

China to United Kingdom Sea Freight

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Sea Freight

Door-to-door transit 25-45 calendar days. Duty and final delivery are inside the published rate.



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Sea freight — China to United Kingdom

Sea Freight from China to United Kingdom runs 25-45 calendar days door to door, clearing through the destination customs authority. Duty, customs handling and final delivery are inside the quoted rate. Send weight and dimensions for a firm figure on your cargo.

Transit time

25-45 calendar days

Destination

United Kingdom

Customs authority

the destination customs authority

Duty-free threshold

GBP 135

Published channel rate for planning. The final quote depends on chargeable weight, cargo class and HS code.

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Current Freight Rates

Price data updating. [Contact us](#) for current rates.

Trade Terms Explained — Who Pays for What

The rate above is quoted on one specific trade term. Change the term and you change how much of the journey to United Kingdom is already inside the price. The table below maps the eleven common Incoterms® against the twelve cost stages of a door-to-door shipment, so you can see exactly where our responsibility ends and yours begins.

- **Seller** — Cost and arrangement sit with the seller / shipper.
- **Buyer** — Cost and arrangement sit with the buyer / consignee.
- **Negotiable** — Not fixed by the rule — agree it in the contract.

Responsibility for each shipment stage under each Incoterms rule

Term	1 Loading on truck	2 Export customs declaration	3 Carriage to port of export	4 Unloading at port of export	5 Loading on vessel / aircraft	6 Main carriage	7 Cargo insurance	8 Unloading at port of import	9 Loading on truck at import	10 Carriage to destination
EXW Ex Works	Buyer Buyer — Loading on truck	Buyer Buyer — Export customs declaration	Buyer Buyer — Carriage to port of export	Buyer Buyer — Unloading at port of export	Buyer Buyer — Loading on vessel / aircraft	Buyer Buyer — Main carriage	Buyer Buyer — Cargo insurance	Buyer Buyer — Unloading at port of import	Buyer Buyer — Loading on truck at import	Buyer Buyer — Carriage to destination
FCA Free Carrier	Seller Seller — Loading on truck	Seller Seller — Export customs declaration	Buyer Buyer — Carriage to port of export	Buyer Buyer — Unloading at port of export	Buyer Buyer — Loading on vessel / aircraft	Buyer Buyer — Main carriage	Buyer Buyer — Cargo insurance	Buyer Buyer — Unloading at port of import	Buyer Buyer — Loading on truck at import	Buyer Buyer — Carriage to destination
FAS Free Alongside Ship	Seller Seller — Loading on truck	Seller Seller — Export customs declaration	Seller Seller — Carriage to port of export	Seller Seller — Unloading at port of export	Buyer Buyer — Loading on vessel / aircraft	Buyer Buyer — Main carriage	Buyer Buyer — Cargo insurance	Buyer Buyer — Unloading at port of import	Buyer Buyer — Loading on truck at import	Buyer Buyer — Carriage to destination
FOB Free On Board	Seller Seller — Loading on truck	Seller Seller — Export customs declaration	Seller Seller — Carriage to port of export	Seller Seller — Unloading at port of export	Seller Seller — Loading on vessel / aircraft	Buyer Buyer — Main carriage	Buyer Buyer — Cargo insurance	Buyer Buyer — Unloading at port of import	Buyer Buyer — Loading on truck at import	Buyer Buyer — Carriage to destination
CFR Cost and Freight	Seller Seller — Loading on truck	Seller Seller — Export customs declaration	Seller Seller — Carriage to port of export	Seller Seller — Unloading at port of export	Seller Seller — Loading on vessel / aircraft	Seller Seller — Main carriage	Buyer Buyer — Cargo insurance	Buyer Buyer — Unloading at port of import	Buyer Buyer — Loading on truck at import	Buyer Buyer — Carriage to destination

