

# Moving Household Possessions To Canada



## Moving to Canada With Atlas Van Lines

To Atlas, the US/Canada border is more than a line on a map. In fact when it comes to moving families cross-border, we have the distinction of being the carrier of choice on a large percentage of the moves that take place between the two countries. By taking the time to properly counsel the relocating family, we can make sure that the move will be less stressful than otherwise might be experienced.

It is imperative you understand that as the individual (or family) relocating, you are responsible to make yourself available to personally meet your van operator at the closest Canada Customs facility to your new home in order to have your shipment legally imported. Canada Customs generally does not permit a third party to clear on the owner's behalf and our van operators are not permitted to deliver any household goods until this process has been completed.

Upon your arrival in Canada (which may precede the arrival of your household possessions) you will be required to clear customs at your port of entry, usually the airport or border crossing. Present your documentation to the Canada Customs officer and advise them that you are moving to Canada either on a work visa, landed immigrant basis or as a returning Canadian citizen. Canada Customs will ask you for your completed B4 form "Personal Effects Accounting Form". If you have not completed this form in advance, the processing will take a little longer. You can use the Atlas inventory forms that your Atlas van operator will prepare when he loads your possessions instead of making your own personal inventory list. If you are bringing in goods that are not on the moving van, then those items should be listed on the B4 form and those on the moving van will be "goods to follow". A sample of the B4 is included in this booklet. To access an online version, go to: [www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/publications](http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/publications) and choose "Forms" BSF186: Personal Effects Accounting Document. They are available by number.

The Canada Customs officer will assign a B4 file number and give you a receipt copy. You will need to present this document when you meet your Atlas van operator at Canada Customs. You are permitted to import all of your personal and household effects for your use while in Canada. Generally these goods can be imported on a duty-free basis. However returning Canadian citizens may be charged tax and/or duty on some items obtained while living in the United States.

This booklet will provide you basic information about the most common areas of concern along with phone and website contacts for the various government agencies who can respond more directly to your personal situation.

### Important Notice

Under new regulations, carriers are now required to do an advance electronic filing of inbound shipments even though actual clearance of the shipment doesn't occur until the owner of the goods meets the van operator at Canada Customs. For this reason, it is highly recommended that people moving to Canada provide the mover with a copy of their passport, work visa or permanent resident card. If there is a motor vehicle included in the shipment you will be required to ensure that the mover has the original title to present to US Customs before exiting the United States. Complete information regarding the exportation of a motor vehicle appears on the following page.

## What Happens When Your Possessions Arrive in Canada

At the first point of entry, your shipment is considered to be travelling “in bond” from the border to the point of destination. This means that the Atlas van operator cannot deliver your possessions until you have met him at a Canada Customs facility at or near your destination city to personally clear your household possessions. Your Atlas van operator will contact you to make arrangements to meet him at the manifested customs facility to have your goods legally imported to Canada. In some centres an appointment is required while in other locations, it is on a first-come/first served basis. If you are not available to accept your goods or if you had made arrangements to have your goods stored, they will be placed in “bonded storage”. When you are ready to have your goods delivered, you will have to contact your Atlas agent where the goods are stored to obtain copies of the van operator’s paperwork and then report to the Canada Customs facility to clear your shipment. Canada Customs will stamp the documents. These documents should then be returned to the storage agent and arrangements made to deliver your possessions to your new home.

You should bring the following documentation with you to the customs office:

- Passport
- Your copy of stamped B4 form from your personal entry to Canada
- Work Permit
- Completed Copy of Mover’s inventories
- Copy of Mover’s Bill of Lading
- Returning Canadians should bring something to prove how long they have been out of Canada (i.e. tax records, employer letter, moving documents for southbound move)

### Taxes and Duty:

If taxes or duty are owed, you will be required to pay these monies before goods are released. Cheques, cash, major credit cards or Canadian bank debit cards are accepted.

### Special Note for Returning Canadians:

If you have been out of Canada for less than five years you must have owned and used items for at least six months in order for them to be tax and/or duty free. If you have been out of the country for more than five years, the six month rule does not apply.

