

How to complete international shipping documentation

How do I complete a commercial invoice?

Overview

The commercial invoice is the primary document used by most foreign customs agencies for import control, valuation and duty determination.

As the shipment's exporter, you're responsible for providing the commercial invoice. Since it serves as the foundation for all other international shipping documents, it's the first one you should complete. Customs officials use this document (and any other documents your shipment requires) to process your shipment, so it's important to ensure that all of the information you provide is thorough and accurate.

The commercial invoice must be completed in English. The information that you provide on other international shipping documents, including the shipping label, must also be consistent with the information you provide on the commercial invoice. If you do not have your own company commercial invoice, please download our commercial invoice template in editable pdf format below.

DOWNLOAD TEMPLATE (PDF)

Transmitting your customs documentation electronically via [FedEx® Electronic Trade Documents \(ETD\)](#) can help you avoid delays at customs. Getting started takes just a few simple steps.

When do I need a commercial invoice?

The commercial invoice is required for all international commodity shipments (excludes intra-EU). In other words, it's required for any international shipment with a commercial value. Most non-document shipments are classified as commodity shipments.

Complete the following steps to fill in the commercial invoice:

1. International Air Waybill number

Enter the FedEx International Air Waybill number, our main reference for your shipment.

2. Export references (ie. order number, invoice number, etc.)

An invoice number is always required for customs.

3. Shipper / Exporter

Complete name, address, telephone number and exporter's EORI (Economic Operator Registration and Identification) and VAT/Tax ID number. Please note the shipper is the owner of the goods and this may differ to the pick-up address.

4. Consignee / Importer

Complete name, address, telephone number and importer's EORI or Tax ID number.

5. Importer – if other than consignee

If the shipment will be handled by an importer who is not the recipient, the complete full name, address and telephone number of that importer.

6. Full description of goods


Including an accurate description of your shipment's contents is essential for timely customs clearance. Inaccurate or vague shipment descriptions are one of the most common reasons for customs delays. Include consistent, detailed descriptions on all documents to help keep your shipment on track.

- What is it?
- How many are there?
- What is it made of?
- What is it intended for?

Please note: Separate descriptions must be provided for each type of commodity. For example, if you are shipping 15 identical jumpers and 30 identical pairs of trainers, you would need to include separate descriptions for the group of jumpers and the group of trainers.

Remember to also include the material composition breakdown e.g. 80% cotton and 20% polyester and check if you require any additional paperwork e.g. a footwear declaration is required for any footwear shipments to the U.S.

Examples:

 **BAD DESCRIPTION**
Parts

 **GOOD DESCRIPTION**
Two steel springs for
woodworking machine

 **BAD DESCRIPTION**
Gift


 **GOOD DESCRIPTION**
One men's knitted
sweater (100% cotton)

 **BAD DESCRIPTION**

 **GOOD DESCRIPTION**

 **BAD DESCRIPTION**
Samples

 **GOOD DESCRIPTION**
200cm x 400cm nylon
carpet sample

 **BAD DESCRIPTION**
Documents

 **GOOD DESCRIPTION**
30 pages of legal
documents

Including the correct Harmonized System (HS) code will help ensure the description of the goods is understood by the authorities in all countries.

[FedEx International Shipping Assist](#) can help you to quickly and accurately identify the HS code for your goods.

7. Country/Territory of Manufacture

Complete the country/territory in which each of the commodities in your shipment was originally manufactured or produced. If you have multiple commodities with different countries/territories of manufacture, please include each country/territory of manufacture beside each product description.

8. Unit Value

A true customs value is required, even if there is no transactional value for the goods being shipped. If you have multiple commodities with different values, please include each value beside each product description.

9. State the reason for shipping

This can help to reduce the risk of customs hold-ups and delays, but that's not all. Some goods may be eligible for special customs procedures or even lower customs charges. This includes shipments that are sent as gifts, returns, repairs, samples or goods for testing. If the reason for shipping is not included, the receiver could pay higher customs charges than is necessary.

Don't forget to include your Customs Procedure Code (CPC) if it's known to you, this tells us the correct clearance process you need us to use.

10. Include the correct Incoterm®

Incoterms® or international commercial terms are a series of predefined commercial terms published by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) relating to international commercial law.