Term	1 Loading on truck	2 Export customs declaration	3 Carriage to port of export	4 Unloading at port of export	5 Loading on vessel / aircraft	6 Main carriage	7 Cargo insurance	8 Unloading at port of import	9 Loading on truck at import	10 Carriage to destination
CIF Cost, Insurance and Freight	Seller Seller — Loading on truck	Seller Seller — Export customs declaration	Seller Seller — Carriage to port of export	Seller Seller — Unloading at port of export	Seller Seller — Loading on vessel / aircraft	Seller Seller — Main carriage	Seller Seller — Cargo insurance	Buyer Buyer — Unloading at port of import	Buyer Buyer — Loading on truck at import	Buyer Buyer — Carriage to destination
CPT Carriage Paid To	Seller Seller — Loading on truck	Seller Seller — Export customs declaration	Seller Seller — Carriage to port of export	Seller Seller — Unloading at port of export	Seller Seller — Loading on vessel / aircraft	Seller Seller — Main carriage	Negotiable Negotiable — Cargo insurance	Seller Seller — Unloading at port of import	Seller Seller — Loading on truck at import	Seller Seller — Carriage to destination
CIP Carriage and Insurance Paid	Seller Seller — Loading on truck	Seller Seller — Export customs declaration	Seller Seller — Carriage to port of export	Seller Seller — Unloading at port of export	Seller Seller — Loading on vessel / aircraft	Seller Seller — Main carriage	Seller Seller — Cargo insurance	Seller Seller — Unloading at port of import	Seller Seller — Loading on truck at import	Seller Seller — Carriage to destination
DAT Delivered At Terminal (DPU)	Seller Seller — Loading on truck	Seller Seller — Export customs declaration	Seller Seller — Carriage to port of export	Seller Seller — Unloading at port of export	Seller Seller — Loading on vessel / aircraft	Seller Seller — Main carriage	Negotiable Negotiable — Cargo insurance	Seller Seller — Unloading at port of import	Buyer Buyer — Loading on truck at import	Buyer Buyer — Carriage to destination
DAP Delivered At Place	Seller Seller — Loading on truck	Seller Seller — Export customs declaration	Seller Seller — Carriage to port of export	Seller Seller — Unloading at port of export	Seller Seller — Loading on vessel / aircraft	Seller Seller — Main carriage	Negotiable Negotiable — Cargo insurance	Seller Seller — Unloading at port of import	Seller Seller — Loading on truck at import	Seller Seller — Carriage to destination

Term	1 Loading on truck	2 Export customs declaration	3 Carriage to port of export	4 Unloading at port of export	5 Loading on vessel / aircraft	6 Main carriage	7 Cargo insurance	8 Unloading at port of import	9 Loading on truck at import	10 Carriage to destination
DDP Delivered Duty Paid	Seller Seller — Loading on truck	Seller Seller — Export customs declaration	Seller Seller — Carriage to port of export	Seller Seller — Unloading at port of export	Seller Seller — Loading on vessel / aircraft	Seller Seller — Main carriage	Negotiable Negotiable — Cargo insurance	Seller Seller — Unloading at port of import	Seller Seller — Loading on truck at import	Seller Seller — Carriage to destination

EXW Ex Works

Buyer takes over at the seller's door and carries every cost from there. Lowest quoted price, highest buyer workload.

FCA Free Carrier

Seller clears the goods for export and hands them to the carrier the buyer nominated.

FAS Free Alongside Ship

Sea and inland waterway only. Seller delivers alongside the vessel; loading is on the buyer.

FOB Free On Board

Sea and inland waterway only. Risk passes once the goods are on board. The most common buying term.

CFR Cost and Freight

Seller pays the main carriage but carries no insurance obligation; risk still passes on loading.

CIF Cost, Insurance and Freight

As CFR, plus the seller must buy and pay for cargo insurance (minimum cover unless you agree more).

CPT Carriage Paid To

Any mode. Seller pays carriage through to the named destination; insurance is not obligatory.

CIP Carriage and Insurance Paid

As CPT, plus the seller must insure the cargo through to the named destination.

DAT Delivered At Terminal (DPU)

Seller delivers unloaded at the named terminal. Renamed DPU (Delivered at Place Unloaded) in Incoterms® 2020.

DAP Delivered At Place

Seller delivers to your address ready for unloading; import clearance and duty stay with the buyer.