However there is one major exception for any single item (including automobiles) that has a value in excess of \$10,000. Canada Customs will assign a value converted to Canadian dollars then deduct a \$10,000 exemption. Tax and or duty will be charged on the net difference. If the automobile was made in Canada, United States or Mexico it is usually duty-free under the NAFTA agreement therefore only tax will be levied. However vehicles manufactured outside of this zone will attract both tax and duty. For more information go to Canada customs website at: [www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/publications](http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/publications) and choose “D Memoranda” D19-12-1: Importation of Vehicles and D2-3-2: Former Residents of Canada.



## Exporting a Motor Vehicle from the United States

US Customs/Homeland Security controls the export of automobiles from the United States. This is part of their "anti-theft" initiative. Motorized vehicle(s) with US plates (including motorcycles and ATVs) must be exported legally from the US into Canada. If your vehicle is going on the moving van or if Atlas is making third party shipping arrangements your Atlas agent will ensure that the proper procedure is followed. What we require from you is a clear, scanned copy (not a photo copy) of your title of registration and a copy of the original bill of sale for the vehicle at least one week prior to your moving date. This allows us sufficient time to send this information to US Customs at the port of exit for their processing. Then our van operator must carry the **original title** with him so that he can report to US Customs at the port of exit for final inspection of the document and the vehicle itself. If you are driving your own vehicle, your Atlas representative will provide you with detailed instructions on how to complete this process on your own. In order to export a vehicle(s) from the US, it is recommended that a US Customs Broker be contacted to assist with the process. For more information about exporting a vehicle, see the online Questions and Answers at: [https://help.cbp.gov/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/307/kw/export%20a%20vehicle](https://help.cbp.gov/app/answers/detail/a_id/307/kw/export%20a%20vehicle). You can locate Ports of Entry under "Find an Answer" or <https://www.cbp.gov/contact/ports>.

## Importing a Motor Vehicle into Canada

**Special Note:** If you are coming to Canada on a work permit that has been issued for 36 months or less then you are exempt from complying with the Registered Imported Vehicle (RIV) program described below. However please note that the automobile cannot be sold in Canada and must be exported back to the United States when your work permit expires. Canada Customs has the right to request that a bond be posted or a deposit provided to ensure that the vehicle will be exported at the end of the work permit period. If this occurs, make sure that Canada Customs provide you with a copy of an E29 form so that you can claim your refund when you leave Canada.

If you will be a permanent resident or are a returning Canadian then the above exemption does not apply to you and you must comply with Transport Canada regulations for any vehicles that are less than 15 years old. Your automobile must meet Canadian safety and emission standards. Transport Canada has contracted with Livingston International to administer their RIV program. You can find complete details and step by step instructions at [www.riv.ca](http://www.riv.ca) or call 1-888-848-8240 or send an email to [support@support.riv.ca](mailto:support@support.riv.ca). You will need the year, make, model and VIN of your vehicle when checking to determine if it is eligible for importation. A list of eligible vehicles can be found on the RIV website.

Entry into the RIV program usually takes place at the same time as Customs clearance in Canada. You will have 45 days to make any necessary modifications before the vehicle can be registered in your new province. The current fee for the RIV program is \$195.00 plus applicable taxes but is subject to change. You will also require a letter from your automobile manufacturer (not dealer) confirming that any recalls have been addressed.

## Importing Alcohol and Wine Collections

Your mover cannot transport wine or liquor on the moving van along with your household goods for safety reasons. You should be aware that you are only entitled to import a limited quantity of alcohol products tax and duty-free. At present the limit is 40 oz. of liquor per person of legal age by province. If you intend to import the contents of a home bar or wine collection you must make separate shipping arrangements and contact the appropriate provincial liquor control board to determine the amount of tax/duty that must be paid in advance. Canada Customs will not release the shipment until proof that these monies have been paid.

## Importing Food

Normal pantry items (i.e. tea, coffee, spices etc.) can be imported however meat products and dairy products are prohibited. Pet food from the United States is also permitted. For a complete list of admissible items go to [www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca) and choose "What Can I Bring into Canada".