They're a set of abbreviations used to determine who holds the risk on the shipment. By risk, we mean the responsibility of loss or damage or whose insurance could potentially be used for a claim.

11. Billing of duties and taxes

Duties, taxes and disbursement fee will be charged to the recipient by default, unless the shipper marks the 'Bill Shipper' option on the air waybill. If the recipient declines the shipment or refuses to pay, the shipper is ultimately liable for any duties, taxes and fees assessed on the shipment.

12. Check if your goods are eligible for duty-free import at destination

Depending on the destination country, your goods may be eligible for duty-free access at destination. The EU and the UK have a network of free trade agreements (FTAs) that enable duty-free access to third countries. To benefit, you may be required to complete additional documentation or to add a statement proving the origin of your goods to your commercial invoice.

13. Signature

Before you sign the declaration, ensure that all the information is consistent with the Air Waybill. Please place the original commercial invoice and two copies, all individually signed, on the package, together with the Air Waybill.

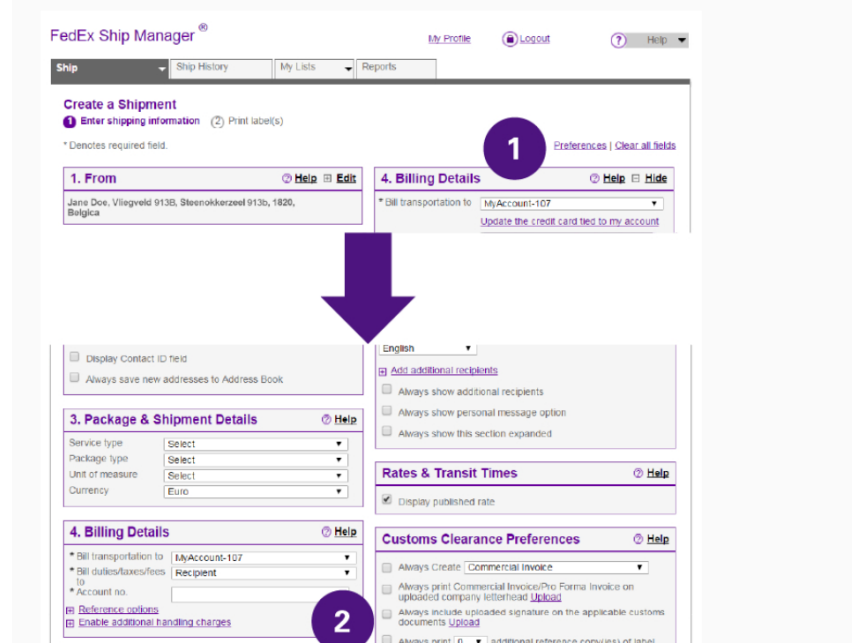
How to complete your Air Waybill online and upload your customs documentation with FedEx Ship Manager® at fedex.com

Step 1 – Enable FedEx® Electronic Trade Documents (only needed once)

Log in to FedEx Ship Manager at fedex.com

1. Click on "Preferences" above Billing Details.
2. Check the box to "Enable Electronic Trade Documents."
3. Click "Save Changes," and you're done!

[SEE WHERE ETD IS AVAILABLE \(PDF\)](#)



The screenshot shows the FedEx Ship Manager interface. At the top, there are navigation links for 'My Profile', 'Logout', and 'Help'. Below that, there are tabs for 'Ship', 'Ship History', 'My Lists', and 'Reports'. The main content area is titled 'Create a Shipment' and has a sub-header 'Enter shipping information'. There are several sections: '1. From' (Jane Doe, Vliegveld 913B, Steenokkerzeel 913B, 1820, Belgica), '4. Billing Details' (Bill transportation to MyAccount-107), '3. Package & Shipment Details' (Service type, Package type, Unit of measure, Currency), and '4. Billing Details' (Bill transportation to MyAccount-107, Bill duties/taxes/fees to Recipient, Account no.). There are also sections for 'Rates & Transit Times' (Display published rate) and 'Customs Clearance Preferences' (Always Create Commercial Invoice, Always print Commercial Invoice/Pro Forma Invoice on uploaded company letterhead, Always include uploaded signature on the applicable customs documents, Always print additional reference copy(ies) of label). A large red arrow points from the 'Billing Details' section at the top to the 'Billing Details' section at the bottom.

