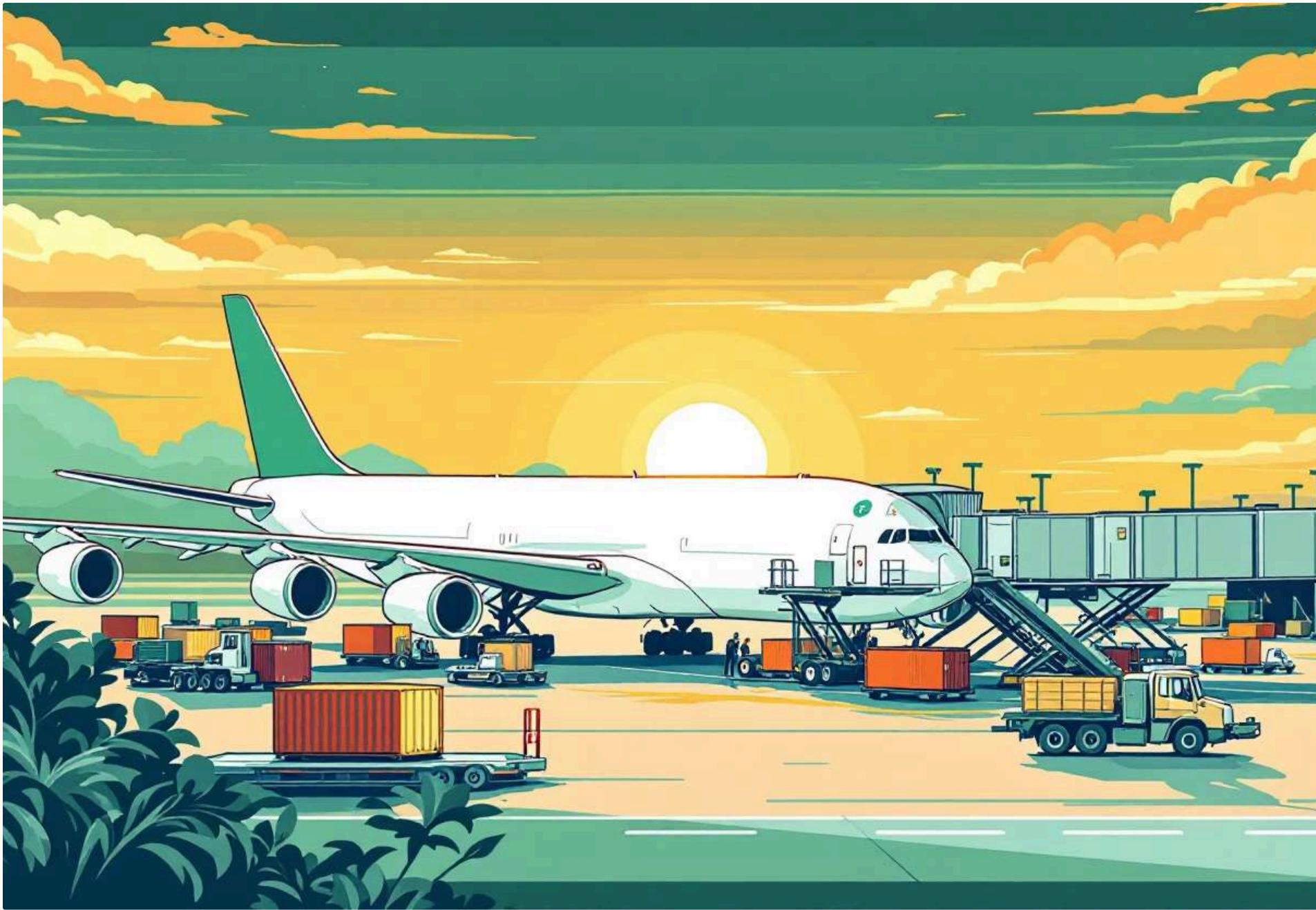


Air Freight Services Guidelines



Introduction

This comprehensive guide provides essential information for shippers, importers, and exporters using air freight services from India to international destinations. Following these guidelines ensures smooth customs clearance, timely delivery, and cost-effective shipping.