DDP Delivered Duty Paid

Seller carries everything through to your door, duty and tax included. Highest quoted price, least buyer workload.

Two things worth flagging. Under CIF and CIP the seller is obliged to buy cargo insurance and pay the premium; under every other term insurance is optional, and we recommend buyers arrange their own cover so a loss or damage in transit is recoverable. And this table is a working summary for planning purposes — the binding definitions are the ones published by the International Chamber of Commerce in the Incoterms® rules, so confirm the exact term wording in your sales contract before you ship.

Service Details

Ningbo → Southampton Container Shipping

Ocean freight from China to United Kingdom on a full-container basis, loading at Ningbo for discharge at Southampton. Because the rate is per container, the way to lower your cost per unit is to fill the box properly rather than to negotiate the freight — a 40HQ at 85% utilization is almost always cheaper per CBM than a 20GP packed tight. Transit is typically 30–40 days port to port.

Port-to-port means exactly that: the rate ends at the Southampton terminal gate. Typical dwell at destination runs 2–4 days before the box is available for collection, and that window sits outside the transit figure above. Origin haulage, export declaration, destination clearance, duty and delivery beyond the terminal are all quoted separately, so ask for a door figure if that is what you are comparing against.

Rate by Container Type

- **20GP** — quoted on request for the current sailing
- **40HQ** — quoted on request for the current sailing

Ocean cargo on this lane discharges at Felixstowe, Southampton and London Gateway. Which one your container routes through is decided by the sailing we book rather than by you, and it moves the inland leg far more than it moves the ocean rate, so if your consignee sits closer to one of them say so at booking and we will bias the routing that way.

If you already know roughly what you are moving, skip the rate maths. The [100 KG](#), [300 KG](#) and [500 KG](#) pages apply this tariff to a fixed consignment and show the result, including the point where stepping up a tier lowers your cost per kilo. The [China to United Kingdom Sea Freight Cost](#) page sets this channel against the alternatives, and [shipping from China to United Kingdom](#) is the full destination guide.



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Track your shipment

Enter your tracking number below

Powered by 17TRACK — supports 2,000+ carriers worldwide

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'; return; } var pretty = res.num.substring(0,4) + ' ' + res.num.substring(4,10) + ' ' + res.num.substring(10); var who, target; if
(res.carrier) { who = 'The ' + esc(res.prefix) + ' prefix belongs to ' + esc(res.carrier.name) + ', so this box is theirs. Their
tracking page is the authoritative source for it.'; target = res.carrier; } else if (res.lessor) { who = 'The ' + esc(res.prefix) + '
prefix belongs to ' + esc(res.lessor) + ', a container leasing company rather than a shipping line. A leased box can sail with any
carrier, ' + 'so the number alone does not say who is moving it — use the universal lookup below, or check your bill of lading for the
line.'; target = FALLBACK; } else { who = 'We do not have ' + esc(res.prefix) + ' in our prefix list. The number itself is valid, ' +
'so the universal lookup below will route it to the right line.'; target = FALLBACK; } /* Always offer the universal lookups as well as
the carrier. A carrier site can be down, or simply not show a box that has not reached its network yet, and a dead end at that point
is what generates a support email. */ var alts = ''; for (var i = 0; i < FALLBACKS.length; i++) { var f = FALLBACKS[i]; if (target !==
FALLBACK && i === 0) { /* keep order, still show */ } if (f.url === target.url) { continue; } alts += '

```

- ' + esc(f.name) + ' — ' + esc(f.note) + '

```

'; } box.innerHTML = '

```

```

' + '

```

```

' + esc(pretty) + '

```

```

' + '

```

```

Check digit valid. ' + who + '

```

```

' + '

```

```

' + 'Track on ' + esc(target.name) + " " + '

```

```

' + '

```

```

' + (alts ? '

```

No result there? These free lookups cover the same box from different data sources:

