

How to import a vehicle into Canada

In order to ensure vehicles manufactured for the United States market meet Canadian standards, there are several steps to follow. This guide provides a simple summary of what you must do.



**Registrar of
Imported Vehicles**

**Registraire des
véhicules importés**

Registrar of Imported Vehicles
405 The West Mall
Toronto, Ontario M9C 5K7
1-888-848-8240
www.riv.ca

What to do before you import

- Make sure your vehicle is admissible and can be modified to meet Canadian requirements by checking Transport Canada's List of Vehicles Admissible from the United States. This program covers passenger cars, trucks, vans, jeeps, chassis cabs, trailers, motorcycles and snowmobiles less than 15 years old; off-road vehicles manufactured after May 1, 1988 and buses manufactured after January 1, 1971.
- Check the list on the back of this brochure for typical modification requirements. You can also call us at 1-888-848-8240 or check our web site: www.riv.ca
- Contact the original equipment manufacturer or authorized dealer of your vehicle to obtain a recall clearance letter. **You must have this document in order to pass the federal inspection.**
- As well you should obtain information from the manufacturer or authorized dealer on costs and availability of parts for the required modifications. Some manufacturers require an authorized dealer perform the modifications. Remember that the costs of the modifications are your responsibility.
- Determine additional costs, such as duty and taxes. Canada Border Services Agency, responsible for assessing and collecting duties and taxes, can be reached at 1-800-461-9999 (in Canada) or 506-636-5064 (outside Canada).
- Make sure you have the required documentation: title documents, registration, sales receipts, statement of compliance label and manufacturer's recall clearance letter.
- Find out about any additional provincial or territorial requirements, such as safety inspections and emissions tests.
- Arrange for insurance on your vehicle.
- Present your vehicle along with original title document to US Customs prior to entering Canada. See US Customs web site for detailed information and contact information for US Customs ports at www.customs.gov (see end of brochure).
- If you are importing a trailer, you may call RIV to have your Vehicle Identification Number verified ahead of time.

What to do at the border

- Produce your title documents, registration and sales receipts.
- Complete Vehicle Import Form – Form 1, which Canada Customs will provide. This requires a Canadian mailing address. This form must be kept in the vehicle until it is licensed.
- Canada Customs will check your vehicle against Transport Canada's list of Vehicles Admissible from the United States. They will also verify the public VIN and manufacturer's statement of compliance label on the vehicle to make sure they match.
- Canada Customs will facilitate the payment of your nonrefundable Registrar of Imported Vehicles' fee of \$209 in all provinces except Quebec where it is \$224.
- Payment for the RIV fee may be made directly to Canada Customs with any major credit card. **Canada Customs does not accept cash or cheques for the RIV fee.** If you wish to pay by cheque or money order, Canada Customs will provide you with a payment envelope which must be mailed to the Registrar of Imported Vehicles. Please note that all personal cheques will be held for ten business days in order to allow them to clear the bank. This will use up a portion of your 45 day time limit.
- Remember that payment of fees and receipt of the Vehicle Import Form – Form 1 does not warrant that your vehicle is capable of being brought into conformity with all applicable federal and provincial or territorial laws.
- The Registrar of Imported Vehicles will not issue a federal inspection form or any specific modification information for a vehicle with an unpaid file. It is important that you do not proceed with any modifications on your vehicle until you receive this federal inspection form. If the file remains unpaid for 14 days after importation, we will send the importer a reminder notice.

Numbers you'll need

Registrar of Imported Vehicles

1-888-848-8240 or check our web site: www.riv.ca
info@riv.ca (email)

Hours of service

Mon. to Fri.: 7:00 AM to 12:00 Midnight (EST)
Sat. and Sun.: 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM (EST)

Canada Border Services Agency

In Canada : 1-800-461-9999 (English)
1-800-959-2036 (French)
Outside Canada : (506) 636-5064 (English)
(506) 636-5067 (French)

www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca

Transport Canada

1-800-333-0371 (from Canada)
(613) 998-8616 (outside Canada)
(613) 998-4831 (fax)
www.tc.gc.ca

United States Customs

US Customs requires notification off all self-propelled vehicles being permanently exported from the United States. Their regulations state that at land border crossing points:

1. The required documentation must be submitted to US Customs at least 72 hours prior to export; and
2. The vehicle must be presented to US Customs at the time of export.

US Customs recommends that you contact the port of crossing directly for more information or visit their website at: www.customs.gov

Transport Canada has contracted with Adminserv Canada LP to operate the national program of vehicle inspection, certification and registration, known as the Registrar of Imported Vehicles.

Adminserv is an affiliate of Livingston International, the largest customs broker and trade services company facilitating two-way trade between Canada and the United States.

