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# Importing a Firearm or Weapon Into Canada

RC4227

This brochure replaces the brochures called *Importing a Firearm or Weapon Into Canada*, C-092 and C-092A.

## Keeping Canada safe

Canada's new firearms laws will help make Canada safer for both residents and visitors. These new laws will result in changes to the procedures residents and visitors have to follow.

You have to declare all firearms and weapons at customs when you enter Canada. If you do not declare all firearms or weapons, we will seize them and you could face criminal charges. You may need documents to prove that you are entitled to possess a firearm in Canada, and you will have to transport it safely.

If you need more information about the changes to Canada's firearms laws, a specific firearm, weapon, device, or any fees that may apply, contact the Canadian Firearms Centre at 1-800-731-4000.

You may want to speak to a chief firearms officer of the province you are planning to visit. They can be reached through the Canadian Firearms Centre at 1-800-731-4000. You can also contact your nearest customs office for information. Addresses and telephone numbers are listed in the government section of the telephone book. You can also get help from any of the customs regional offices listed in [Appendix B](#).

## Classifying firearms, weapons, and devices

All firearms are classified as non-restricted, restricted, or prohibited. There are also categories for weapons and devices.

**Non-restricted** firearms include:

- semi-automatic rifles and shotguns that have barrels that are at least 470 mm (approx. 18.33 inches) long, and do not otherwise fall into a restricted or prohibited category; and
- single shot or manual repeating rifles and shotguns of any length, as long as they are not designed or adapted to be fired when reduced to a length of less than 660 mm (approx. 25.74 inches) by folding, telescoping, or other means.

**Restricted** firearms include:

- handguns that do not fall in the prohibited category;
- semi-automatic rifles and shotguns that are capable of discharging centre-fire ammunition, have barrels less than 470 mm (approx. 18.33 inches) long, and are not otherwise prohibited;

- firearms designed or adapted to be fired when reduced to a length of less than 660 mm (approx. 25.74 inches) by folding, telescoping, or other means; and
- firearms restricted by regulations.

**Prohibited** firearms include:

- handguns with barrels less than or equal to 105 mm (approx. 4.1 inches) long;
- handguns designed or adapted to discharge a 25 or 32 calibre cartridge;
- firearms adapted from rifles or shotguns by sawing, cutting, or any other alteration, that when adapted in this way are less than 660 mm (approx. 25.74 inches) long or have a barrel less than 457 mm (approx. 17.82 inches) long;
- automatic firearms, whether or not altered to fire in the manner of a semi-automatic firearm; and
- firearms prohibited by regulations.

**Prohibited** weapons include:

- switchblade knives or other knives that open automatically by gravity or by centrifugal force, or by hand pressure applied to a button, spring, or other device;
- some martial arts weapons, such as nunchaku sticks or shuriken ("shooting stars");
- Mace or pepper spray;
- blowguns;
- hand-held "compact" crossbows; and
- weapons prohibited by regulations.

**Prohibited** devices include:

- devices designed to muffle or stop the sound of a firearm, like silencers;
- certain cartridge magazines above a given capacity. Generally, cartridge magazines are limited to 5 rounds for centre-fire semi-automatic rifles or shotguns and 10 rounds for semi-automatic handguns, with certain exemptions for rare and valuable magazines;
- replica firearms; and
- devices prohibited by regulations.

Unless you have a specific licence, you **cannot** import prohibited firearms, weapons, or devices.

If you are a Canadian resident, you can **re-import** prohibited firearms (not prohibited weapons, or devices) as long as you meet **all** of the following conditions:

- you previously exported the firearms from Canada; and
- you have an authorization to transport from a chief firearms officer when you re-import.

## Replica firearms

Replica firearms are not classified as firearms but are designed or intended to exactly resemble a firearm with near precision. We do not consider a reproduction of an antique firearm to be a replica firearm.

Replica firearms are classified as prohibited devices and **cannot** be imported into Canada.

## Antique firearms

Antique firearms are firearms:

- manufactured before 1898 that were not designed to discharge rim-fire or centre-fire ammunition and that have not been redesigned to discharge such ammunition; or
- prescribed in Canadian law to be antique firearms.

If you are a Canadian resident or a visitor to Canada, you can import firearms that are considered to be antiques under the *Firearms Act* and regulations. You do not need to register antique firearms, nor do owners of antique firearms need licences.

We consider reproductions of flintlock, wheel-lock, or matchlock firearms, other than handguns, that were manufactured after 1897, to be antiques even though they may have been manufactured very recently. However, we treat reproductions of more up-to-date firearms, beginning with percussion cap, muzzle-loading rifles such as the Springfield rifles (the originals of which would have been used in the American Civil War), as firearms. These reproductions have to be registered if they will be staying in Canada, and owners of these non-exempt reproductions need firearms licences. Visitors to Canada importing reproductions that are not flintlocks, wheel-locks, or matchlocks should be prepared to have these reproductions dealt with as firearms.

We consider some pre-1898 handguns, rifles, and shotguns that fire rim-fire or centre-fire ammunition to be antiques if they are known to use ammunition that is no longer commonly available.

