



New Zealand Car Shipping and Import Guide

Our complete guide to shipping your car to New Zealand

Get the facts about shipping your car to New Zealand and know before you go to avoid delays.

New Zealand has strict rules and regulations in regard to emissions and safety guidelines with which all vehicles must comply in order to be imported into the country. We are happy to provide this guide to assist you in making arrangements to ship your car to New Zealand and to help you understand the process of importing your car when it arrives. We hope that this comprehensive guide provides you with all you need, however if you would like to talk to us in relation to any aspect of shipping your car please do not hesitate to get in touch and we will be happy to help.

Please feel free to call us on [0800 3890784](tel:08003890784) for any further information.

Essential links:

[Download or Print our New Zealand Car Shipping Guide Here](#)

[NZ Transport Agency - Importing Immigrants' Vehicles - Fact sheet 44a](#)

Before you go

All vehicles shipped to New Zealand must be checked, certified, registered and licenced before they can be used on New Zealand roads, this process is called entry certification. Due to the complexities of the rules and regulations governing the importation of vehicles into New Zealand it is recommended that an 'Entry Certifier' is used to ascertain if your vehicle can be imported, what documentation will be required and what procedures will apply on arrival.

It is not a mandatory requirement to use the services of an entry certifier and you are able to import your vehicle independently however, if you do wish to arrange importation of your vehicle independently we strongly recommend that you speak with an entry certifier in the early stages of planning shipment of your vehicle for advice on the suitability of your vehicle to be imported into New Zealand.

While the import entry certification process for vehicles is a rigorous process requiring provision of documentation evidencing, dependent on vehicle type and age, such things as the vehicle:

- Being entry inspected on arrival (V5).
- Being found to be in roadworthy condition and passing a Warrant of Fitness (WoF) test (similar to an MOT)
- While there are some exceptions, passenger cars must be right hand drive
- Meeting an approved frontal impact standard
- Having evidence of fuel consumption

In addition to which there may be various additional standards dependent on the date of manufacture. Further information on other standards, dependent on the year of manufacturer, are published by the NZTA [here](#).

Exemptions for Immigrants Concession

If you are shipping a vehicle that is over 20 years old, is a 'Special Interest' vehicle, if you are a returning New Zealand citizen or if you are a first time immigrant with permanent residency in New Zealand, you may not have to prove that your vehicle complies with some of these regulations provided that other criteria can be met.

To qualify for exemption from some of the more rigorous standards you can import your vehicle as an 'immigrant vehicle' only where the below requirements are met:

- You must be a New Zealand citizen returning to New Zealand or have been granted permanent residency in New Zealand.
- You must have lived outside of New Zealand for a period of at least 21 months before your arrival in or return to New Zealand.
- You must apply to import your vehicle within 18 months of your arrival in New Zealand.
- The vehicle must have been owned and registered for personal use by you for a period of at least 12 months in a country outside of New Zealand.
- You must not have had any other vehicle imported and identified as being an 'immigrant vehicle'.
- It is not possible to import a vehicle as an 'immigrant' vehicle' for any third party.

Even if the above requirements are met if your vehicle does not meet frontal impact or emission standards it will still be required to meet general safety requirements of these rules.

It is also important to understand that vehicles imported into New Zealand as immigrant' vehicle's may not be sold or used for hire for a period of 24 months from the date of registration in in New Zealand.

To import and register a non-compliant vehicle in New Zealand you must apply to an entry certifier to identify your vehicle as an immigrants vehicle as part of the entry certification inspection process. If your vehicle is not identified as a immigrants vehicle by the entry certifier registration for use on New Zealand roads will not be granted unless you can prove that it meets all safety and emissions standards.

Full details on importing an immigrants vehicle can be found on the NZTA fact sheet 44a available on their website [here](#).