## Importing Firearms and/or Ammunition

Canada has very strict laws regarding firearms. If you are planning on bringing firearms into Canada you have to declare all such items when you enter the country. If you do not declare them, they will be seized. To obtain a list of prohibited weapons and devices go to Canada Custom's Import and Export page at: <http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/import/iefw-iefw-eng.html>. For more information, contact the Canadian Firearms centre at 1-800-731-4000.

**Note for Returning Canadians:** If you are returning to Canada with firearms that were previously acquired in Canada, you must provide proof to Customs that the firearms were exported and are now being re-imported.

## Importing Your Family Pets

### Dogs

Dogs over the age of eight months must be vaccinated against rabies within the past 36 months before entering Canada. A valid rabies vaccination certificate must accompany the animal. It must identify the animal by breed, age, colour and markings, include the date of vaccination and the expiry date. It must be signed by a licensed veterinarian.

### Cats

Cats over the age of three months must be accompanied by a valid rabies vaccination certificate that identifies the animal by breed, age, colour and markings and should include the date of the vaccination and the expiry date. The certificate must be signed by a licensed veterinarian.

## Birds

It is possible to import personally-owned pet birds under the following conditions:

- Birds must accompany the owner or be in the possession of an immediate family member at time of entry to Canada
- Owner must sign a declaration stating that the bird(s) have been in his/her possession for a 90 day period preceding the date of importation and have not been in contact with any other birds
- Owner must sign a declaration stating that the birds are not for resale
- Under these conditions, no quarantine period or import permit is required

## Other Types of Animals or Reptiles

For all other types of pets or more information, contact the C.F.I.A. at 1-800-442-2342 or go to their website at [www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca) and choose "Importing or Travelling with Pets"

## Exotic Pets, Endangered Species or Hunting Trophies

There are various regulations involved to import more exotic pets, endangered species and hunting trophies. It is a two-step process. First you must obtain an export permit from the United States. Go to [www.aphis.usda.gov](http://www.aphis.usda.gov) and choose "import/export" then choose "animals". US Fish and Wildlife Service handle the permits for the export/import of endangered species. Go to [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov) for more information. You also have to obtain an import permit from Canada through Environment Canada and CITES. Go to their website at [www.cites.ec.gc.ca](http://www.cites.ec.gc.ca) or call 1-855-869-8670 for assistance. Please note that it can take several weeks to obtain these permits so please make arrangements well in advance of your move.



## Moving to the Canada Contact Information

### For Visa Information:

Canadian Citizenship and Immigration

1-888-242-2100

[www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca)

### For Customs Information:

506-636-5064 or 1-800-461-9999

**Email:** [contact@cbsa.gc.ca](mailto:contact@cbsa.gc.ca)

[www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca](http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca)

### For Motor Vehicle Importation:

Registrar of Imported Vehicles

1-888-848-8240

**Email:** [support@support.riv.ca](mailto:support@support.riv.ca)

[www.riv.ca](http://www.riv.ca)

### For Firearm Importation:

The Canadian Firearms Program

1-800-731-4000

<http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/import/iefw-iefw-eng.html>

### For Animal Importation:

Canadian Food Inspection Agency

1-800-442-2342

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/animals/eng/1299155513713/1299155693492>









**PERSONAL EFFECTS ACCOUNTING DOCUMENT**  
(Settler, Former Resident, Seasonal Resident, or Beneficiary)

Shaded areas for CBSA use only

Accounting document number

Importer's name	Cargo control number	CBSA stamp	
Importer's address	Country of origin		Country of export
	Landed immigrant / Permanent resident		
	Port of entry		Date of landing
	Unique Client Identifier		

Item	Description of goods (include serial numbers, if applicable)	Value (CDN Dollars)
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

▼ **All conveyances MUST be eligible for importation in accordance with Transport Canada requirements.** ▼  
Vehicle import registration fees may also apply.