1. Pre-Shipment Planning

1.1 Determine Shipping Requirements

Before booking air freight, assess the following factors:



Urgency & Timeline

Identify if express (2-4 days) or standard (5-8 days) service suits your business needs. Express shipments command premium rates but ensure faster delivery for time-critical cargo.



Shipment Weight & Volume

Weigh and measure your cargo accurately in kilograms and cubic centimeters. Air freight charges apply based on either actual weight or volumetric weight ($\text{length} \times \text{width} \times \text{height} \div 4000$ or 5000 , depending on the rules used by the airline or courier), whichever is greater.



Commodity Type

Confirm whether your product is restricted, prohibited, or requires special handling (electronics, fragile items, temperature-sensitive goods). Some items may need additional certifications or licenses.



Budget Constraints

Compare express, standard, and consolidated shipping rates. Consolidation works well for smaller shipments (under 100kg) where cost savings offset slightly longer transit times.

1.2 Receiver & Origin Details

Obtain complete, accurate information for both shipper (in India) and receiver (in destination country):

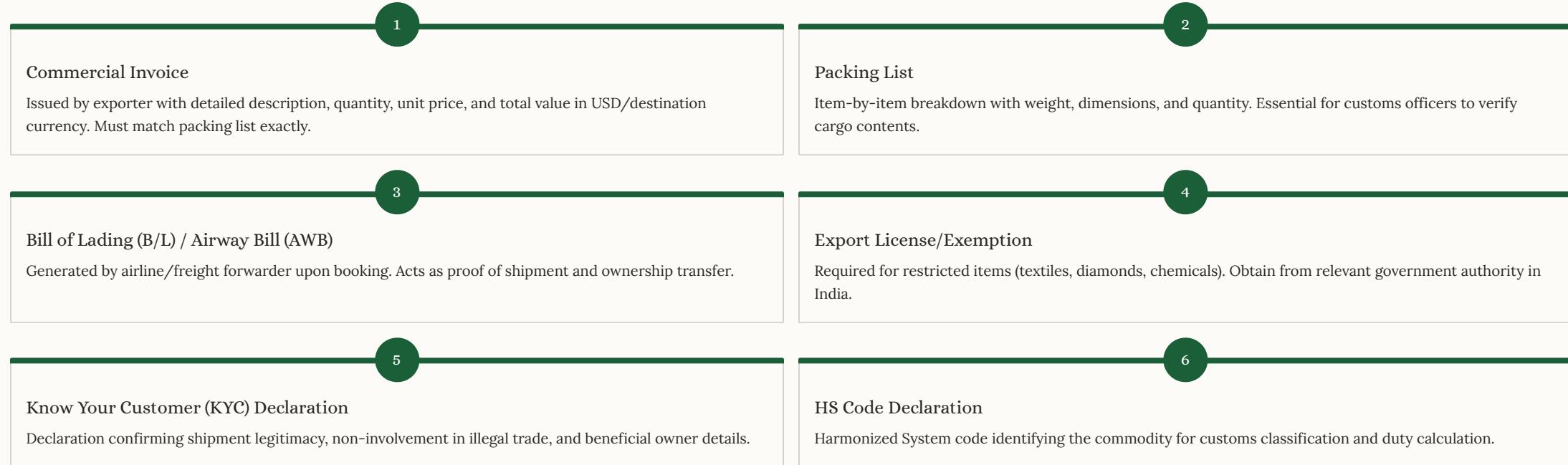
- Full name, phone number, email address
- Complete street address, city, postal code
- GST/Tax ID if commercial shipment
- Port of arrival preference in destination country

Incorrect details delay customs clearance and delivery.

