

Australia

This guide is compiled from the IAM Country Guide for reference only. Customs regulations change frequently; please consult your Seapoe relocation consultant for the latest requirements before shipping.

Updated 2026-09-05

Documents

Required Documents

Specific Information

Who qualifies: Returning Australian citizens, permanent residents, holders of long-term work visas, and new immigrants. The goods must be personal property owned while overseas. There must be a clear connection between the person's travel to Australia and the goods importation (e.g., the UPE concession cannot be used to import goods months after arrival without justification).

Goods can arrive before or after the owner: Personal effects can arrive in Australia before or after the owner, but proof of intention to travel (airline ticket, work contract, university acceptance letter) must be provided if goods arrive first.

Form B534 requirements: Every section must be answered. The signature must match the passport. No whiteout or correction substances. Errors must be initialled. Penalties apply for false or misleading information.

Biosecurity (CRITICAL): Australia has some of the world's strictest biosecurity controls. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) assesses all personal effects imports. All shipments are subject to document assessment and potential physical inspection. Items of biosecurity concern include anything that has been in contact with soil, vegetation, livestock, or dust. Goods from countries with identifiable biosecurity risks may require higher levels of inspection.

Items requiring special attention for biosecurity:

- Shoes and boots (especially hiking/outdoor footwear) — must be clean and free of soil
- Camping and outdoor equipment — must be thoroughly cleaned
- Garden tools and equipment — must be free of soil and plant matter
- Bicycles — clean tyres and frames
- Golf clubs — clean heads
- Wooden items, crates, and furniture — may be inspected for pests
- Foodstuffs, herbs, spices, seeds — generally prohibited
- Straw, hay, and plant-based packing materials — prohibited
- Christmas decorations containing pinecones or plant matter — subject to confiscation
- Artificial trees with real timber trunks — subject to treatment or destruction
- Fruit boxes — do not use for packing

DAFF biosecurity actions: The department may require items to be cleaned, irradiated, fumigated, or destroyed (deep burial). All costs are borne by the importer.

Customs broker: Highly recommended. A customs broker will process goods through ABF and DAFF. The ABF uses the Integrated Cargo System (ICS) for all import declarations.

CFC refrigerants: Australia has an exemption for pre-charged equipment imported as personal effects by immigrants, temporary permit holders, or returning residents. The restriction applies

only to equipment purchased overseas and imported for the first time by returning Australian residents. Equipment containing prohibited refrigerants may need to be evacuated and recharged with approved alternatives at the importer's expense.

Duties & Taxes

Duty-free conditions: Household goods and personal effects may be imported duty-free provided the items have been owned and used overseas for 12 months or more preceding the owner's departure for Australia. Items owned and used for less than 12 months are subject to duty. Rates vary by item type; purchase receipts or invoices are required to substantiate values.

Goods and Services Tax (GST): 10% GST applies to most imported goods. Personal effects that qualify for the duty-free concession (owned and used 12+ months) are generally also exempt from GST. Items not qualifying for the concession are subject to both duty and GST.

Alcohol and tobacco: Do not qualify for duty-free status within personal effects shipments. Subject to customs duty and excise. Limited amounts may be imported within traveller allowances.

Recommended: Contact the destination agent to ensure all requirements have been met prior to import, especially for differences regarding air / sea shipments.

Inventory requirements: A full descriptive inventory in English is mandatory. The packing list must be detailed.

B534 form: Must be completed accurately and signed by the owner. The signature must match the passport. Any corrections must be initialled (no whiteout). Every section must be answered.

Customs clearance: Required at the port of entry. ABF processes clearance. Use the Integrated Cargo System (ICS). A licensed customs broker is highly recommended.

Biosecurity inspection: DAFF assesses all documentation (B534 and packing list) to determine biosecurity risk. All shipments may be inspected. Items must be clean and free of soil, vegetation, dust, and animal matter. Biosecurity charges apply for inspections. If the responsible party is not an approved AIMS Account Client, upfront payment is required.

Cleaning recommendations before packing: All items that have been in contact with household dust, soil, livestock, or vegetation should be cleaned and dried before packing. Shoes and boots, garden equipment, sporting goods, bicycles, and outdoor furniture should be thoroughly cleaned and packed accessibly for inspection.

Ports of entry: Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Darwin, and other ports. Customs clearance occurs at the port of entry.

Storage: If using a broker, goods are typically stored at a bond store or depot until cleared.

High Volume Specialist Operators (HVSOs): Some moving companies specialise in personal effects and offer total movement and clearance services.

Currency: Australian dollar (AUD). Credit cards widely accepted.

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- March 2025 / March 2026: Bengal cats banned from import (exemption for F5 Bengals revoked). Transition period ends February 2026.
 - February 2026: Guide content reviewed and confirmed current.
 - Ongoing: Road Vehicle Standards (RVS) legislation governs vehicle imports, replacing the former Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989. The SEVS Register and RAV are the key databases for vehicle eligibility.
 - 2025: Mickleham Post Entry Quarantine Facility (opened 2024, replacing the former Eastern Creek facility) is the sole quarantine facility for all pet imports.