

Export Solutions Guide

Twelve Steps to Export Success

Your guide to every step of exporting, developed by the U.S. Government's top trade experts at the International Trade Administration (ITA). Each step links to more in-depth information on Trade.gov's Export Solutions page.





Learn How to Export

Use this guide and the online resources it points to, to get you on the right path to becoming a successful exporter and to taking advantage of the assistance available from the U.S. Government. The Learn How to Export sections includes:

- **Free Tools** - Start your exporting journey by learning about the export process and make use of ITA's free tools to assess your export readiness to enter international markets.
- **Complete Assessments** - To help you understand your capabilities, resources, and actions you can take now, complete our Assessments for New Exporters, Expanding Exporters or Experienced Exporters.
- **Watch Videos** - Our "How to Export" series of short videos.

[More Information on Learn How to Export](#)



Research Foreign Markets

Assess foreign demand for your product and understand unique requirements for your product destination. ITA's market research tools and resources help you conduct research by country and industry, and our trade data analysis compares markets and finds the best fit for your products. Other resources:

- **Country Commercial Guides** – Topics covered include market conditions, best sector prospects, sales factors and techniques, customs regulations, selling to the public sector and other useful information.
- **Market Intelligence** – Reports which provide timely updates on specific industry opportunities and market conditions.
- **Trade Stats Express** – A tool which assists finding information on growth markets and trends for specific industries/sectors.
- **The Market Diversification Tool** – helps identify potential new export markets using the exporter's current trade patterns.

[More information on Research Foreign Markets](#)



Network and Learn at Events

ITA's U.S. Commercial Service trade professionals in more than 100 locations across the United States help businesses maximize export potential through invitations to domestic trade events and connections to the local exporting community. Participating in events is a great way to cultivate valuable relationships with trade experts, service providers, and other businesses.

ITA-organized or sponsored events focus on critical "need to know" export topics ranging from small webinars and seminars to major national conferences to specialized training.

- **Search our Events Options** - Export Tech, Export Compliance, or Intellectual Property Rights-related training. More information on Network and Learn at Events [More information on Network and Learn at Events](#).

[More information on Network and Learn at Events](#)



Find Foreign Buyers and Partners

ITA's trade experts can assist companies with finding the right foreign buyer or partner through business matchmaking at trade shows and trade missions, offering customized services such as:

- **International Partner Search**
- **Gold Key Service**
- **Advocacy Services** - assist with winning foreign government contracts
- **Trade Missions** - connect with international partners.
- **Connect with a Local Office** – find assistance to identify, assess, and connect with international partners.

[More on Finding Foreign Buyers and Partners](#)



Explore eCommerce Resources

Implementing a business digital strategy can help focus your business technology to achieve your overseas eCommerce goals. ITA's trade experts provide counseling and guidance to businesses selling online that wish to find more overseas consumers.

ITA's *eCommerce Resources* videos cover:

- Guides
- Digital Strategies
- Website Globalization
- Featured Events
- Business Service Provider
- Frontline Library

[More Information on eCommerce Resources](#)



Obtain Financing

To help companies make global deals while protecting their cash flow, the U.S. government agencies offer a variety of financing and insurance products, including business development financing, export working capital and project financing.

ITA's *Trade Finance Guide* will expose you to various methods of payments and corresponding risks to buyers and sellers such as open account, cash-in-advance, exporting on consignment, working capital financing or export credit insurance. Learn how to minimize your risk by considering export credit insurance, addressing foreign exchange risk, and avoiding potential payment problems from your buyer.

[More Information on Obtaining Financing](#)



Negotiate and Export Sale

To price your product properly and give accurate quotations, you need to determine your (landed) costs using three key elements: choosing the terms of the sale (INCOTERMS), selecting the appropriate method of payment method, and calculating taxes and tariffs.

[View Information on Negotiating a Sale](#)



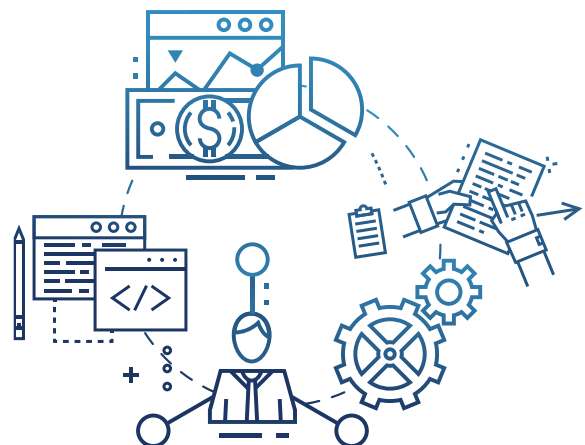
Navigate Shipping and Logistics

Shipping and logistics are a critical aspect of efficient, secure, and legal product delivery to foreign buyers. Depending on the incoterms you and your buyer agree on, you may be responsible for some or all of the shipping costs. If so, you will need to find a shipper/broker or freight forwarder that specializes in product/region.

These experts can guide you through preparing products to ship, choosing the appropriate shipping options and providing relevant and accurate export documentation.

- ITA's Videos (product preparation, shippingbasics and shipping documents).
- U.S. Census Bureau's AESdirect - Find resources on filing the right paperwork.

[View More Information on Navigating Shipping and Logistics](#)





Comply with U.S. and Foreign Regulations

Before shipping, make sure that your product complies with U.S. and foreign regulations, and quickly confirm that the individual buyer you are working with is not on a list of denied parties.

There is a good chance your product can ship tariff free, if you are exporting to one of the 20 U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) partner countries. ITA's [FTA Help Center](#) and FTA tariff tools help you and your buyer take advantage of FTAs.

U.S. and Foreign Regulations section resources include:

- [ITA's Videos Demystify Regulations](#)
- [ITA's FTA Tariff Tools](#)

[More Information on Complying with U.S. and Foreign Regulations](#)



Perform Due Diligence

You can reduce your risk by performing some basic due diligence before you commit to a sale. Understanding the political, economic, and financial conditions of the market, along with selecting reliable buyers and partners are important aspects of profitable transactions. ITA provides a variety of resources to help you in your research.

- [Due Diligence on Markets and Potential Partners \(video\)](#)
- [Initial Market Check](#)
- [International Company Profile](#)
- [Country Commercial Guides](#)
- [Consolidated Screening List](#)

[View More Information on Performing Due Diligence](#)



Protect Intellectual Property

Your intellectual property (IP) is an extremely valuable intangible asset that should be protected to enhance your competitive advantage in the global marketplace. Our IP sections includes a valuable video to help you understand this topic:

- [Protect Your IP Abroad \(video\)](#)

Stopfakes.gov (from ITA and the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office) is the U.S. Government's one-stop shop for tools and resources on intellectual property rights at home and abroad, including business guides, country toolkits, upcoming training events, and more.

- Visit [Stopfakes.gov](#)

[More Information on Protecting Intellectual Property](#)



Resolve Export Problems

As you grow your exports, you may encounter an unexpected foreign trade barrier. The barrier could be a foreign government policy, practice or procedure that unfairly or unnecessarily restricts U.S. exports. Learn how to find government services that help U.S. businesses resolve common trade problems. Learn how to report your trade problem, and ITA may be able to help you via government advocacy support, commercial diplomacy, and other means.

- [Report a Trade Problem](#)

[More Information on Resolve Export Problems](#)

Get Personalized Exporting Assistance

Once you are ready to export, ITA's U.S. Commercial Service can provide personalized counseling and other assistance available locally.

[Connect with a Local Office](#)



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[in USCommercialService](#)