Entry Certifiers

Please see below details for registered entry certifiers who can assist you in understanding if your vehicle is suitable to be imported into New Zealand and how importation of your vehicle should be processed:

- Automobile Association (AA) - <http://www.aa.co.nz/>
Tel. +64 9 966 8800. Fax +64 9 966 8893. email aatech@aa.co.nz
- Vehicle Inspection New Zealand (VINZ) - <http://www.vinz.co.nz/>
Tel. +64 9 573 5070. Fax +64 9 573 3989. email info@vinz.co.nz
- Vehicle Testing New Zealand (VTNZ) - <http://www.vtnz.co.nz/>
Tel. +64 4 495 2500. Fax +64 4 495 2530. email technical@vtnz.co.nz

Entry certifiers make a charge for the services they provide and while rates can vary between certifiers for services provided, an indicative cost to have a vehicle issued with a Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) and certified for registration purposes is approximately NZ\$350.

Temporary Import

If you are taking your vehicle to New Zealand for a temporary period of time (usually a maximum of 12 months) you can take your vehicle into New Zealand free of duty and tax provided it is covered by a Carnet de Passage (Carnet).

If you intend to ship your vehicle to New Zealand for a temporary period under a Carnet your application should be made well in advance as it can take over a month for applications to be processed.

While importing a vehicle under a carnet means the vehicle is exempt from import duty and tax it must be re-exported from the country in line with duration of the stay permitted by the carnet de passage permits and cannot be sold at any time during its stay. If you do not have a carnet when importing your vehicle you will need to apply to the New Zealand Customs Service for a temporary import entry further to which you will be required to pay a cash deposit to Customs equivalent to the customs charges that would have been applied if the vehicle was imported permanently. Provided that your vehicle is exported from New Zealand within 12 months of its arrival the cash deposit will be refunded to you.

More detailed information on importing a vehicle into New Zealand temporarily can be found on the NZTA website [here](#).

Preparing your car for Bio Security and inspection

Before your vehicle is shipped it must be well cleaned. All vehicles arriving in New Zealand must be quarantine inspected before they can be released by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). Both the interior and exterior of the vehicle will be examined for the presence of quarantine matter such as soil, plant matter, insect or pests. If any material of concern is found it will require cleaning at an approved MPI decontamination facility at the cost of the importer. Areas that can frequently be overlooked when a vehicle is cleaned prior to shipment include:

- Wheels and tyres (including spare) and under / around arches and mud guards
- Spare wheel housing and boot.
- The corners of the engine bay, radiator, cooling fan and battery tray.
- Around dashboard, air vents and under seats checking for cobwebs (and their inhabitants!)

More detailed information on quarantine regulations and requirements can be obtained from the New Zealand Quarantine website [here](#).

Documentation we need

To ship your vehicle to New Zealand there are a few documents that we require copies of. These include:

- A Copy of the vehicles licence document (V5) – we do not need the original.
- A Copy of a valid MOT certificate will only be requested if you require us to arrange collection of your vehicle in the UK using an insured driver. If your vehicle does not have a valid MOT, or if you would simply prefer, we can arrange collection using a recovery vehicle or enclosed collection vehicle.

Arriving in New Zealand

Shortly after departure from the UK we will provide you with copies of the shipping documentation covering shipment of your vehicle (the Bill of Lading), with the anticipated arrival date and contact details for our agents at your port of arrival. Our agents will contact you ahead of your vehicles arrival in New Zealand to make arrangements for the arrival of your vehicle and to start making preparations for completing local import formalities.

Port and shipping line charges

When your vehicle arrives at the port of destination there are charges made by the shipping line/receiving agents for handling your vehicle at the port. There are also standard costs in relation to completing clearance through New Zealand customs and quarantine.

Please see below where we have provided an indication of fees for such standard services that you should expect to pay on arrival in New Zealand.