2. Documentation Requirements

2.1 Essential Export Documents

Proper documentation is critical for customs compliance and dispute resolution. Prepare the following before shipment:



2.2 Country-Specific Documentation

Some destinations require additional documents:

- USA:** US Import License (if applicable), FDA declarations for food/pharma
- EU Countries:** CE certification, EORI number, VAT ID
- Middle East:** Certificate of Origin, commercial registration documents
- Australia/Canada:** Biosecurity permits for agricultural products

Check destination country requirements 2-3 weeks before shipment.

2.3 Incoterms Selection

Choose appropriate Incoterms defining responsibility for costs and risks:

DAP (Delivered at Place)

Seller covers freight and insurance; buyer clears customs and pays duties.

DDP (Delivered Duty Paid)

Seller handles everything including destination customs and duties. Most convenient for buyers but higher cost for sellers.

FOB (Free on Board)

Buyer arranges and pays for international freight from airport departure. Lower seller costs but more buyer responsibility.

3. Packing & Labeling Standards

3.1 Proper Packing Techniques

Air shipments experience pressure changes, temperature variations, and rough handling. Pack accordingly:

- Use sturdy cardboard boxes or wooden crates rated for fragile cargo
- Wrap delicate items in bubble wrap, foam, or corrugated cardboard
- Ensure items don't move inside boxes (use foam sheets or packing peanuts)
- For electronics: store in original packaging when possible; use anti-static materials
- For liquids: use leak-proof containers in sealed plastic bags
- Maximum box weight: 30kg per carton for easy manual handling



3.2 Labeling Requirements

Clear labeling prevents mishandling and delays:



Shipper Label (top-left corner)

Your name, address, phone number, email



HS Code & Description Label

Clearly visible commodity description and code



Weight & Dimensions

Display on two sides of box for quick verification

Use waterproof labels to prevent smudging during transit.



Receiver Label (center)

Recipient's full name, complete address, phone number, email



Handling Labels

"FRAGILE," "KEEP UPRIGHT," "DO NOT STACK" where applicable



Country of Origin

Print country name prominently (required by most customs)

4. Customs Clearance Process

4.1 Export Clearance (India)

Your freight forwarder manages export procedures, but understanding the process helps avoid delays:

- 1 Submit Documents
All paperwork submitted to customs authority 2-3 days before scheduled flight.
- 2 Physical Inspection
Customs officers may inspect cargo contents to verify declared items. Random checks are standard.
- 3 Assessment
Confirmation that HS codes, quantities, and values are correctly declared.
- 4 Release
Once cleared, cargo receives export stamp and airway bill confirmation.

Timeline: Allow 3-5 working days for complete export clearance, longer during festive seasons or high-traffic periods.