## Firearms specifications

### Barrel length

Canadian law specifies how the barrel of a firearm has to be measured to determine if the firearm is classified as prohibited or restricted.

Barrel lengths are measured as follows:

- a revolver is measured from the muzzle of the barrel to the breech, immediately in front of the cylinder; and
- all other firearms are measured from the muzzle of the barrel up to and including the chamber, but not including the length of any part or accessory added to the barrel, including those designed or intended to suppress the muzzle flash or reduce the recoil, such as a flash suppressor (eliminator) or muzzle brake.

### Muzzle velocity

We may consider other barrelled weapons, such as pellet guns, as non-restricted or restricted firearms if they meet the legal definition of a firearm, and if they have a muzzle velocity of more than 152.4 metres (500 ft.) per second. Owners of such weapons have to meet all import, licence, registration, and authorization requirements for non-restricted or restricted firearms.

If the muzzle velocity of a weapon is 152.4 metres (500 ft.) per second or less, the weapon may still, technically, be a firearm. However owners of such weapons do not need a firearms licence, the weapons do not have to be registered, and owners do not need an "authorization to transport" to import such a weapon.

# Import procedures

When you arrive at the border, declare the firearm to the customs officer, provide any documents required, and answer all questions truthfully. The customs officer has to be satisfied that you have a valid reason for importing the firearm, and may check to ensure that you have transported your firearm properly. The officer will also review your documents and ensure that the firearm you have matches the one described on the documents.

## **Note**

As of January 1, 2001, visitors will have to declare their firearms in writing.

If you have declared a non-restricted or restricted firearm but you cannot meet the import requirements, or you do not have the proper documents, the customs officer may allow you to remove the firearm from Canada. In some cases, we may hold the firearm, give you a receipt and allow you time to give us the correct documents.

It is customs policy that prohibited firearms, weapons, and devices will be detained and will not be returned for subsequent export from Canada.

If you have not been truthful, or if the officer believes that you should not bring the firearm into Canada, we can hold it. If you did not declare the firearm, we will seize it, and you may face criminal charges.

If you need information about importing a specific firearm or weapon, contact the nearest Canada Customs office.

## Import regulations

Different regulations apply depending on whether you are importing firearms as a visitor or as a Canadian resident. However, the following basic requirements apply to anyone importing a firearm into Canada.

- You must be at least 18 years of age.

## **Note**

Canadian residents under 18 years of age cannot acquire firearms, but they can get a Minor's Possession Licence, which allows them to re-import a non-restricted firearm.

- You are allowed to import non-restricted and restricted firearms with the proper documents.
- You are not allowed to import prohibited firearms, weapons, or devices, including silencers and replica firearms.

## Visitors to Canada

If you are a visitor to Canada, as of January 1, 2001, you will have to declare your firearms in writing.

Visitors may only import non-restricted firearms for legitimate purposes such as:

- sporting or hunting use during hunting season;
- use in competitions;
- in-transit movement (i.e., moving in the most direct route possible from Point A to Point B) through Canada; or

- personal protection against wildlife in remote areas of Canada, as long as the customs officer is satisfied that the circumstances warrant the firearm being imported.

If you are importing restricted firearms you need an authorization to transport. You can get an application for an authorization to transport by calling the Canadian Firearms Centre at 1-800-731-4000.

Visitors **cannot**, under any circumstances, import prohibited firearms.

Visitors who plan to leave firearms in Canada will have to pay duties and taxes. If the firearm is sold or otherwise transferred to a Canadian resident, the parties must meet all the legal requirements associated with transferring firearms.

## Canadian residents

If you are a Canadian resident, depending on the circumstances and the firearm you are importing, you may need the following documents:

- a valid Firearms Acquisition Certificate (FAC), possession licence, or possession and acquisition licence; and
- an authorization to transport.

You can apply for these documents through the Canadian Firearms Office or a chief firearms officer. To get an authorization to transport, you have to apply directly to a chief firearms officer.

To import **non-restricted** firearms newly acquired outside Canada, you have to:

- provide customs with a possession and acquisition licence for that kind of firearm, or a valid FAC; and
- pay any duty and taxes that apply.

If you are importing **non-restricted** firearms that you previously exported from Canada, you do not have to produce any documents to meet the requirements of the firearms legislation but, it is a good idea to carry proof that you purchased the firearm in Canada, or that duty was paid when you imported it. You can ask customs staff to document your firearm on Form Y38, *Identification of Articles for Temporary Exportation*, before you leave the country.

To import **restricted** firearms newly acquired outside Canada you have to:

- provide customs with a possession and acquisition licence for that kind of firearm, or a valid FAC;
- have an authorization to transport; and
- pay any duty and taxes that apply.

If you are re-importing **restricted** firearms that you previously exported from Canada, you have to provide customs with a valid authorization to transport.

You **cannot**, under any circumstances, import **prohibited** firearms newly acquired outside Canada.

