



Importing Goods From Great Britain To The EU From The 1st January 2021

The process for importing goods from the EU has changed. Businesses in Great Britain need to complete the following actions to continue importing from EU countries from 1 January 2021.

Declaring Goods From 1st January 2021

From 1 January 2021, you will make customs declarations when you import goods from the EU. These rules currently apply to importing goods from the rest of the world, including Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.

You can make the declarations yourself or hire someone else such as a courier, freight forwarder or customs agent.

Hiring A Person Or Business To Deal With Customs For You

You can hire a person or business to deal with customs for you, such as:

- freight forwarders
- fast parcel operators
- customs agents or brokers

What they can do for you (and who will be liable) depends on:

- the services they provide
- the commercial agreement you have with them
- what you want them to do

From 1 January 2021 they will need to be established in Great Britain or Northern Ireland.

Freight Forwarders

Freight forwarders move goods around the world for importers.



A freight forwarder will arrange clearing your goods through customs. They will have software to communicate with HMRC's systems. You can find out how to use a freight forwarder on the British International Freight Association and Institute of Export websites.

See: <https://www.bifa.org/home>

See: <https://www.export.org.uk/>

Customs Agent Or Broker

Customs agents and brokers help your goods clear through customs. You can hire a customs agent or broker to act as a:

- direct representative
- indirect representative

You can search these out on the internet.

Examples are: <https://hansenmac.com/>

Typically they will:

- liaise with government agencies and customs authorities on your behalf
- help arrange correct payment of import duties and VAT as necessary
- advise on any necessary licenses for import of restricted or hazardous goods
- check the classification and valuation of your goods, and making sure you use the right commodity codes
- prepare and submit documents which have to be filed to clear customs processes

See: <https://smallbusiness.co.uk/customs-brokers-2544117/>

Further Information can also be found at UK Import Services Ltd: <https://www.ukimports.org/services/import/customs-clearance/customs-clearance-broker-agent-information.php>

Fast Parcel Operators

Fast parcel operators transport documents, parcels and freight across the world in a specific time frame. They can deal with customs for you, as part of their delivery.

See: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/international-trade-fast-parcel-operators>

HMRC list of customs agents and fast parcel operators can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/list-of-customs-agents-and-fast-parcel-operators?utm_source=c531715c-739b-46aa-a269-5c5ece94f2e6&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily