

# Sea Freight from China to Marsaxlokk

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☐ Sea Freight

China → Marsaxlokk · via Malta Freeport sea · clearance by Maltese Customs Department (EU)



Cargo handling on the China-Marsaxlokk lane.

Marsaxlokk is the container terminal district, and it is served through Malta Freeport sea. That combination is what actually sets your delivery date on this lane — the inland leg is same-day, so the clearance date is effectively the delivery date.

The clearing authority is Maltese Customs Department (EU). Historical dwell on this gateway is around 2-5 days, and it lengthens in Sep-Nov.

## Routing and transit on this lane

Malta Freeport is one of the Mediterranean's largest transshipment hubs, so direct Asian calls are frequent — but much of that traffic is transshipment rather than local import. Local delivery volumes are small, which means LCL consolidation and feeder timing usually determine the door date rather than the mainline schedule.

|                               |                                       |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Sea gateways used             | Malta Freeport (Marsaxlokk), Valletta |
| Sea transit, China to gateway | 24-32 calendar days                   |
| Gateway serving Marsaxlokk    | Malta Freeport sea                    |
| Inland leg to Marsaxlokk      | Same day from the gateway             |
| Typical clearance / dwell     | 2-5 days                              |
| Peak season to plan around    | Sep-Nov                               |

## Duty, tax and clearance into Marsaxlokk

Maltese Customs Department (EU) assesses duty and tax on cargo arriving for Marsaxlokk consignees. Current regime: Import VAT 18%; duty 0-12% under the EU TARIC, with a de-minimis position of EUR 150 for duty; VAT applies from the first euro.

Conformity is the part most first-time importers underestimate: CE marking; IOSS registration for low-value B2C consignments. Getting this wrong is expensive because it usually cannot be fixed after the cargo has landed.

**Restrictions and known friction points for Malta:** Standard EU rules apply — CE marking, TARIC duty and IOSS for low-value B2C. Local LCL frequency is the practical constraint.



Handling on the Malta Freeport sea routing serving Marsaxlokk.

## Pre-shipment checklist for Marsaxlokk

- Budget for the inland leg: same-day delivery beyond gateway clearance to reach Marsaxlokk.
- Put the Marsaxlokk delivery address, contact name and phone number on the invoice, not just the packing list.
- Photograph carton markings and seal numbers before departure — it makes any claim far easier to settle.
- Use ISPM-15 treated pallets. Untreated wood is the most common reason otherwise-clean cargo gets held.
- Check the de-minimis position (EUR 150 for duty; VAT applies from the first euro) against your invoice value before you decide how to split the shipment.
- Declare lithium batteries, magnets, liquids and powders up front — retro-declaring after booking usually means re-planning the whole shipment.

## Frequently asked questions

How long does shipping from China to Marsaxlokk take?

China to the Malta gateway is 24–32 calendar days. On top of that, allow 2–5 days of clearance with Maltese Customs Department (EU) and a same-day inland leg to Marsaxlokk.

What duty and tax will I pay importing into Marsaxlokk?

Maltese Customs Department (EU) applies: Import VAT 18%; duty 0–12% under the EU TARIC. The de-minimis position is EUR 150 for duty; VAT applies from the first euro. Under a DDP arrangement these are pre-paid, so nothing is collected on arrival in Marsaxlokk.

What documents does Maltese Customs Department (EU) require?

A commercial invoice with HS codes, a packing list, the bill of lading or air waybill, a certificate of origin where it lowers duty, and any product certification (CE marking; IOSS registration for low-value B2C consignments). We prepare and file these as part of the service.

How is the chargeable weight calculated for Marsaxlokk?

We compare actual gross weight against volumetric weight — length × width × height in centimeters divided by 6000 for air — and bill the greater of the two, rounded up to the next kilogram. Light, bulky cargo is almost always billed on volume.

When is the busiest time on the China–Malta lane?

Space and rates tighten around Sep–Nov, plus the China-side windows of Chinese New Year in January or February and Golden Week in early October. Book one to two weeks earlier in those periods.

Which port or airport does cargo for Marsaxlokk clear through?

Cargo for Marsaxlokk is routed via Malta Freeport sea. Sea gateways for Malta are Malta Freeport (Marsaxlokk), Valletta; air gateways are MLA (Malta International). We pick whichever gives the shortest total door time for your address.