Details of Service	RoRo Costs	Dedicated Container Costs	Shared Container Costs
Port Service Charges & Customs Clearance	n/a	NZ\$ 851	CAR - NZ\$ 598 SUV - NZ\$ 673
Terminal Handling	CAR - NZ\$ 230 SUV - NZ\$ 285	n/a	n/a
Customs Clearance	NZ\$ 136	n/a	n/a
Administration, H&S & Management Fee	NZ\$ 54	NZ\$ 54	n/a
Handling / Container Unloading	NZ\$ 95	NZ\$ 365	CAR - NZ\$ 240 SUV - NZ\$ 290
Delivery Order	NZ\$ 60	n/a	NZ\$ 172
EDI (Software charge)	NZ\$ 10	NZ\$ 20	NZ\$ 130
NZTA Border Structural Check & Levy	NZ\$ 115	NZ\$ 215	NZ\$ 180
Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) Inspection	NZ\$ 140	NZ\$ 195	NZ\$ 180
Total	CAR - NZ\$ 840 SUV - NZ\$ 895	NZ\$ 1700	CAR - NZ\$ 1500 SUV - NZ\$ 1625

Please note that the above charges are excluding GST or Duty and do not include any MPI directed cleaning or re-inspection fees. While potential cleaning or re-inspection fees cannot be predicted or pre-paid in advance of arrival, we are happy to provide an indication of some example basic cleaning fees below:

- NZ\$180 Steam Clean - If Required
- NZ\$ 95 Vacuum - If Required
- NZ\$225 Dual Steam Clean and Vacuum - If Required
- NZ\$200 - NZ\$450 Cleaning Outside - If Required

Benefits of Roll on Roll off (Ro Ro) Shipping

Arrival charges when shipping by Ro Ro are cheaper as your car is simply driven off the ship and does not require the use of container handling facilities needed when offloading a container onto the quayside. There are also no costs associated with moving the container to another facility at the port to have your car unloaded. When shipping your vehicle by Ro Ro it is not possible to load any personal items inside the vehicle for shipment.

Benefits of Container Shipping

You have the facility to load and ship personal effects both inside your vehicle and where space permits, dependent on the size of your vehicle, additional space in the container around your car can be used to load and ship larger personal items.

Additional Benefits of 40' Container shipping

When shipping 2 cars inside a 40ft or allowing us to ship your car with another car in a shared 40ft container savings are available at destination. Transport and unloading into a warehouse for example is more expensive than for a 20' container, at NZ\$640 per container, but works out cheaper per car as you have 2 cars so the cost paid is NZ\$320 per car.

Duty and Tax

Import Duties and taxes are based on the 'Landed Value' of the vehicle. This is the cost of the vehicle itself plus shipping and insurance costs paid for the transportation of your vehicle to New Zealand.

Duty

There is no import Duty charged on privately imported motorbikes or cars in New Zealand. Motorhomes, caravans and vehicles specially equipped for habitation (ie. equipped with sleeping and cooking facilities) are subject to import Duty charges at 10% of the landed value.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

GST on privately owned vehicles is calculated at a rate of 15% of the landed value. Dependent on your personal status in New Zealand however, you may qualify for exemption from GST. While our agents will make the application to customs on your behalf, applications for exemption from GST are reviewed by New Zealand customs on a case by case basis. Provided that you meet the following criteria however, in general your application for exemption should be successful:

- You must be a first time immigrant with permanent residency in New Zealand or be a returning New Zealand citizen who has been living outside New Zealand for a period of more than 21 months.
- The vehicle being imported must have been owned and used by you for a period of at least 12 months.
- You should be prepared to sign a deed whereby you agree not to sell the vehicle for 2 years following registration in New Zealand.

Registration

Once customs and quarantine clearance has been completed your vehicle must be checked, certified, registered and licenced before it can be used on New Zealand's roads. Entry Certification Inspection and Warrant of Fitness (WoF) must be booked with and completed by a registered entry certifier.

On successful completion of inspections the vehicle is approved for registration and you will be provided with the registration application form (MR2A). Your completed MR2A form should be presented to a registration agent along with your registration fees so that your application can be processed. While registration fees vary dependent on the vehicle type and engine size, 12 months registration fee for a private passenger car will be charged at between NZ\$430 and NZ\$590.

Once processed your vehicle is registered and licenced and you will be provided with your new registration plates and licence label. While registered and licenced before you can legally drive your car on the road you must first ensure that registration plates, licence label and WoF label.