```
' + alts + '
': ') + '
'; /* Copy the number so the carrier's own search box is one paste away. Deliberately not a deep link: these carrier sites are SPAs
whose query parameters change without notice, and a link that quietly stops prefilling looks like a broken tracker. */ var note =
box.querySelector('[data-copy]'); if (navigator.clipboard && navigator.clipboard.writeText) {
navigator.clipboard.writeText(res.num).then(function () { note.textContent = res.num + ' copied — paste it into the tracking box
that opens.'; }, function () { note.textContent = 'Copy ' + res.num + ' and paste it into the tracking box that opens.'; }); } else {
note.textContent = 'Copy ' + res.num + ' and paste it into the tracking box that opens.'; } } function wire(root) { var input =
root.querySelector('.cof-ot-input'); var btn = root.querySelector('.cof-ot-btn'); var box = root.querySelector('.cof-ot-out'); if (!input ||
!btn || !box) return; function go() { var num = normalize(input.value); if (!num) { input.focus(); return; } render(box,
analyze(num)); } btn.addEventListener('click', go); input.addEventListener('keydown', function (e) { if (e.key === 'Enter') {
e.preventDefault(); go(); } }); } function init() { var nodes = document.querySelectorAll('.cof-ot'); for (var i = 0; i < nodes.length;
i++) { wire(nodes[i]); } } if (document.readyState === 'loading') { document.addEventListener('DOMContentLoaded', init); } else
{ init(); } }();
```

Track your container to United Kingdom

Ocean cargo is tracked by container number, not by a parcel barcode. Enter yours below: we check it is a valid number, identify the line that owns it, and take you straight to that line's tracking page for this ocean service.

Container number

A container number is four letters and seven digits, for example MSKU6090510. The last digit is a check digit, so a typo can be caught here rather than by an empty result on the carrier's site. We validate it in your browser — the number is not sent to us or to anyone else.

Additional Information

What This Rate Covers — and What It Does Not

The Ningbo to Southampton rate is ocean freight, port to port, for one full container. Origin haulage to Ningbo, export declaration, destination clearance, duty and tax for United Kingdom, and delivery beyond the Southampton terminal all sit outside it and are quoted on request. That split is normal for FCL, and it is why a port-to-port figure should never be compared directly against a door-to-door one.

- Priced per box in USD for 20GP and 40HQ, not per KG or per CBM — utilization is yours to optimize
- Transit 30–40 days port to port port to port on Ningbo to Southampton, subject to the sailing booked
- Heavy and out-of-gauge cargo is core traffic here: machinery, steel, stone, building materials, project pieces
- Cut-off and free time attach to the specific sailing; demurrage begins the day free time expires
- Reefer, dangerous goods and out-of-gauge are priced case by case rather than from the card

- Clearance at destination is handled by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC); the consignee must be registered to import
- Destination conformity for United Kingdom: UKCA/CE marking for regulated goods

Utilization is where the real saving sits on this lane. The rate is per box, so every CBM you leave empty is money already spent — which is why it is worth planning the load before booking rather than after. On the compliance side, HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) assesses against your declaration, so the packing list and the commercial invoice need to agree with each other and with the cargo.

Every shipment needs a commercial invoice and a packing list that agree with each other, plus destination certification where the commodity requires it. The most common cause of delay we see is not the freight at all — it is a declared value or a goods description that does not match what is in the cartons, which turns a routine clearance into an inspection.

Where these numbers come from

Every duty and tax figure quoted on this page is our working estimate for planning, not a ruling. The binding rate for your consignment is whatever [HM Revenue & Customs](#) applies against your declared HS code on the day of entry, and their published guidance is the source to check before you commit stock.

Most landed-cost surprises trace back to classification rather than freight. [the WCO Harmonized System](#) defines the heading structure every customs administration builds on, and [ITC Market Access Map](#) will show you the duty a given heading attracts in this destination.

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.