Special Services Help

- Show FedEx InSight® options
- Always use Broker Select option
- Always show this section expanded
- Always select Returns clearance
- Display Reason for return for international outbound commodity shipments

Return/Import Options Help

Label type: Select

Service type: Select

Allow Saturday deliveries

Label accessible until: 1 | Select | after creation

Item description:

Contact phone no:

Language for email: Select

Add English text in email

Add a personalized message to be included in the email notification

Allow shipper to edit email shipment details

Send copy of email return/import notification

Include FedEx shipping instructions

Always print: 0 | additional copy(ies) of customs documents

Enable Electronic Trade Documents (ETD) Note: does not apply to Return shipments

Always display additional customs documentation (Requires proper Harmonized code)

Always provide a duty and tax estimate (Requires proper Harmonized code)

Enable Document Profile Selection

Always display advisories

Document description: Select

For Intra European Union shipments only:

Don't want to create a Commercial Invoice or Pro forma invoice with FedEx Ship Manager at FedEx.com (Not available for FedEx Express Freight Shipments)

Printer and Scale Options Help

Label Printing: Laser/Inkjet Printer Thermal Printer

[Setup thermal printer](#)

5. Complete your Shipment Help

Remind me to print Pending shipments

Remind me to Save for later

Always show shipment confirmation

Always show Pending shipment confirmation

3 [Save changes](#)

Step 2 – Enter Shipping Information

1. Sender Information

Be sure to complete your full address and phone number.

For commercial shipments travelling outside the European Union, make sure you include your EORI number.

2. Recipient Information

Complete the recipient's address details and phone number.

For commercial shipments travelling outside the European Union, make sure you include the recipient's tax ID /EORI number.

3. Payer Information

Complete the payer information for transportation and Duties & Taxes

FedEx Ship Manager®
My Profile Logout Help

Ship Ship History My Lists Reports

Create a Shipment

1 Enter shipping information 2 Enter product/commodity information 3 Print label(s) and documents

* Denotes required field [Preferences](#) | [Clear all fields](#)

1. From Help

Jane Doe, Vilegveid 913b, Steenokkerzeel 913b, 1820, Belgium

4. Billing Details Help Hide

* Bill transportation to: MyAccount-107

[Update the credit card tied to my account](#)

* Bill duties/taxes/fees to: MyAccount-107

[Update the credit card tied to my account](#)

Your reference:

[More reference fields](#) Add

2. To Help Hide

* Country/Location: United States

Company: Company ABC

* Contact name: John Smith

* Address 1: Main Street 123

Address 2:

* ZIP: 90210

* City: BEVERLY HILLS

* State: California

* Phone no: 5555555413 ext.

Recipient tax ID: 123456

[Perform detailed address check](#)

This is a residential address

Save new recipient in address book

3. Package & Shipment Details Help Hide

* Ship date: 07/03/2016

* No. of packages: 1

* Weight: 1.00 kgs

Declared Value: 20 Euro

[Currency Converter](#)

* Service type: International Priority

* Package type: FedEx Pak

* Package contents: Documents Products/Commodities

* Shipment purpose: Commercial

* Total customs value: 20 Euro

[Currency Converter](#)

Include a return label

5. Special Services (optional) Help Edit

You have selected indirect signature required for your shipment.

5. Pickup/Drop-off Help Hide

Schedule a pickup

Drop off package at a FedEx location

Use an already scheduled pickup/Schedule a pickup later

Shipment Notifications (optional) Help Edit

Send an email to yourself, the recipient or others indicating the status of your shipment.