If you are importing grandfathered **prohibited** firearms that you previously exported from Canada, you have to provide customs with a valid authorization to transport. Grandfathered means that you have owned and registered the firearms under the former *Act*.

## Ammunition

Both Canadians and non-residents may import sporting and competitive ammunition for their personal use, but if they want to import hollow-point ammunition labelled for use in handguns, they need written authorization from Natural Resources Canada.

Canadian residents do not need a permit from Natural Resources Canada to import:

- small arms sporting ammunition up to a maximum of 5,000 rounds;
- percussion primers, up to a quantity of 5,000;
- empty primed cartridge cases, up to a quantity of 5,000; and
- propellants (smokeless and black powder), up to a maximum of 8 kilograms, (17.66 pounds).

Within these limits, non-residents can import 200 rounds duty free for hunting purposes, or up to 1,500 rounds duty free for use at a recognized competition.

You can make arrangements to import larger quantities through a Canadian shooting association, committee, or federation for team practice and competition at meets. For information on permits to import quantities of ammunition in excess of those mentioned above, contact:

Explosives Regulatory Division  
Natural Resources Canada  
15th floor  
580 Booth Street  
Ottawa ON K1A 0E4

Telephone: (613) 943-0206  
Fax: (613) 995-0480

## Export procedures

Currently, if you are exporting non-restricted or restricted firearms from Canada to the United States, you do not have to stop at customs when you leave Canada. However, this will change when the relevant sections of the *Firearms Act* come into force.

If you are exporting non-restricted or restricted firearms to countries other than the United States, you need export permits from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. For more information on these permits, contact:

Export Controls Division  
Export and Import Permits Bureau  
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade  
Lester B. Pearson Building  
125 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa ON K1A 0G2

Telephone: (613) 996-2387

You need an export permit to export prohibited firearms, weapons, and devices from Canada. Check with customs officials of the country you intend to enter before exporting these goods.

It is customs policy that prohibited firearms, weapons, and devices will be detained and will not be returned for subsequent export from Canada.

If you are flying out of Canada, you have to follow Transport Canada regulations by keeping your firearm in a gun case and storing the ammunition separately.

## Hunting requirements

Firearms are forbidden in many of Canada's national and provincial parks, game reserves, and adjacent areas. Hunting in Canada is governed by federal, provincial, and territorial laws. If you hunt in Canada, you have to get a hunting licence from each province or territory you plan to hunt in. If you need more information about parks and hunting regulations, contact the appropriate provincial or territorial tourism information office listed in [Appendix C](#).

## Transporting firearms

Canadian law states that you have to transport all firearms unloaded. If you are transporting them in a vehicle, they must be kept out of sight in a part of a vehicle that is kept locked (the trunk, if there is one), unless the vehicle is supervised by an adult. You have to transport restricted firearms in a locked case and equip them with locked safety devices to prevent firing.

## Appendix A - Canadian Firearms Centre

Canada Firearms Centre  
Ottawa, ON K1A 1M6

Telephone: 1-800-731-4000 (Canada and the U.S.)  
(506) 624-5380 (outside Canada and the U.S.)  
Fax: (613) 941-1991  
Web Site: [www.cfc-cafc.gc.ca](http://www.cfc-cafc.gc.ca)  
Email: [cfc-cafc@cfc-cafc.gc.ca](mailto:cfc-cafc@cfc-cafc.gc.ca)

## Appendix B - Customs regional offices

If you are calling from outside Canada please call the Automated Customs Information Service (ACIS) at:

Winnipeg, Manitoba (204) 983-3500 **or**  
St. John, New Brunswick (506)636-5064

### Atlantic Region

5th floor, CIBC Building  
1809 Barrington Street  
Halifax NS B3J 3K8

Telephone: 1-800-461-9999

## **Quebec Region**

### **Québec**

130 Dalhousie Street  
P.O. Box 2267  
Québec QC G1K 7P6

Telephone: 1-800-461-9999

### **Montréal**

8th floor  
400 Place d'Youville  
Montréal QC H2Y 2C2

Telephone: 1-800-461-9999

## **Northern Ontario Region**

3rd floor  
2265 St. Laurent Boulevard  
Ottawa ON K1G 4K3

Telephone: 1-800-461-9999

## **Southern Ontario Region**

### **Toronto**

Inland Operations  
303-6725 Airport Road  
Mississauga ON L4V 1V2

Telephone: 1-800-461-9999

### **Hamilton**

400 Grays Road North  
Hamilton ON L8E 3J6

Telephone: 1-800-461-9999

### **Windsor**

Ambassador Bridge  
780 Huron Church Road  
Windsor ON N9C 2K2

Telephone: 1-800-461-9999

## **Prairie Region**

### **Winnipeg**

530-266 Graham Avenue  
Winnipeg MB R3C 0J8

Telephone: 1-800-461-9999

### **Calgary**

Bay 32  
3033-34th Avenue N.E.  
Calgary AB T1Y 6X2

Telephone: 1-800-461-9999

## **Pacific Region**

Main Floor  
607-333 Dunsmuir Street  
Vancouver BC V6B 5R4

Telephone: 1-800-461-9999