

7103: Procedures for Declaring Unaccompanied Articles to Customs

Unaccompanied articles include household effects imported for relocation of residence, things such as personal effects that became unnecessary while traveling, and souvenirs sent from your visiting countries separately from the accompanied personal effects, by regular mail, airmail or sea mail, or international courier service.

Articles which can be cleared as unaccompanied articles, are limited, in principle, to those clearable at Customs within 6 months from the sender's entry (arrival in Japan).

Those who move to Japan can import their goods as unaccompanied articles even when they ship their baggage to Japan after they arrive at Japan. They must clear the baggage within 6 months since their arrival. Moreover, they are required to complete procedures below.

In cases where you bring commercial cargo or costly goods into Japan as unaccompanied articles, you may be required to take the same import procedures as those for the general cargo.

1. When sending baggage from a foreign country

Be sure to clearly write "unaccompanied baggage" on the parcels, a customs notice, and an invoice.

Set yourself as the addressee.

If you have items sent by a souvenir shop, instruct the salesclerk to write the words "unaccompanied baggage" on the parcel.

2. Procedures at entry (return to Japan)

On your entry into Japan, required to prepare two copies of '[Declaration of Accompanied Articles and Unaccompanied Articles](#)' and to submit them to Customs at your arrival airport.

A Customs officer at your arrival airport accepts them will check the contents. Where no mistakes or omissions in them, the officer will hand one of them to you on the spot, after affixing a seal of Customs confirmation to it. Its original copy is essential to conduct import clearance procedures after your his/her unaccompanied articles arrive in Japan, which you had sent before flying to Japan. Hence, please be reminded of keeping it until beginning import clearance procedures of your unaccompanied articles.

Japan Customs cannot redo the above process, whatever the reason may be (including failing of the above process and losing its original copy).

3. Customs procedures for unaccompanied articles sent by air or sea

The customs procedures for the unaccompanied articles listed below can be consigned to a professional agent (customs broker). If you delegate customs procedures for accompanied articles to the agent, you have to submit the declaration sheet with the seal of certification returned by the Customs to the agent after your entry (return) and before the customs procedures.

- (1) The Arrival Notification Form arrives from the airline company, shipping company, carrier, or the like.

- (2) Pick up the documents related to transportation (delivery order, etc.) at the notified airline company or the like.
- (3) Make the import declaration for the unaccompanied articles at the unaccompanied baggage clearance section of Customs.
Documents necessary for the declaration are as follows.
 - (a) Declaration form for unaccompanied articles with the seal of certification.
 - (b) Documents related to transportation (documents aforementioned in (2))
 - (c) Statement of contents, passport, and receipts.
- (4) The baggage is moved from a warehouse (customs warehouse) to a customs inspection area for customs inspection.
Plants and animals subject to quarantine are inspected at the nearest plant or animal quarantine station.
- (5) In cases of taxation, pay the tax.
After completing the customs clearance procedures, you can take possession of the baggage.

4. Customs procedures for unaccompanied articles by international mail

When the unaccompanied baggage arrives in Japan by mail, a Sub-branch Customs office for overseas mail sends a postcard (“Notice of Customs Clearance for Mail Articles Delivered from Overseas”) to the addressee. The addressee must mail the “Declaration of Unaccompanied articles” with the seal of certification, or directly submit it to the Customs sub-branch that sent the postcard. If “unaccompanied baggage” is not written on the unaccompanied baggage, the baggage may be handled as dutiable articles, and “Notice of Assessment of Duties and Taxes Postal Matters” may be sent to the addressee. In such cases, the addressee should inquire of the Customs sub-branch that sent the duty notification before paying the duty whether the articles are duty-free or not. After paying the duty, you may not be granted the duty-free status.

If you have paid the duty by mistake, please consult the Customs Sub-branch office for overseas mail.

(Article 6-2,8,67 of Customs Law, Article 14 of the Cabinet Order for Enforcement of the Customs Tariff, and General Notification 67-4-10 of Customs Law)