	Conveyances (make, model, serial number of vehicle, vessel, aircraft, or trailer)	Value (CDN Dollars)	K22 / Vehicle import form number
1			
2			
3			

Additional list of goods  Form BSF186A  Mover's inventory  Other  Goods to follow  Yes  No  Form BSF715 number (if applicable)

**CLASSIFICATION TYPE – See information on reverse**

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>FORMER RESIDENT (tariff item No. 9805.00.00)</b> I hereby declare that I have read and qualify for the provisions of tariff item No. 9805.00.00 and that: 1. <input type="checkbox"/> I have been a resident of another country for at least one year; or 2. <input type="checkbox"/> I have been continuously absent from Canada for at least one year; and 3. I left Canada on _____; and 4. I returned to Canada to resume residence on _____. 5. With the exception of wedding gifts, alcoholic beverages and tobacco products or replacement goods described in the <i>Tariff Item No. 9805.00.00 Exemption Order</i> , all household and personal effects imported or to be imported by me under this tariff item have been actually owned, possessed, and used abroad by me for at least six months prior to the date of my return to Canada to resume residence. 6. All goods imported are my personal or household effects and were not used abroad for any commercial purpose nor will they be used in Canada for any commercial purpose. 7. If any item is sold or otherwise disposed of in Canada within 12 months of the date of its importation, I will notify a CBSA Office of such fact and pay all duties owing at the time.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>BENEFICIARY (tariff item No. 9806.00.00)</b> I hereby declare that I have read and qualify for the provisions of tariff item No. 9806.00.00 and that I am a beneficiary of personal and household effects which were bequeathed to me without remuneration as: 1. The result of the death of _____, a resident of _____, who died on _____. I have attached: <input type="checkbox"/> A certified true copy of the death certificate; and <input type="checkbox"/> A copy of the donor's will, showing that I am a beneficiary of the estate; or <input type="checkbox"/> If there is no will, a document issued by the probate court; or <input type="checkbox"/> A statement from the executor of the estate or other legal representative. or 2. A "Gift in anticipation of the death" of _____, who resides in _____. I have attached: <input type="checkbox"/> A copy of the donor's will; or <input type="checkbox"/> If there is no will, a signed/dated statement from the donor (or individual with power of attorney) transferring ownership of the goods and witnessed by someone other than the recipient of the goods imminent; and <input type="checkbox"/> A written testimony from the donor's physician that the donor's death is imminent.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>SEASONAL RESIDENT (tariff item No. 9829.00.00)</b> I hereby declare that I have read and qualify for the provisions of tariff item No. 9829.00.00 and that: 1. I arrived in Canada to occupy my seasonal residence for the first time on _____. 2. All goods imported or to be imported by me under this tariff item have been in my ownership, possession, and use prior to my first arrival in Canada to occupy my seasonal residence. 3. All goods imported are my personal or household property and they will not be used in Canada for any commercial purpose. 4. If any item is sold or otherwise disposed of in Canada within 12 months of the date of its importation, I will notify a CBSA Office of such fact and pay all duties owing at the time. 5. I have not previously claimed the benefits of tariff item No. 9829.00.00.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>SETTLER (tariff item No. 9807.00.00)</b> I hereby declare that I have read and qualify for the provisions of tariff item No. 9807.00.00 and that: 1. I am entering Canada with the intention of establishing, for the first time, a permanent residence for a period in excess of 12 months and I arrived in Canada on _____. 2. With the exception of wedding gifts, alcoholic beverages and tobacco products described in the <i>Tariff Item No. 9807.00.00 Exemption Order</i> , all household and personal effects imported or to be imported by me under this tariff item have actually been owned, possessed, and used abroad by me prior to the date of my arrival in Canada. 3. All goods imported are my personal or household property and they will not be used in Canada for any commercial purpose. 4. If any item is sold or otherwise disposed of in Canada within 12 months of the date of its importation, I will notify a CBSA Office of such fact and pay all duties owing at the time.

