

# Instructions for Using Your ATA Carnet

Failure to follow these instructions may delay your departure from the U.S., entry into the importing country, and may result in the payment of duties, taxes and/or penalties.

## Definitions

**Holder:** An entity on whose behalf the Carnet has been issued. A Holder must have a beneficial economic interest in the merchandise being exported and is responsible for any duties, taxes and/or penalties that become payable.

**Authorized Representative:** An entity authorized by the Holder to present the Carnet for customs clearance in the U.S. and/or abroad.

**Green Cover:** The principal page of a Carnet, which includes the Holder and Carnet information, Carnet countries, customs certificate to initiate the Carnet, and the original General List.

**Counterfoils and vouchers (color-coded):** yellow for exit from/return to the U.S., white for entry into/departure from foreign countries, and blue for transit. Counterfoils and vouchers are issued in sets of two. There are no yellow vouchers for U.S. issued Carnets. The validation of a counterfoil and its corresponding voucher constitutes a single customs transaction.

**Counterfoil:** The Holder's record of a customs transaction. There are three different sets of counterfoils: 1) exportation & reimportation; 2) importation & reexportation, and 3) transits.

**Voucher:** The control document for Foreign Customs use. Customs will remove and retain the voucher upon completion of a customs transaction. There are two sets of vouchers: 1) importation & reexportation, and 2) transits.

## Checklist Upon Receiving Your Carnet

Verify that all information on the Green Cover, Vouchers, and General List is correct. **Never amend, remove or substitute the original General List.**

Sign the Green Cover in the space marked "Signature of Holder." The signature must be of the Holder or an authorized representative.

Confirm that the correct number of counterfoils and vouchers has been issued to cover all intended customs transactions. Additional sets may be purchased later.

**Split or partial shipments:** It is permissible to split a shipment (i.e., some items leave now and the remainder at a later date) or to take fewer items abroad than shown on the General List. In either instance, **cross out the items not traveling** from the General List on the backs of the vouchers to be presented to customs.

All procedures apply equally to items shipped as cargo or carry-on baggage.

**Arrive early!** It is the Carnet Holder's responsibility to locate a customs inspector to validate the Carnet. If traveling during non-business hours, call the local customs office to ensure that an inspector familiar with Carnets will be available.

Instructions continued 

Upon completion of the last trip or Carnet expiration, return the Carnet by receipted mail to

USCIB  
Carnet Redemption Department  
1212 Avenue of the Americas  
New York, NY 10036

## Clearing U.S. Customs

**Depart the U.S.** – Use Green Cover and yellow Exportation Counterfoil (e.g. #1).

1. At **initial** departure, the Holder/authorized representative signs the Green Cover and presents the Carnet to U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) for activation upon its first use. CBP must validate the Carnet by signing and stamping Section H: “Certificate by Customs at Departure”. If not validated, **Foreign Customs may deny entry** of the goods. Completion of Section H eliminates the need to complete a Certificate of Registration, CF4455.
2. CBP notes those items leaving the U.S. in section (1) of the counterfoil (e.g. #1) and validates it. It is the Holder’s responsibility to ensure that CBP has indicated the correct items, especially in cases of **partial or split shipments**.

**Reenter the U.S.** - Use the yellow Reimportation Counterfoil (e.g. #1) bearing the same number as the yellow Exportation Counterfoil (e.g. #1) used at the time of departure.

Sec.148.11 of the CBP Regulations states “All articles brought into the United States by any individual shall be declared to a Customs officer at the port of first arrival...” CBP should allow the goods to reenter the U.S. even if the Carnet has expired. The expiration date only limits entry into foreign countries.

1. Present the Carnet to CBP at the time of reentry.
2. CBP indicates only those items reentering in Section 1 of the counterfoil (e.g. #1) and validates it.
3. **IMPORTANT.** Upon returning to the U.S., the Reimportation Counterfoil must be validated by CBP. This is the last line of defense in canceling a Carnet, though **finances and penalties** may apply.