If this is your first shipment into United Kingdom, the [United Kingdom Country Commercial Guide](#) covers the practical import environment in more depth than a rate page reasonably can, and it is written by a party with no stake in your booking.

China to United Kingdom — Shipping Reference Data

Main sea gateways	Felixstowe, Southampton, London Gateway
Destination customs authority	HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC)
De-minimis / duty-free threshold	GBP 135
Import tax & duty regime	VAT 20%; duty 0–12% by commodity code
Local currency	GBP
Typical clearance / dwell time	2–4 days
Peak / busy season	Sep–Nov
Conformity & certification	UKCA/CE marking for regulated goods

Thresholds and duty bands are buyer-planning references, not formal customs rulings — confirm the exact HS-code rate for your goods before shipping.

Free 3D Loading Tools for This Sea Route

This page covers a Sea freight service from China to United Kingdom. Use the matching tool below to plan your cargo before requesting a quote.



3D Container Loading Planner

Sea freight to United Kingdom prices by CBM or container — plan your 20GP/40GP/40HQ loading in 3D, compare utilization, and see exactly how many cartons fit before you commit to a booking.

[Open Container Planner →](#)

United Kingdom Sea Freight Checklist

- Photograph the container number, seal, and loading process for insurance evidence.
- Check pallet vs floor-loading: floor loading typically fits 8-12% more cartons per container.
- Declare accurate gross weight — VGM misdeclaration delays vessels and triggers fines.
- Ask whether the quote includes destination port charges in United Kingdom or only ocean freight.

Frequently Asked Questions

How long does Sea FCL Port-to-Port from China to United Kingdom take?

Sea freight on this route runs about 25–45 calendar days door-to-door, plus roughly 2–4 days of clearance/dwell once it reaches the gateway. All times include customs clearance under DDP terms.

What duties and taxes apply when importing into United Kingdom?

Clearance is handled by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC). The regime is: VAT 20%; duty 0–12% by commodity code, with a de-minimis position of GBP 135. Under DDP these are pre-paid, so nothing is collected on arrival.

Can you ship special cargo (batteries, branded goods) to United Kingdom?

Yes — battery goods by sea follow UN3480/UN3481 rules with an MSDS; we prepare the dangerous-goods paperwork as part of DDP into Felixstowe, Southampton, London Gateway. Surcharges apply.

When does capacity tighten on the China–United Kingdom lane?

Space and rates tighten around Sep–Nov, plus the China-side windows of Chinese New Year (Jan/Feb) and Golden Week (early Oct). Book 1–2 weeks earlier in these periods.

In what currency is this route priced and paid?

Freight is quoted and invoiced in USD; the destination-side currency is GBP. Payment is typically due before departure, and DDP means you settle the full landed cost once.

How is the shipping cost on this route calculated?

We compare actual gross weight against volumetric weight ($L \times W \times H \div 6000$) and charge the greater, rounded up to the next kilogram, then apply the per-KG rate shown in the table above.

Shipping United Kingdom cargo by industry

This rate is for the lane. What decides whether the cargo arrives intact is the commodity — how it prices, how it must be packed and loaded, and which compliance step holds it at the border. These guides cover that per industry.

- [Amusement Equipment Toys, Sports, Outdoor & Leisure](#)
- [Gifts Consumer Goods & Gifts](#)
- [Amazon FBA E-commerce & Retail Channels](#)
- [Metal Fabrication Metal Products & Industrial Components](#)
- [Cutting Tools Metal Products & Industrial Components](#)
- [Compressors General Machinery & Industrial Equipment](#)
- [Automated Storage Equipment Construction, Mining & Material Handling](#)
- [Electrical Cabinets New Energy, Power & Electrical](#)
- [Automotive Glass Automotive & Vehicles](#)
- [Doors & Windows Building Materials & Construction Products](#)
- [Paper Packaging Wood, Bamboo & Paper Products](#)
- [Packaging Materials Plastics, Rubber & Packaging](#)

[All 139 industry guides →](#)

Shipping a Container from Ningbo to Southampton: Cost & Transit

Contact Us

Ready to ship? Our team responds within one business day. We also handle sourcing and purchasing.

Direct Contact

sales@chinaoceanfreight.com

Ningbo → Southampton desk

Our Services

- ✈ Air freight — EXW, FCA, CIP or duty-paid
- 🚢 Sea freight FCL / LCL — FOB, CIF or duty-paid
- 🚂 Rail freight — door-to-door or terminal handover
- China sourcing & purchasing
- Warehouse & consolidation

Customs clearance in United Kingdom

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

[United Kingdom clearance requirements →](#)