4.2 Import Clearance (Destination Country)

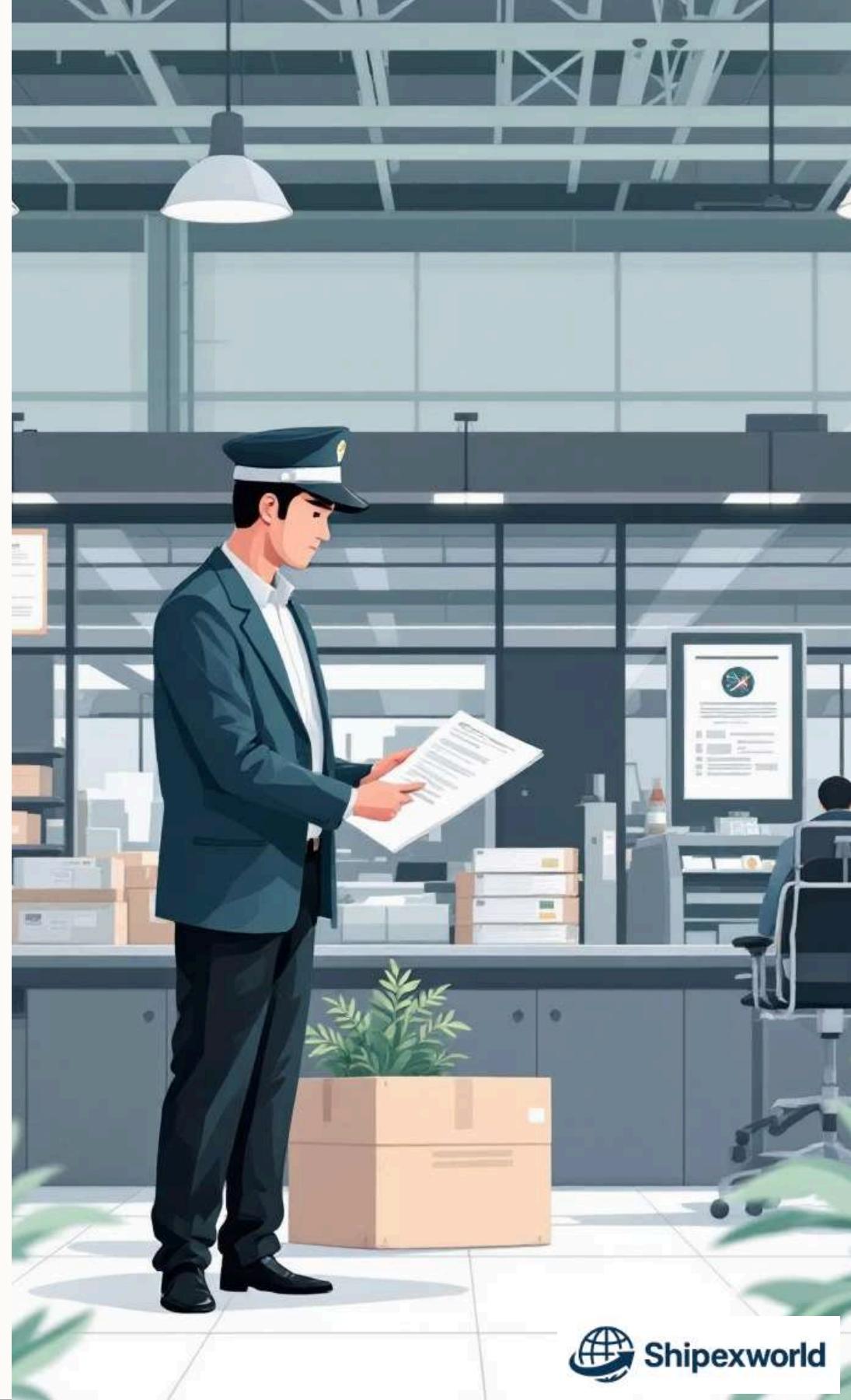
Upon arrival, the destination country's customs authority processes imports:

- Document Verification
Cross-check commercial invoice, packing list, and AWB for consistency.
- Duties & Taxes Assessment
Calculate import duty and VAT based on HS code and declared value. Rates vary by commodity and country.
- Payment Options
DDP shipments: seller pre-pays; DAP shipments: buyer pays upon clearance.
- Final Release
Post-payment, cargo is released for last-mile delivery.

Timeline: 24-48 hours for standard clearance; longer if inspection required or documents incomplete.

4.3 Avoiding Common Clearance Issues

- Ensure invoice value matches packing list totals
- Declare accurate HS codes (consult customs broker if uncertain)
- Include required certificates/licenses upfront
- Avoid under-invoicing to reduce duties (customs easily detect and penalize)
- Provide shipper contact for any customs queries
- Keep copies of all documents for records



5. Restricted & Prohibited Items

5.1 Items NOT Permitted by Air

Certain items cannot be shipped by air due to safety regulations:

- Lithium batteries (standalone or in devices) - Extremely limited or prohibited
- Flammable liquids (paint, alcohol, perfume)
- Explosive materials, ammunition, fireworks
- Radioactive substances
- Biological/medical waste
- Infectious agents



