

Turkey (Turkiye)

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.

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Documents

Documents required for importing used household goods, personal effects, and related shipments.

For Turkish Nationals (Returning Citizens)

- Original passport
- Detailed inventory (description, brand, serial numbers of electrical items)
- Original bill of lading (OBL) or air waybill (AWB) — name must match passport exactly
- Tax identification number (TIN)
- Spouse's passport (if married), or ID certificate from the Registry Office (*Nüfus müdürlüğünden vukuatlı nüfus kayıt örneği*) if unmarried
- List of entry and exit dates for the past three years, obtained from the nearest police headquarters
- **Plus one of the following (see Specific Information):**
- Permanent return certificate from the nearest Turkish Consulate in the country of origin, or
- Copy of the export declaration form used when the shipment was previously exported from Turkey, or
- Copy of rental contract (minimum 24 months, notarized) or original property title/deed, or
- Payment of applicable taxes (if no documentation above is available)

For Foreign Citizens (Non-Turkish Nationals)

- Original passport
- Work permit or valid residence permit
- Detailed inventory
- Original OBL / AWB — name must match passport exactly
- Tax identification number (TIN)
- Turkish citizenship/tax identity number
- Rental contract or property title/deed (non-citizens)
- List of entry and exit dates for the past two years from nearest police headquarters
- **Plus one of the following (see Specific Information):**
- Rental contract (minimum 12 months, notarized) or original property title/deed (permanent import), or
- Work permit + original residence permit + bank deposit or guarantee letter (temporary import), or
- Payment of taxes if value exceeds €1,500 and none of the above is available

For Non-Citizens Coming to Turkey for Marriage

- Marriage certificate
- All standard documents listed above
- Turkish spouse must have resided in Turkey for the 12 months preceding the marriage date
- Shipment must arrive within 2 months prior to or 12 months after the marriage date

For Diplomats

- Diplomatic franchise document
- Letter of assignment

Specific Information

Shipment Timing: The shipment must arrive no earlier than two months before the owner's arrival in Turkey, and no later than six months after the owner's last entry into Turkey. For small air shipments entering via paid taxes, the owner must arrive at least one month before or within one month after the goods arrive.

Three-Path Import System for Foreign Citizens (Non-Turkish Nationals):

Four-Path Import System for Returning Turkish Citizens:

ISPM 15: Turkey requires all wood packaging materials (pallets, crates, dunnage) to comply with ISPM 15 phytosanitary treatment standards. Non-compliant wood packaging may be fumigated or returned at the shipper's expense.

Customs clearance takes approximately four to five business days. All goods must be used; no new items may be imported duty-free under the household goods exemption. Packed-by-owner (PBO) items are not permitted — all goods must be professionally packed. The name on the passport must match the OBL/AWB identically.

Option 1 (Permanent Import): Provide a rental contract of at least 12 months (notarized) or an original property title/deed.

Option 2 (Temporary Import): If no rental contract or property deed is available, the owner must have a valid work permit and residence permit, and must pay a refundable customs deposit of approximately 30% above the total declared shipment value, or provide a bank guarantee letter. Import is valid only until the work and residence permits expire.

Option 3 (Taxable Permanent Import): If none of the above documents is available and the shipment value exceeds €1,500, taxes of approximately 20% apply. The shipment must arrive within 30 days of the owner's arrival.

Option 1: Permanent return certificate from the nearest Turkish Consulate confirming at least two years of residence abroad.

Option 2: Copy of the export declaration form used when the same goods were previously exported from Turkey.

Option 3: Payment of taxes (~20%) if shipment exceeds €1,500 and no certificate or declaration form is available.

Option 4: Notarized rental contract (minimum 24 months) or original property title/deed.

Note on PBO: Turkey strictly prohibits packed-by-owner items. All boxes must be professionally packed and inventoried. Customs officers reserve the right to inspect any shipment.

Prohibited & Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Narcotics and illegal drugs (Turkey enforces a strict drug policy; even small quantities carry significant prison sentences)
- Firearms and military ammunition (without a permit from the Ministry of National Defense) [PERMIT REQUIRED]
- Explosive materials (without Ministry of National Defense permit) [PERMIT REQUIRED]
- Radioactive substances (without certificate from the Turkish Atomic Energy Authority) [PERMIT REQUIRED]
- Chemical substances listed under the Chemical Weapons Convention
- Meat and dairy products from outside Turkey (subject to phytosanitary controls; generally prohibited in shipments)
- Gambling machines and slot machines

- Pornographic materials
- Pirated goods and counterfeit products
- Ozone-depleting substances (without Ministry of Environment permit) [PERMIT REQUIRED]
- Certain waste materials, chemical scrap, and environmentally controlled substances [PERMIT REQUIRED]
- Protected fauna and flora subject to CITES regulations — including certain parrots, tortoises, reptiles, and other wildlife [CITES]
- Maps and goods containing mapping information (require certificate from Ministry of National Defense) [PERMIT REQUIRED]
- Antiques and archaeological artifacts (export is prohibited; import without documentation may lead to confiscation)
- Banned dog breeds and their crosses (see Section 3)
- Used or refurbished goods may be subject to Ministry of Trade inspection and approval depending on the product category

Restricted / Dutiable Items

The following allowances apply to travelers entering Turkey. Items within a household goods shipment are governed by the duty-free import options described in Section 1; these traveler allowances apply to accompanied personal baggage only.

