

What is an ATA Carnet?

An **ATA Carnet**, often called a “**Merchandise Passport**” or “**Passport for Goods**”, is an international customs document that allows goods to be **temporarily imported into foreign countries without paying duties or taxes**. It simplifies customs clearance for items like trade show exhibits, professional equipment, and commercial samples. The acronym **ATA** comes from the French and English words *Admission Temporaire / Temporary Admission*.

Who Issues ATA Carnets?

ATA Carnets are issued by **National Guaranteeing Associations (NGAs)** in each participating country. These are usually **Chambers of Commerce or similar trade organizations**, authorized by their customs authorities and recognized by the **ICC World Chambers Federation**.

Examples by Country

- **United States:**
 - U.S. Council for International Business (USCIB)
 - Service providers: Roanoke Trade, Boomerang Carnets
 - **Germany:**
 - Industrie- und Handelskammern (IHK) – Chambers of Commerce
 - **Austria:**
 - Wirtschaftskammer Österreich (WKO)
 - **France:**
 - Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie (CCI)
 - **United Kingdom:**
 - London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI)
 - **Switzerland:**
 - Chambers of Commerce and Industry
 - **Italy:**
 - Unioncamere (Italian Union of Chambers of Commerce)
 - **Japan:**
 - Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI)
 - **China:**
 - China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT)
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There are **over 80 countries** in the ATA Carnet system, each with its own authorized issuing body.

Key Features

- **Validity:** Up to **1 year** (6 months for fairs/exhibitions).
 - **Coverage:** Accepted in **80–100+ countries** worldwide.
 - **Multiple Trips:** One carnet can be used for unlimited entries and exits during its validity.
 - **Goods Covered:**
 - Commercial samples
 - Professional equipment (e.g., cameras, tools)
 - Goods for exhibitions and trade shows
 - **Goods NOT Covered:** Consumables, perishables, explosives, and disposables.
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Benefits

- **Duty & Tax-Free:** Avoids paying customs duties and VAT.
 - **Simplifies Procedures:** One standardized document for all participating countries.
 - **Cost Savings:** Eliminates need for multiple bonds or guarantees.
 - **Speeds Up Clearance:** Reduces delays at customs.
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How It Works

- Present the ATA Carnet at customs **each time you enter or exit a country**.
 - Goods must be **re-exported before the carnet expires**.
 - If goods are not returned, duties and taxes become payable.
 - Carnet acts as a **customs declaration and guarantee** for temporary admission.
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