



Simple guidance for first time Importers and Exporters

These notes are for guidance only and are not a full statement of the law. If you need points of law to be explained, you should get independent legal advice. Detailed guidance notes are available for specialist traders, breeders and scientists. A full list of detailed Guidance Notes is given at the end of this guidance.

1 Introduction

The CITES Convention regulates trade in endangered species by controlling the import, export, re-export and movement of certain CITES listed species unless a permit has been issued by a CITES Management Authority (MA). The UK CITES MA is the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), Centre for International Trade - Bristol.

Species are controlled according to how endangered they are in the wild, Annex A being the most strictly controlled and Annex D the least.

2 Import, export and re-export controls

We use the term 'import' to mean moving a specimen into the UK from outside the EU; 'export' to mean moving a specimen out of the UK for the first time; and 're-export' to mean exporting a specimen which has been previously imported into the UK.

This guidance does not cover movement within the EU – see GN2 for information.

3 Types of permits and certificates

WLRS issue the following types of documents:

- A permit for importing, exporting or re-exporting annex A or B specimens.
- A permit for exporting or re-exporting Annex C specimens.
- An import notification form for Annex C and D specimens, which the importer fills in themselves prior to import.
- A permit to allow the multiple import and (re)-export of personal pets to and from the EU.

4 How do I apply?

Application forms for CITES permits and certificates are available on our website or you can request them from our enquiries desk (see paragraph 12 of this guidance note). If you need help completing the form look on our website or contact our enquiries desk for guidance.

Applications for specimens listed on Annex A and B:

All of these applications have to be referred to our Scientific Advisors. You may be asked for further information, and it is possible your application may be refused if you cannot provide sufficient information.

When you fill in your application form you must:

- Give us a full description (in Box 8) of the item or specimen, including details of all marks, tags, microchip numbers, ring numbers, and other identifying features it may have (please see sample application forms)
- Use the description, source and purposes codes set out in the completion guidance.
- Confirm that any rings fitted to birds are closed rings rather than split rings. Closed rings are continuous bands without any breaks.
- Include your telephone number and/or an e-mail address so we can contact you quickly if we need to.

- Tell us if an application for a permit or certificate for the specimen has already been rejected by another EU country.

Supporting documentation you should supply for imports:

- Evidence that the specimen was lawfully acquired in the country of origin e.g. a receipt, an Article 10 certificate or a letter of gifting.
- For all Annex A and B specimens, a copy of the export or re-export permit issued by the exporting country. Please note we do not accept export permits that have a validity date of more than six months.
- For imports of certain live animal specimens, evidence confirming the proposed accommodation is adequately equipped to house and care for them.

Supporting documentation you should supply for exports/re-exports:

- For specimens taken from the wild and listed on Annex A, you should provide a copy of the permit issued by the importing country.
- For exports, you should provide evidence confirming the specimens were legally removed from the wild, bred in captivity or artificially propagated.
- For re exports, you should provide evidence confirming the specimens were imported into the EU after 1975 in line with the relevant regulations, or confirmation they were imported before the convention applied to them.

5 Importing specimens listed on Annex C and D

You do not need to make an application for an import permit for these specimens, which are controlled mainly for monitoring purposes. You should complete an import notification form (available on request from our enquiries desk) and give it to the UK Border Agency at the point of introduction together with the relevant export permits or certificates of origin issued by the management authority in the exporting country.

6 Validity of permits

In most cases permits are valid for six months from the date they are issued, and the expiry date is clearly shown on each permit. Where an export permit from another country has an expiry date of less than six months, we will use the same expiry date on the UK permit.

Used import permits issued for live specimens are no longer valid if the specimens have died, escaped or been destroyed.

Certificates of origin issued by non-EU countries are accepted for up to twelve months after the date they were issued.

7 Replacement permits

We may issue replacements for permits that have been cancelled, lost, stolen or destroyed.

8 Importing, exporting and re-exporting personal and household belongings

Personal and household belongings may not need permits if they are not to be used commercially, but the rules are complex and you are advised to contact us for advice.

9 Importing and exporting CITES listed items by post

Exporting by post:

If you are posting CITES listed items to destinations outside the EU you must declare them to the UK Border Agency so the permits can be stamped - the permits will not be valid otherwise.

You must complete a Customs Declaration CN22 or CN23 (available from any Post Office) depending on the value of the item. This declaration includes a description of the goods, the value and whether they are gifts or commercial items. All documents should be sealed in a clear plastic folder on the outside of the parcel.

You will also need to use a 'C&E 83A

Label – Exported by Post under Customs and Excise Control'. This can be obtained from :
Cardiff 1 Contact Centre
National Advice Service
Portcullis House
21 Cowbridge Road East
Cardiff CF11 9SS
Fax: 02920 386 444 or phone the advice line on 0845 010 9000.

Importing by post

It is in your interest to ensure anyone sending you goods from outside the EU makes a complete and accurate declaration to the UK Border Agency. If no declaration is made, or the information is inaccurate, the package may be delayed while further enquiries are made, or in some cases the package and its contents may be seized.

10 Turnaround times and Customer Charter

We have published Service Standards as part of the Government's service initiative to raise standards of public service. We aim to process 90% of complete applications within 15 working days and the remainder within 30 working days. You should allow this amount of time for your application to be processed. Copies of the Service Standards can be obtained from our enquiry desk or website.

11 Release of Information

Information (including personal details) supplied on applications may be used for the purposes of monitoring compliance, and in the investigation and prosecution of possible offences. Information may be passed to the UK Border Agency, the Police and the National Wildlife Crime Unit for this purpose. It is a condition of making an application that you agree to APHA passing on information to these organisations.

Your personal information may also be used for quality monitoring. Please let us know if you do not wish to be contacted as part of a customer satisfaction survey.

12 Enquiries desk

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<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/cites-imports-and-exports>