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Importer

**Privacy Statement** - The information collected on this form is under the authority of the *Customs Act* and will be used to document goods, currency and monetary instruments that are detained by the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) or, abandoned to the Crown until the goods have either been returned to the traveller, transferred to another government department or disposed of by the CBSA. The personal information on this form is protected in accordance with the *Privacy Act* and other laws. The information may be disclosed to internal or external bodies as a consistent use. Information may also be used for the purpose of enforcement and disclosed to other government departments and internal CBSA programs as a secondary use. Under the law, failure to provide the information may result in fine or criminal proceedings.

You have the right to access and/or to correct your personal information under the *Privacy Act*. Further information about this collection may be found by referring to the following Personal Information Banks: Food, Plant and Animal Program (CBSA PPU 062) and Occupational Health and Safety (PSU907). For more information, visit [www.infosource.gc.ca](http://www.infosource.gc.ca).

#### **Tariff Item No. 9805.00.00 (Former Resident)**

Goods imported by a member of the Canadian Forces, by an employee of the Canadian government, or by a former resident of Canada returning to Canada to resume residence in Canada after having been a resident of another country for a period of not less than one year, or by a resident returning after an absence from Canada of not less than one year, and acquired by that person for personal or household use and actually owned, possessed and used abroad by that person for at least six months prior to that person's return to Canada and accompanying that person at the time of their return to Canada.

"Goods" does not include goods that are sold or otherwise disposed of within twelve months after importation.

For the purpose of this tariff item:

- (a) the provisions shall apply to either wine not exceeding 1.5 litres or any alcoholic beverages not exceeding 1.14 litres and tobacco products not exceeding fifty cigars, two hundred cigarettes, two hundred tobacco sticks and two hundred grams of manufactured tobacco if they are included in the baggage accompanying the importer, and no relief from payment of duty and taxes is being claimed in respect of alcoholic beverages or tobacco products under another item in this Chapter at the time of importation;
- (b) if goods (other than alcoholic beverages, cigars, cigarettes, tobacco sticks and manufactured tobacco) are not accompanying the person returning from abroad, they may be classified under this item when imported at a later time if they are reported by the person at the time of return to Canada; and
- (c) any article which was acquired after March 31, 1977 by a class of persons named in this tariff item and which has a value for duty as determined under the *Customs Act* of more than \$10,000 shall not be classified under this tariff item.

Section 84 of the *Customs Tariff* reads:

84. Goods that, but for the fact that their value for duty as determined under section 46 of the *Customs Act* exceeds the value specified under tariff item No. 9805.00.00, would be classified under that tariff item, shall be classified under Chapters 1 to 97 and their value for duty reduced by that specified value.

##### *Short Title*

1. This Order may be cited as the *Tariff Item No. 9805.00.00 Exemption Order*.

##### *Interpretation*

2. In this Order,

"bride's trousseau" means goods acquired for use in the household of a newly married couple, but does not include vehicles, vessels or aircraft;

"wedding presents" means goods of a non-commercial nature received by a person as personal gifts in consideration of that person's recent marriage or the anticipated marriage of that person within three months of the person's return to Canada.

##### *Exemption*

3. The following goods are exempt from the six-month ownership, possession or use requirements set out in tariff item No. 9805.00.00 of the *Customs Tariff* :
  - (a) alcoholic beverages owned by, in the possession of and imported by a person who has attained the minimum age at which a person may lawfully purchase alcoholic beverages in the province in which the CBSA Office where the alcoholic beverages are imported is situated;
  - (b) tobacco products owned by and in the possession of the importer;
  - (c) a bride's trousseau owned by, in the possession of and imported by a recently married person or a bride-to-be whose anticipated marriage is to take place within three months of the date of her return to Canada;
  - (d) wedding presents owned by, in the possession of, and imported by the recipient thereof;
  - (e) any goods imported by a person who has resided abroad for at least five years immediately prior to returning to Canada and who, prior to the date of return, owned, was in possession of and used the goods; and
  - (f) goods acquired as replacements for goods that, but for their loss or destruction as the result of fire, theft, accident or other unforeseen contingency, would have been classified under tariff item No. 9805.00.00 of the *Customs Tariff*, on condition that
    - (i) the goods acquired as replacements are of a similar class and approximately of the same value as the goods they replaced,
    - (ii) the goods acquired as replacements were owned by, in the possession of, and used by a person prior to the person's return to Canada, and
    - (iii) evidence is produced at the time the goods are accounted for under section 32 of the *Customs Act* that the goods they replaced were lost or destroyed as the result of fire, theft, accident or other unforeseen contingency.

