of residence and no later than 12 months after the shipper's arrival.
- The effects were not obtained under a duty/tax-free scheme, except for the following: diplomats, members of officially recognized international organizations, members of NATO or UK forces and the civilian staff accompanying them, or spouses of any of the aforementioned.
- The items must be kept for personal use and not be sold, lent, hired out or otherwise disposed of in the EC within 12 months of importation.
- Items qualifying for duty-free entry include: clothing, furniture, portable tools of trade, pets and other household goods and personal effects. Alcoholic beverages and tobacco products are **not** eligible for duty-free import.
- **WEDDING GIFTS** (up to a value of £800 per item) are eligible for duty-free importation if the items are intended for the shipper and given by someone living outside the EC. (Does **not** apply to alcohol or tobacco.) Gifts can arrive 2 months prior to the wedding and 4 months afterward. A marriage certificate is required.
- **INHERITANCE GOODS** require a copy of the will, which may require certification. Sometimes a letter from an attorney and a copy of the death certificate is accepted by customs.

### Required Documents:

- ✓ Completed and signed H.M. Customs Form C3
- ✓ Detailed packing list
- ✓ Invoices/receipts for all items less than 6 months old
- ✓ Valid passport
- ✓ Work Permit
- ✓ Detailed valued inventory in duplicate

### SECONDARY HOMES

Goods for a secondary home may be imported duty-free, but are subject to VAT, if the owner:

- Has his/her normal home outside the EC
- Had his/her normal home outside the EC for at least 12 continuous months
- Has owned or rented the secondary home in the EC for at least 24 months
- Does not rent the secondary home to a third party while he/she is absent
- Has possessed and used the effects for at least 6 months prior to importation
- Does not sell, lend, hire out or otherwise dispose of the goods in the EC within 24 months of importation, unless Customs authorization is acquired and duty is paid.

### Required Documents:

- ✓ Completed and signed H.M. Customs Form C33

## DIPLOMATS – HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND PERSONAL EFFECTS

- Duty-free entry
- It is necessary to know the following information: the marks and numbers of the packages in which the goods are traveling, the ship's name, the date of arrival, and port of arrival.

### Required Documents:

- ✓ Completed and signed H.M. Customs Form C426

## PROHIBITED ITEMS

- All firearms
- Explosives and fireworks
- Offensive weapons such as flick-knives, swordsticks, knuckle-dusters, blowpipes, butterfly knives, death stars, spring-operated telescopic truncheons and some martial arts equipment
- Weapons that are designed or adapted to discharge any noxious substance are prohibited, including stun guns, electric shock batons and self-defense sprays.
- Obscene materials depicting extreme violence, including horror comics
- Unlicensed drugs, such as heroin, morphine, cocaine, cannabis, amphetamines, barbiturates and LSD
- Pornographic materials
- Indecent and obscene materials featuring children
- Counterfeit and pirated goods
- Goods that infringe upon patents
- Meat, milk and other animal products

## RESTRICTED ITEMS

- Radio transmitters (walkie-talkies, CB radios and cordless phones) that have not been approved for use in the United Kingdom
- Live animals (see **Dogs and Cats** section for additional information) Live birds require a British health import license and quarantine. For advice, call DEFRA Animal Health: 020 7904 6000.
- Endangered species, including birds and plants, whether alive or dead, and the goods made from them. Fur, ivory, and leather that have been taken from endangered species.
- Certain plants and their produce including trees, shrubs, potatoes, certain fruit, bulbs and seeds.

## MOTOR VEHICLES

### **DUTY-FREE ENTRY IS PERMITTED IF THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS ARE MET:**

- The shipper has owned and used the vehicle for more than 6 months.
- The vehicle must not be sold or otherwise disposed of for at least one year after the date of importation.
- Before importing a motor vehicle you should check with the nearest Consulate to the United Kingdom to verify whether or not the vehicle complies with specific safety and environmental protection standards.

### **Required Documents:**

- ✓ Customs Form C104A
- ✓ Proof you have owned and used vehicle outside the EC for at least 6 months. For example:
  - ✓ Foreign registration papers
  - ✓ Police certificate of registration; or
  - ✓ Insurance policy.
- ✓ Original purchase invoice
- ✓ Foreign vehicle registration
- ✓ Certificate of Title
- ✓ C384 Declaration if the vehicle is less than 6 months old

**NOTE:** Vehicles being shipped into any port in the UK require a C104A, certificate of title, bill of lading, copy of passport, proof of insurance (if shipper is collecting vehicle from port themselves) and proof of US residency for previous 12 months.

## DOGS AND CATS

- Dogs and cats traveling under the Pet Travel Scheme (PETS) from the Mainland U.S. may enter the U.K. without quarantine. The following procedures, in the order listed, must be carried out to qualify for PETS: the pet must be microchipped, vaccinated against rabies, and receive a blood test; the owner must obtain an EU passport or official veterinary certificate for the pet; and the pet must be treated for ticks and tapeworms. A six month waiting period is required once the blood sample is drawn.
- For up-to-date, detailed information refer to the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs' website: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/index.htm>. Refer to Fact Sheet 4, which covers the rules and regulations in depth and provides a handy checklist: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/factsheet/factsheet.htm>. PETS hotline: 0870 241 1770 (Mon-Fri, 8:30am-5:00pm UK time).
- Dogs and cats not qualifying for PETS may be quarantined for up to six months and require an import license prior to traveling to the UK.
- Birds require 30 days in quarantine and an import license.
- The maximum number of allowable pets for importation is five.

### **REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:**

- ✓ If traveling on PETS: EU Pet Passport or a Third Country Official Veterinary Certificate
- ✓ If requiring quarantine: Import License
- ✓ Customs Form C5 for each pet, with the pet's purchase price or the cost of buying another pet of the same breed, age and condition.

## ART AND ANTIQUES

### **DUTY-FREE ENTRY IS PERMITTED IF THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS ARE MET:**

- Articles are part of a bona fide household removal or are over 100 years old.
- Articles have been in the use and possession of the owner for a minimum of one year.
- Articles are not for sale or other disposal in the United Kingdom.
- Owner must declare the age and value of the goods in advance of the importation. Date of manufacture **must** be produced.
- Certificate of Antiquity should be supplied.
- Precious metal objects may enter duty-free. Silverware is considered as household goods.

### **REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:**

- ✓ Customs Form C88. Enter the appropriate Customs Procedure Code in Box 37.
- ✓ An Age Declaration. This should be a written statement made by the shipper to read: "I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the articles in the form as imported were wholly manufactured or produced more than 100 years before the date of importation."
- ✓ Evidence of Age as proven by a certificate of age provided by the seller or by an independent expert in the country where the antique/work of art was acquired.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Fox Moving & Storage, 2007
- DEFRA (Department for Environment and Rural Affairs), Bringing Pets to the UK, <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/index.htm>, April 2007
- HM Customs and Excise, <http://www.hmce.gov.uk>, April 2006.

**The information presented herein is based on customs data available at the time of printing and is frequently subject to change without notice. It is the responsibility of the owner or importer of the household goods to comply with the current customs restrictions, regulations, and duties of the country to which the goods are imported. We strongly advise customers to contact the consulate or embassy of the destination country for the most current information on customs regulations, restrictions and duties for importing household goods, personal effects and vehicles.**