



Shipping vehicles to Australia Guide



Thinking of bringing your car, suv, utility or motorcycle with you? The dramatic depreciation in value of most vehicles during the first 3 years after purchase, results in many 'ditch hoppers' choosing to ship their cars along with their personal effects and furniture. The New Zealand standards for motor vehicle registration are very similar to Australian standards, so most vehicles can be legally imported to Australia without requiring modifications.

The importation of motor vehicles into Australia is controlled by the Australian vehicle import regulations which only permits some cars to be imported (based on age, specialist nature and other criteria).

Note: Do not make arrangements to transport your vehicle to Australia until you have been issued with a valid Vehicle Import Approval (VIA). It is an offence to ship a road vehicle into Australia before obtaining a VIA. This guide ONLY refers to the importation of motor vehicles under the Personal Import Scheme (PIS).

Are you eligible to import a motor vehicle under the Personal Import Scheme (PIS)?

The Personal Import Scheme for approved motor vehicles (including motorcycles and trailers) is available if the vehicle is imported by a person who meets the following citizenship and visa criteria:

- (i) Is an adult (18 years +) Australian citizen or permanent resident returning home to Australia (permanently) after a period of living overseas or
- (ii) Is a migrant moving to Australia with a valid visa which allows permanent residence;
- (iii) Is otherwise entitled to remain in Australia indefinitely (ie a New Zealand citizen);

AND

(iv) has personally owned and used the motor vehicle overseas for at least 12 months prior to the application for import approval. Note: companies and/or corporations are not eligible to import a vehicle under the PIS and individuals are restricted to the importation of one vehicle per person every 5 years.

What documents will you need to substantiate prior use and ownership of the motor vehicle?

The vehicle must have been available to you for use as transport. This means that the vehicle must have been available to be driven by you, at all times during the 12-month qualifying period. Evidence could include that the vehicle is registered (in your name) and was garaged (within proximity to your residence) throughout the 12-month qualifying period together with evidence that you held an appropriate licence to drive the vehicle overseas.

Are there any restrictions on the kind of vehicle you can import under a VIA?

There are vehicle emissions, asbestos and air-conditioner refrigeration restrictions applicable upon the importation of motor vehicles into Australia.

Are there any constraints on selling an imported vehicle in Australia?

If a vehicle has met the requirements for import approval and initial registration, there is no restriction preventing the subsequent sale of an imported vehicle unless conditions have been applied to the Vehicle Import Approval.

Will you have to pay Customs Duty or GST in Australia?

Customs duty, GST and Luxury Car Tax (LCT) are generally applicable to most motor vehicle imports, with the only exceptions being vehicles which are being returned to Australia in an unaltered condition or tourists or temporary residents wishing to import a motor vehicle on a temporary basis (up to 12 months). GST is applicable at a rate of 10% of the value of the motor vehicle, whilst the customs duty rate is generally not applicable under the AANZFTA agreement for trans-Tasman trade. LCT becomes payable if the value of the vehicle exceeds the LCT threshold and is imposed at a rate of 33% on the amount above the luxury tax threshold.

How is the Customs Value of my motor vehicle determined?

All vehicles in excess of two years of age, require the customs value to be assessed by a licenced valuer in Australia who will establish the market value of the vehicle and give consideration to the purchase value, depreciation and any improvements or modifications made to the vehicle. For vehicles with a manufactured date less than two years you will have the option of using either the purchase receipt or requesting a valuation in order to establish the customs value.

How do you apply for a VIA to import a motor vehicle into Australia?

Applications may be made before you arrive in Australia (although you must still meet the 12-month qualifying period prior to applying). Alternatively, applications may be made up to six months after you arrive in Australia. Applications for vehicle import approvals are submitted through an Australian Government Dept of Infrastructure & Transport secure Client Portal. Before submitting an application, you must register with the Department. Part of the registration process includes providing photo identification (e.g. driver's licence or the identity page of the passport).

Once you are registered, you may complete and submit an application by logging onto the Client Portal and completing the application form(s) including uploading supporting evidence and paying a A\$50 application fee

A completed application for a VIA, with all the necessary supporting documentation, will generally be assessed by the Department within 20 working days of receipt of the application.

Apart from the cost of shipping, customs clearance, GST and LCT are there any other charges you need to be aware of?

The Australian Department of Agriculture will conduct a physical quarantine examination of all imported vehicles to determine if there is any bio-security risk associated with any attached soil, plant or animal matter. There are costs for this service and these will be clearly displayed in our quotation. These costs are currently NZ\$380 for a car or SUV and NZ\$260 for a motorcycle or trailer. Should the department request quarantine approved cleaning of the vehicle, this will attract an additional charge payable in Australia.

In the event your vehicle is older than 2 years or you elect to use the licenced valuation method to determine the customs value, a valuation fee of A\$290 is payable in Australia.

Once cleared, the vehicle will also need to be registered in the relevant Australian State of Territory. The costs for this vary from state to state and some states may require a road worthy examination to be undertaken by a licenced tester where standard items such as headlights, seat belts, speedo, emissions control and windscreen may be checked to ensure the vehicle meets local regulations.

For even more detail about process and eligibility you can visit www.infrastructure.gov.au

Your Grace moving consultant will be able to assist you further with export documentation and shipping costs from New Zealand to all Australian destinations.

Whilst all care has been taken in compiling the information contained in this information sheet Grace Worldwide Australia cannot accept any responsibility for errors, omissions and changes. The information should only be used as a guide. Costs are current as of November 2019.



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