

Importing a classic car from USA to Canada

You may have heard otherwise, but in most situations, importing collector vehicles from the United States into Canada isn't difficult. In fact, vehicles that are at least 15 years old are fairly easy to import. For these, you do not need a [Registrar of Imported Vehicles \(RIV\) inspection](http://www.riv.ca/rivinspection.aspx) (<http://www.riv.ca/rivinspection.aspx>), which is required for newer cars. For replica vehicles, age is determined by the completion date, not the model year it replicates. If you are not able to show valid proof of age, it would need to meet the requirements of the RIV.

Once you have that sorted out, all you need to do is [electronically file ownership documents](https://www.autoexports.us/) (title, bill of sale) (<https://www.autoexports.us/>) and contact the U.S. border crossing office at least 72 hours in advance of when and where you plan cross. This gives customs agents time to run various vehicle/VIN checks and ensure that the vehicle is not stolen.

It is important to note that not all border crossings have offices that process vehicle exports. They may also have varying office hours, so make sure to give yourself plenty of extra time in case of heavy traffic or a breakdown. If you arrive a border office after closing, you'll have to wait until it reopens the following morning.

When you arrive at the crossing, present the original ownership documents on the U.S. side. Customs officials will review your vehicle ownership documents and bill of sale (if it's a new purchase), and stamp them as "approved." This process takes about 10 minutes. Without the export approval stamp from U.S. customs officials, Canadian customs officials will not allow you to import the vehicle.

When you reach the Canadian side, Canadian customs officials review your vehicle ownership documents, bill of sale, and U.S. export stamp, and will advise of any taxes or duties you need to pay in order to proceed. If your car is equipped with air conditioning, expect to pay a \$100 "air condition excise tax." You may also need to pay a 5-percent goods and services tax (GST). If your car was not manufactured in the U.S. or Mexico, be prepared to pay a 6-percent import duty. The process will take 10-20 minutes, as long as everything is in order.

Keep in mind that successfully importing a classic car into Canada does not guarantee that you will be able to register it. Some provinces will not allow you to register certain vehicles (such as salvage title vehicles, right-hand drive, etc.). Depending on the province or territory where you will be registering the vehicle, you will likely have additional taxes to pay.

If you would rather not deal with the exporting/importing process yourself, many trucking companies offer a complete customs clearance package and freight forwarding service. Once you've purchased your vehicle in the U.S., the company can handle the entire process—picking up the vehicle at the seller's location, transporting it to the border, clearing customs, and finally, delivering the car to your door.

A couple of recommended Auto Transport Companies that specialize in transport from US to Canada are:

Cosdel PH 415-777-2000

website: <https://cosdel.com/>

11430 San Pablo Ave., Suite 500,
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Thorson's Enclosed Vehicle Transportation – PH 416-742-0854

website: <https://www.thorsonsevt.com/>

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