#### **Tariff Item No. 9806.00.00 (Beneficiary)**

Personal and household effects of a resident of Canada who has died, on the condition that such goods were owned, possessed and used abroad by that resident;

Personal and household effects received by a resident of Canada as a result of the death or in anticipation of death of a person who is not a resident of Canada, on condition that such goods were owned, possessed and used abroad by that non-resident;

All the foregoing when bequeathed to a resident of Canada.

#### **Tariff Item No. 9807.00.00 (Settler)**

Goods imported by a settler for the settler's household or personal use, if actually owned, possessed and used abroad by the settler prior to the settler's arrival in Canada and accompanying the settler at the time of the settler's arrival in Canada.

For the purpose of this tariff item:

- (a) "goods" may include:
  - (i) either wine not exceeding 1.5 litres or any alcoholic beverages not exceeding 1.14 litres, and
  - (ii) tobacco products not exceeding fifty cigars, two hundred cigarettes, two hundred tobacco sticks and two hundred grams of manufactured tobacco;
- (b) "goods" does not include imported goods that are sold or otherwise disposed of within twelve months after importation; and
- (c) if goods (other than alcoholic beverages, cigars, cigarettes, tobacco sticks and manufactured tobacco) are not accompanying the settler at the time of the settler's arrival in Canada, they may be classified under this tariff item when imported at a later time if they are reported by the settler at the time of the settler's arrival in Canada.

##### *Short Title*

1. This Order may be cited as the *Tariff Item No. 9807.00.00 Exemption Order*.

##### *Interpretation*

2. The following goods are exempt from the use requirements specified in tariff item No. 9807.00.00 :

- (a) alcoholic beverages imported by a settler who has attained the minimum age at which a person may lawfully purchase alcoholic beverages in the province in which the customs office where the alcoholic beverages are imported is situated;
- (b) tobacco products;
- (c) household goods acquired by a settler and set aside for use in the household of the settler whose marriage occurred within three months before the settler's arrival in Canada or is to occur within three months after the settler's arrival in Canada; and
- (d) wedding gifts received outside Canada by a settler in consideration of the settler's marriage which occurred within three months before the settler's arrival in Canada or is to occur within three months after the settler's arrival in Canada.

#### **Tariff Item No. 9829.00.00 (Seasonal Resident)**

Household furniture and furnishings for a seasonal residence, excluding construction materials, electrical fixtures or other goods permanently attached to or incorporated into a seasonal residence;

Tools and equipment for the maintenance of a seasonal residence;

The foregoing, on condition that:

- (i) the goods are imported by a person who is not a resident of Canada and who owns or leases for not less than three years a residence in Canada for seasonal use, other than a time-sharing residence, trailer or mobile home;
- (ii) the person is entitled to only one importation for each seasonal residence under this tariff item;
- (iii) the goods are for the personal use of that person or their family and are not for any commercial, industrial or occupational purpose;
- (iv) the goods are owned, possessed and used by that person or their family before their first arrival in Canada to occupy the seasonal residence;
- (v) the goods are not sold or otherwise disposed of in Canada for at least one year after the date of their importation; and
- (vi) the goods accompany the seasonal resident at the time of the seasonal resident's first arrival in Canada to occupy the seasonal residence or, if not imported at the time of first arrival in Canada, are, at that time, described and listed on a customs accounting document as goods to follow.

#### **NOTE FOR FORMER RESIDENTS AND SETTLERS TO CANADA (TARIFF ITEM NOS. 9805.00.00 AND 9807.00.00)**

A minimum duty applies to cigarettes, tobacco sticks, and manufactured tobacco that you include in your personal exemption entitlement. However, this duty does not apply if the products have an excise stamp "DUTY PAID CANADA DROIT ACQUITTÉ".

Please refer to section 21 of the *Customs Tariff* for legislative references.

## Notes