5.2 Items Requiring Special Handling

These items need additional certifications and may incur premium charges:

Electronics

Ensure proper voltage compatibility in destination; include user manuals

Jewelry

Declare full value; consider insurance

Textiles

May require quota/export license in certain countries

Food/Beverages

Requires health certificates and compliance with destination food safety laws

Pharma/Cosmetics

Obtain country-specific approvals (FDA, TGA, CE marks)

Antiques/Cultural Artifacts

Require export permits and may face import restrictions

Always declare items honestly. Concealing prohibited goods results in seizure, penalties, and legal consequences.

6. Pricing & Cost Breakdown

6.1 How Air Freight Rates Are Calculated

Chargeable Weight = Maximum of (Actual Weight) or (Volumetric Weight)

Volumetric weight = (Length cm × Width cm × Height cm) ÷ 4,000 to 5,000 (depending on the rules used by the airline or courier)

Example:

A 5kg box measuring 40 × 30 × 20cm

- Actual weight: 5kg
- Volumetric weight: $(40 \times 30 \times 20) \div 4,000$ to 5,000 (depending on the rules used by the airline or courier) = 6kg to 4.8kg
- Chargeable weight: 5kg (actual weight applies)

6.2 Cost Components

Freight Charge Base rate per kg varies by route, airline, and season. India-USA: typically ₹80-150/kg; India-UAE: ₹20-40/kg.	Fuel Surcharge Usually 10-20% of freight charge; fluctuates with oil prices.
Security & Handling Fees Fixed charges per shipment for airport processing and screening (₹500-2000).	Documentation & Customs Clearance Professional services fee for paperwork (₹1500-3000 in India; \$50-100 in destination country).
Insurance (Optional) 1-3% of cargo value; highly recommended for high-value shipments.	Last-Mile Delivery Door delivery charges vary by destination city and address remoteness (₹1000-5000 in India; \$30-100 abroad).

Total landed cost for India-USA, 10kg parcel: ~₹25,000-35,000 (approximately \$300-420 USD).

6.3 Cost-Saving Tips

- **Consolidation:** Combine multiple small shipments to reduce per-kg costs
- **Standard vs. Express:** Choose standard service unless urgency demands premium rates
- **Seasonal Rates:** Book off-peak (monsoon, year-end holidays) for discounts
- **Advance Booking:** Reserve space 2+ weeks ahead for better rates
- **Bulk Shipments:** Negotiate volume discounts for regular shipments over 500kg

7. Insurance & Risk Management

7.1 Cargo Insurance Importance

While air freight is statistically safer than sea transport, accidents happen. Cargo insurance protects against loss, damage, and theft:



All-Risk Coverage

Covers loss/damage due to accident, mishandling, weather, or theft (excludes natural disasters and war).



Coverage Limits

Typically insure at 110% of invoice value to cover freight costs if loss occurs.



Premium Cost

1-3% of insured value depending on commodity risk level.



Claims Process

Report damage within 48 hours of delivery with photos; provide original invoice and AWB.

- Shipments over \$5,000 should almost always be insured. Electronics, jewelry, and fragile items are high-risk categories.

7.2 Risk Mitigation



Photograph items before packing

Evidence of pre-shipment condition



Pack with shock-absorbent materials



Use track & trace actively

Monitor shipment status



Obtain pre-delivery inspection agreement

With receiver



Keep duplicate documents as backup



8. Tracking & Communication

8.1 Tracking Your Shipment

Modern air freight services provide real-time visibility:

Airway Bill (AWB) Number – Unique identifier for your shipment. Use this to track on airline website or freight forwarder portal.

Key Milestones to Monitor:

1. Pickup confirmation from your location
2. Arrival at airport in India
3. Customs clearance completion
4. Departure from Indian airport
5. Arrival at destination airport
6. Customs clearance in destination country
7. Out for delivery
8. Delivery completed (with receiver signature)

Typical Status Updates: Daily or every 2-3 hours for express shipments.