## Clearing Foreign Customs

**Enter a Foreign Country** - Use the white Importation Counterfoil (e.g. #1) and its corresponding Importation Voucher (e.g. #1).

1. Complete sections D-F on the voucher. Indicate only the items that are entering the country in Section F(a). Specify in Section F(b) the intended use of the Carnet, e.g., exhibition or sales visit.
2. Sign and date the voucher.
3. Present the Carnet to customs at the time of entry.
4. Foreign Customs notes on the counterfoil only those items that are entering.
5. Foreign Customs has the right to **restrict any visit to less than one year** regardless of the Carnet expiration date. Be sure to comply with section 2 of the counterfoil: “Final Date for Re-exportation/production to the Customs of goods.”
6. Foreign Customs validates the counterfoil and the voucher, removing and retaining the voucher.

**Depart a Foreign Country** - Use the white Reexportation Counterfoil and Voucher (e.g. #1) that has the same number as the most recently used Importation Counterfoil and Voucher (e.g. #1).

1. Complete sections D-F of the Reexportation Voucher (e.g. #1). Indicate the items that are departing in Section F(a). Also indicate the corresponding Importation Voucher number (e.g. #1) in the second part of Section F(a). Complete Section F(b, c, d), if applicable.
2. Sign and date the voucher.
3. Present the Carnet to customs at the time of departure.

4. Foreign Customs notes the corresponding Importation Voucher number (e.g. #1) on the Reexportation Counterfoil. Foreign Customs also notes the items that are departing in Section 1 of the Reexportation Counterfoil and Voucher.
5. Foreign Customs validates the counterfoil and voucher, retaining the voucher to match with the Importation Voucher.
6. For items sold abroad, it is advisable to obtain a customs receipt, which indicates the Carnet No. and the amount of duties/taxes/penalties paid. Send the receipt to the USCIB HQ.
7. Use in the EU: Customs authorities in the European Union may be unavailable to validate Carnets for goods moving between EU member countries. **Before final departure from the EU**, insist on validation of the Reexportation Counterfoil and Voucher.
8. Penalties: All items not reexported whether lost, stolen, or destroyed, are subject to all applicable duties, taxes, and possible penalties. Holders who fail to have the Carnet validated at departure may be charged a **regularization fee** by Foreign Customs.

## Transiting a Country (if applicable)

Use two blue Transit Counterfoils (both bear the same number) and Vouchers (both bear the same number).

Transits are used when merchandise travels by land through a country that lies between the country of departure and the next country of entry (e.g., leaving Germany to go to Italy, but passing through Switzerland).

### At the Time of Entry

1. Complete Sections D-E on **both** Transit Vouchers. Indicate in Section F(a) the customs port from which the goods will exit.
2. Indicate only those items that are transiting in the lower half of Section F(a).
3. Sign and date the vouchers.
4. Present the Carnet to customs at the port of entry.
5. Foreign Customs notes the items, port of dispatch, and final date for re-exportation on the counterfoil under “Clearance for Transit” Sections 1 & 2. Be sure to comply with this date and the port of departure.
6. Customs completes Section 4-7 on both counterfoils and Section H of the first voucher. The voucher will be removed.

### At the Time of Departure

1. Present the Carnet to customs at the port of discharge.
2. Customs at the port of discharge will complete the Certificate of Discharge on the second counterfoil (same #1) and Section H of the second voucher and then remove the second voucher (same #1).
3. The transit is complete when Sections 3-6 of the second counterfoil have been validated and both vouchers have been removed by customs.

## Final Return to the U.S.

1. Your ATA Carnet is the property of the USCIB. Upon completion of the final trip, the **original Carnet, including all used and unused certificates, must be returned to the USCIB via receipted mail** (See address below). Keep a copy of the entire Carnet for your records.
2. **Questions?** Call your ATA Carnet Service Bureau or Carnet HQ 212.703.5080 or in the U.S. 800.5.DUTYFREE (800.538.8937), or [atacarnet@merchandisepassport.org](mailto:atacarnet@merchandisepassport.org).