Rates & Transit Times (optional) Help Hide

Amounts are shown in EUR

Select	Service and Transit Time	Your Rate
<input type="checkbox"/>	Click calculate to get rates and transit times	Calculate

6. Continue your Shipment Help

[Save for later](#) [Continue](#)

Step 3 – Enter Product or Commodity Information

1. Enter product/commodity information

For shipments requiring customs documentation, a new window will appear to allow you to enter all your commodity information

2. Commodity Information

For each of the commodities in your shipment put:

- o Full description of goods in English
 - What it is?
 - What it is made of?
 - How many/how much?
 - What it is used for?
 - o Customs Value: A value of customs is required, even if there is no transactional value for the goods being shipped (Zero value is not acceptable)
 - o Country/Territory of Manufacture: If you have multiple commodities with different countries/territories of manufacture, please include each country/territory of manufacture for each product description
- 3. Choose the basic customs documents you want to upload or create**
- o **Commercial Invoice**
 - Our recommendation: Use your own commercial invoice
 - Make sure you have enabled Electronic Trade Documents to upload your documentation electronically
 - Make sure that the information in the Commercial Invoice matches the information on the Air Waybill
 - o **Pro forma Invoice**
 - For shipments of free goods such as product samples, catalogues or products not intended for sale
 - However, not all countries/territories accept pro-forma invoices and we recommend preparing a commercial invoice in every case as it requires no extra effort
 - o **Additional Trade documents**
 - Attach any other required trade documents required for your commodity / destination

Step 4 – Print Labels and Documents

1. Print labels and documents

Last step in the process is the verification and printing of your Air Waybill

2. Documents attached

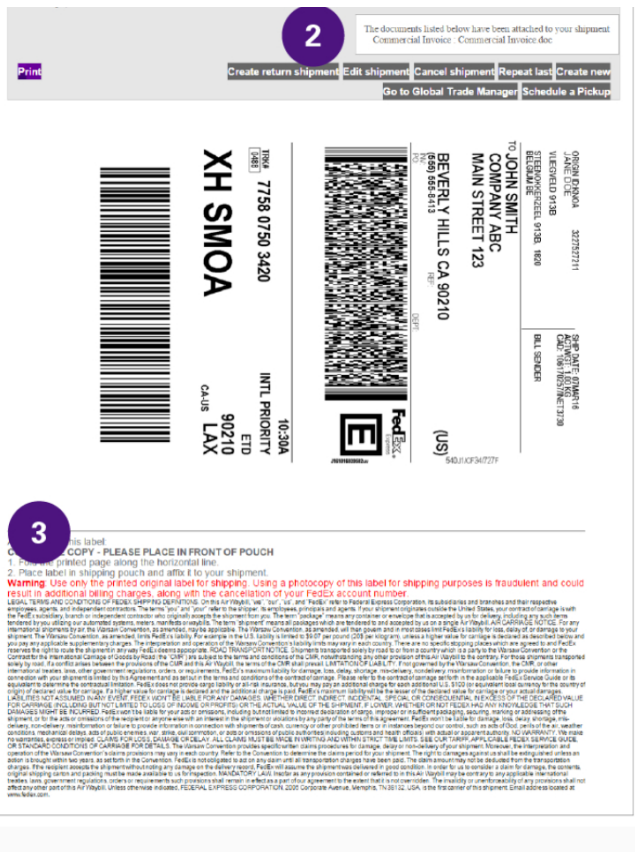
You have the ability to view the documents that have been attached to your shipment

3. After printing instructions

Fold the printed page along the horizontal line

Place the label in the shipping pouch and affix it to your shipment

Note: If you have not uploaded your Commercial Invoice in FedEx Ship Manager®, please print three copies of your Commercial Invoice, sign them and put them on your shipment together with the Air Waybill



Additional tips and customs resources



Customs for importers

Learn what's required from a receiver to help ensure shipments arrive without delay.

[SEE WHAT'S NEEDED](#)



Customs for exporters

See the steps that you and FedEx must take to help your goods clear customs smoothly.

[CHECK THE REQUIREMENTS](#)



Ready to ship?

Log-in to the new FedEx Ship Manager[®] a faster, easier, more automated way to ship.

[SHIP NOW](#)

OUR COMPANY

- Celebrating 50 years
- About FedEx
- Careers
- International Holiday Schedule
- Conditions of Carriage
- Feedback
- Binding Corporate Rules

FOLLOW FEDEX



NEW CUSTOMER

- Open an Account
- Create a fedex.com login
- Shipping Tools

MORE FROM FEDEX

- Fuel Surcharges
- Rates & Surcharges
- Download Center
- FedEx Mobile App
- FedEx Developer Portal

LANGUAGE

Sweden

English