8.2 Communication Best Practices

- Provide direct contact numbers for shipper and receiver
- Ensure receiver is available on expected delivery date
- Inform receiver of approximate delivery time (usually within 2-4 hour windows)
- Maintain open communication with freight forwarder for any issues
- Escalate immediately if shipment status shows delays (potential customs hold or logistical issue)

9. Common Issues & Solutions

Issue	Cause	Solution
Customs delay (3+ days)	Incorrect HS code or missing documents	Contact customs broker immediately; provide missing certificates or corrected invoice
Damaged goods	Inadequate packing or rough handling	File insurance claim within 48 hours with photos; require inspection report from receiver
Lost shipment	Misplaced during transit or sorting error	Contact airline and freight forwarder; provide AWB number and tracking history
High duty charges	Under-declared value or HS code mistake	Request post-clearance review; consult customs broker for HS code correction
Delivery address rejection	Incomplete or incorrect address	Obtain corrected address immediately; reroute shipment before delivery attempt
Receiver unavailable	No advance notice from shipper	Arrange redelivery within 24-48 hours; consider neighbor pickup if authorized



Air Freight from India: Compliance & Best Practices Guide

A comprehensive reference for international shipping procedures, regulatory compliance, and freight forwarder selection

Compliance & Legal Considerations

10.1 Regulatory Compliance

- **India Export Policy:** Adhere to items' export restrictions per Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)
- **Destination Import Laws:** Verify destination country allows item import (some goods like certain plastics face restrictions in EU)
- **GST/IGST:** File GST returns for commercial shipments; ensure proper tax classification
- **Anti-Dumping Rules:** Be transparent about pricing to avoid accusations of dumping in sensitive commodity categories

10.2 Record Keeping

Maintain records for 3-5 years:

Shipping Documents

Copies of all invoices, packing lists, and AWBs

Customs Records

Customs clearance receipts and release certificates

Insurance & Claims

Insurance documents and claims (if any)

Communications

Communication with freight forwarder and receivers

Financial Records

Payment receipts and bank statements

These records prove shipment legitimacy and aid in dispute resolution or tax audits.

Choosing a Reliable Freight Forwarder

11.1 Key Credentials to Verify

- **IATA Certification** – International Air Transport Association membership ensures professional standards
- **Customs Licensed** – Check forwarder's licensed customs broker status with local authority
- **Insurance License** – Ability to arrange cargo insurance without intermediaries
- **Network Coverage** – Presence in both origin (India) and destination countries
- **Track Record** – Minimum 5+ years in business; customer reviews and testimonials

11.2 Questions to Ask Before Booking

1. What are all-inclusive charges for my specific route and weight?
2. How are rates adjusted for peak seasons?
3. What's your typical transit time and what causes delays?
4. How often do shipments face customs issues?
5. What insurance options do you offer?
6. How do you handle customer communication and tracking?
7. What's your liability in case of loss or damage?
8. Can you provide references from past shippers?

Conclusion

Air freight from India to international destinations is reliable and efficient when you follow proper procedures. Plan ahead, document thoroughly, pack carefully, and choose a reputable freight forwarder. With these guidelines, your shipments will arrive on time, in good condition, and with minimal customs complications.

- ❑ For specific questions about your shipment, contact our customer service team for personalized guidance.

Quick Reference Checklist

- Determine shipping method (express/standard/consolidated)
- Obtain complete shipper and receiver details
- Prepare all required documents (invoice, packing list, export license)
- Confirm HS code with customs broker
- Pack using proper materials and labeling standards
- Select appropriate Incoterms (DAP/DDP)
- Book with certified freight forwarder
- Confirm insurance coverage
- Obtain AWB number and track shipment
- Coordinate with receiver for delivery
- Maintain documentation for 3-5 years
- File any insurance claims within 48 hours of delivery