Adminserv
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What to do
after the vehicle
enters Canada

- Within 10 days, you should receive a letter from RIV with your inspection document (Form 2) which details what must be done to bring your vehicle into compliance.
- It is your responsibility to complete the necessary modifications within 45 days. *The Motor Vehicle Safety Act* allows modifications to be performed by the mechanic or garage of your choice, however, some manufacturers require that an authorized dealer or agent performs the modifications. In all cases we recommend that you contact the Original Equipment Manufacturer or authorized dealer to discuss parts availability and costs or warranty issues.
- Make sure you keep receipts for all your modification work. These must be presented at the time of federal inspection, along with the Vehicle Import Form, Inspection form and the recall clearance letter.
- The RIV has contracted Canadian Tire, with 430 locations across Canada, to perform our federal inspections. In many cases, Canadian Tire can perform certain modification work, as well as performing the provincial inspection.
- The Registrar of Imported Vehicles has also contracted a number of independent inspection facilities to perform the federal inspection. A list of these facilities will be included in the mail out of your inspection package.
- When you pass the inspection, the inspection centre will stamp your Form 1, that you will have to present to the provincial or territorial licensing authority, which may require additional testing.
- Within approximately one week of passing the federal inspection, we will send you a new Canadian Certification label with instructions on where to affix it to your vehicle.
- If the vehicle fails the inspection, you'll have to pay additional charges for another inspection. If the vehicle cannot pass the inspection within the 45 days, it will have to be exported back to the United States.
- If you have any questions or require any information that will assist you in meeting the 45 day time line, please call us at 1-888-848-8240. We're here to assist you 7 days a week

Modification and inspection
requirements

Passenger vehicles

- Recall clearance letter
- The vehicle must bear a manufacturer's valid statement of compliance label at the time of importation, otherwise a manufacturer's letter of compliance will be required
- The Registrar of Imported Vehicles will mail a Canadian statement of compliance label to you after passing the federal inspection
- Valid alpha-numeric 17-digit VIN
- Metric speedometer and odometer labels (provided by inspection centre)
- Daytime running lights, if manufactured after November 1989
- Infant restraint kit, if manufactured after 1988
- Child tether anchorage, for most passenger cars manufactured after 1988 (refer to Admissibility List)
- 8 km/hour bumpers (refer to Admissibility List)
- French supplementary restraint system label for airbags that require periodic maintenance

Trucks, MPV's, motor homes, minivans, chassis cabs

- Recall clearance letter
- The vehicle must bear a manufacturer's valid statement of compliance label at the time of importation, otherwise a manufacturer's letter of compliance will be required
- The Registrar of Imported Vehicles will mail a Canadian statement of compliance label to you after passing the federal inspection
- Valid alpha-numeric 17-digit VIN
- Manufacturer's cargo capacity label if manufactured after April 1, 1999
- Metric speedometer and odometer labels (provided by inspection centre)
- Daytime running lights, if manufactured after November 1989
- French supplementary restraint system label for airbags that require periodic maintenance

Trailers (including travel trailers, boat trailers, utility trailers, air braked trailers, and machinery mounted on a trailer frame that is capable of being towed or drawn on a public roadway)

- Recall clearance letter
- The vehicle must bear a manufacturer's valid statement of compliance label at the time of importation, otherwise a manufacturer's letter of compliance will be required
- The Registrar of Imported Vehicles will mail a Canadian statement of compliance label to you after passing the federal inspection
- Valid alpha-numeric 17-digit VIN
- Lighting
- Reflectors
- Travel trailers only - Manufacturer's cargo capacity label if manufactured after April 1, 1999

Motorcycles

- Recall clearance letter
- U.S. statement of compliance (S.O.C. Label), at the border
- The Registrar of Imported Vehicles will mail a Canadian statement of compliance label to you after passing the federal inspection
- Valid alpha-numeric 17-digit VIN
- Metric speedometer and odometer labels (provided by inspection centre)
- All Lights On

Restricted-Use Motorcycles

- Recall clearance letter
- Off-road statement label
- Reflectors

All terrain vehicles manufactured after April 1988

- Recall clearance letter
- Off-road statement label
- All Lights On, for existing lights

Snowmobiles

- Recall clearance letter
- U.S. statement of compliance (S.O.C. Label) or Snowmobile Safety Certification Committee label (SSCC), at the border
- Headlights On, if manufactured after 1988
- Lighting
- Reflectors
- Kill switch

Snowmobile cutters

- Recall clearance letter
- Reflectors
- Rigid tow bar

Buses

- Recall clearance letter
- The vehicle must bear a manufacturer's valid statement of compliance label at the time of importation, otherwise a manufacturer's letter of compliance will be required
- The Registrar of Imported Vehicles will mail a Canadian statement of compliance label to you after passing the federal inspection
- Valid alpha-numeric 17-digit VIN
- Metric speedometer and odometer labels (provided by inspection centre)
- Daytime running lights, if manufactured after November 1989
- French Supplementary Restraint System label for airbags that require periodic maintenance
- Emergency exits, labels and mechanical
- Manufacturer's cargo capacity label if manufactured after April 1, 1999