## Other delivery cities in Malta

- [China to Valletta](#)
- [China to Birkirkara](#)
- [China to Mosta](#)
- [China to Sliema](#)

[All Malta freight information →](#)

## References & official sources

Duty rates, thresholds and conformity requirements for Malta change by ministerial decision, sometimes mid-year. The figures on this page are buyer-planning references, not a customs ruling — confirm the current position for your own HS code with Maltese Customs Department (EU) or your broker before you ship.

- [Maltese Customs Department](#)
- [EU TARIC tariff database](#)
- [WTO — Tariff Profiles \(applied MFN duty by country\)](#)
- [IMO — IMDG Code for dangerous goods by sea](#)
- [IATA — Lithium battery shipping guidance \(PI 965–970\)](#)
- [World Bank — Logistics Performance Index](#)

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## Shipping by industry

This page covers the route and clearance picture for the destination. Packing, classification and the compliance step that actually holds a shipment depend on what you are sending — these guides cover that by commodity.

- [CNC Machines General Machinery & Industrial Equipment](#)
- [Industrial Furnaces General Machinery & Industrial Equipment](#)
- [Solar Inverter New Energy, Power & Electrical](#)
- [Energy Storage System New Energy, Power & Electrical](#)
- [Building Materials Building Materials & Construction Products](#)
- [Construction Hardware Building Materials & Construction Products](#)
- [Plastic Products Plastics, Rubber & Packaging](#)
- [Ceramic Tableware Glass & Ceramic Products](#)
- [5G Equipment Telecom, Computing & Data Centre](#)
- [Headphones Consumer Electronics & Smart Devices](#)
- [Home Furniture Furniture & Home Products](#)
- [Garden Products Furniture & Home Products](#)

[All 139 industry guides →](#)

## Checking the Malta duty position yourself

Duty and tax figures on this page are planning estimates. The binding assessment is made by Maltese Customs Department (EU) against your declared HS code at the time of entry; where the amount is material, verify the current rate through [ITC Market Access Map](#) before committing to an order.

Classification drives everything downstream: the same carton can attract very different duty depending on the heading it lands in, and the structure those headings come from is [the World Customs Organization Harmonized System](#). If your product sits near a boundary between two headings, resolve it before shipping rather than at the border.

For ocean cargo, restricted commodities move under [the IMO's IMDG Code](#), and the container has to be declared and stowed accordingly. Batteries, flammables and corrosives all have a compliant ocean path; what causes rolled bookings is finding out about them after the container is packed.

## Watch: the process behind this route

This guide covers routing and clearance for Marsaxlokk. The video below covers the wider shipping process that sits around it.

Marine Insurance Explained - Understand the Cargo Insurance You're Getting — ABTS®. Published on YouTube by a third party; we link it because it explains the process well, not because we produced it or endorse the provider.

## Get a rate for Marsaxlokk

This lane is quoted per shipment rather than from a published rate card, because the landed cost depends on the commodity, its density, the conformity requirements above and the delivery point. Send the cargo details and we will come back with a full DDP figure.

[Request a quote →](#)

## Freight Rates to Malta

📦 Cargo Weight (KG)

☐ Enter the actual gross weight of your shipment in kilograms. If you're unsure, fill in the volume fields below and we'll calculate it for you.

☐ Or enter volume (cm) — volumetric weight ÷ 6000

× ×

Non-integers rounded up. Larger of actual vs volumetric is used.

☐ Number of Boxes

Total chargeable weight = weight per box × number of boxes.

⚠ When you have not filled in the volume information, our prices may be inaccurate.

Marsaxlokk Sea Freight, Malta: Cost, Transit & Customs

Sea Freight to Marsaxlokk: 24-32 calendar days in transit, cleared by Maltese Customs Department (EU), same day to the door.

What the rate covers and what it does not.

## Get a Quote

Send the cargo details and we respond within one business day with a full DDP figure for Marsaxlokk.

[WhatsApp Us Send Inquiry →](#)

## Marsaxlokk by Mode

- [All modes — Marsaxlokk](#)
- [✈ Air Freight](#)

## Other Cities in Malta

- [China to Valletta](#)
- [China to Birkirkara](#)
- [China to Mosta](#)
- [China to Sliema](#)

## Other Europe Destinations

- [Shipping to Albania](#)
- [Shipping to Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)
- [Shipping to Cyprus](#)
- [Shipping to Iceland](#)
- [Shipping to Moldova](#)
- [Shipping to Montenegro](#)
- [Shipping to North Macedonia](#)
- [Shipping to Norway](#)

## Customs clearance in Malta

Duty and tax position, certification, typical port dwell and what actually holds shipments at this border — plus who files the entry.

[Malta clearance requirements →](#)