Alcohol (travelers aged 18 and over): 1 liter of spirits exceeding 22% alcohol, or 2 liters of wine or spirits not exceeding 22% alcohol. Additionally, upon arrival at Turkish duty-free shops, travelers may purchase 1 bottle of spirits and 1 bottle of wine.

Tobacco (travelers aged 18 and over): 200 cigarettes and 50 cigars and 200 grams of tobacco (with 200 cigarette papers), or 200 grams of pipe/hookah tobacco, or 200 grams of chewing tobacco, or 50 grams of snuff. Additional tobacco may be purchased at Turkish duty-free stores on arrival (up to 200 cigarettes, 100 cigars, 500 grams pipe tobacco).

Perfume: Up to 5 bottles (maximum 120 ml each).

Food: Up to 1 kg of coffee; 1 kg of instant coffee; 500 g of tea; 1 kg of chocolate; 1 kg of sugar-based confectionery. Fresh fruit and vegetables are limited to 3 kg per person. Processed plant-based products are limited to 1 kg.

Gifts: Goods up to a total value of EUR 300 (EUR 145 for travelers under 15 years of age).

Medications: Medications for personal use may be imported with supporting documentation (prescription, medical report, or doctor's letter) proportionate to the length of stay.

Personal Jewelry: The total value of personal jewelry must not exceed USD 15,000. Higher values must be declared at customs on arrival.

Currency: There is no restriction on the amount of Turkish lira or foreign currency brought into Turkey. On departure, travelers may not export more than USD 5,000 or its equivalent without proof of purchase from an authorized bank.

Antiques and Cultural Property: The export of antiques, cultural goods, archaeological artifacts, carpets of historical value, icons, coins, sculptures, and similar items is strictly regulated and subject to severe criminal penalties. Customs officers may detain any item that appears to have cultural heritage value. Travelers should be extremely cautious about purchasing items that could be construed as antiques.

Note: Alcohol, tobacco, cosmetics, and food items cannot be imported into Turkey via postal or express cargo. These items must accompany the traveler as baggage.

Special Categories

Documents Required (Dogs and Cats)

- Dogs: distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, parvovirus
- Cats: feline viral rhinotracheitis, panleukopenia, feline leukemia

Consignment Instructions

Contact the destination agent to ensure all requirements have been met prior to import, especially regarding differences between air and sea shipments.

Inventory: Turkey requires a detailed inventory in which every item in the shipment is described individually, including the brand name and serial numbers of all electrical goods. Shortcomings in the inventory are a common cause of delays and inspections.

PBO Prohibition: No packed-by-owner boxes are permitted. All cartons must be professionally packed and clearly inventoried. Customs reserve the right to inspect any shipment.

Document Matching: The name on the OBL or AWB must match the passport name exactly, including all given names and family name in the same order. Even minor discrepancies cause significant delays.

Timing: The shipment must not arrive more than two months before the owner's arrival and must arrive no later than six months after the owner's last entry into Turkey. Coordinate scheduling carefully.

Bank Guarantee/Deposit: For Option 2 imports (non-citizens without property or long-term rental documentation), a refundable deposit of approximately 30% above the declared shipment value must be paid to Turkish customs. Alternatively, a bank guarantee letter can substitute for the cash deposit. This money or guarantee is released when the owner's residence or work permit expires, or when the goods are re-exported. Clients should be advised of this requirement well in advance.

Tax Identification Number: All importers — Turkish nationals and foreign citizens alike — must have a Turkish tax identification number (TIN) before customs clearance can proceed. If the client does not already have one, it can be obtained at any Turkish tax office with a passport.

ISPM 15: All wooden packing materials (pallets, crates, lift vans) must comply with ISPM 15 phytosanitary standards. Use heat-treated or fumigated wood only, and ensure the ISPM 15 mark is clearly visible.

Air Shipments: For small air shipments where taxes are paid without a residence permit or rental contract, the owner must arrive in Turkey no more than one month before or one month after the goods arrive. This window is stricter than for sea shipments.

Unpredictable Expenses: Storage fees at Turkish customs warehouses can accumulate quickly if documents are incomplete. Agents should advise clients to have all paperwork in order before the shipment departs origin.