

What is a Carnet?

A Carnet is an international customs document that provides duty-free customs clearance for temporary imports into foreign countries and can simplify entry by eliminating the need to post a Temporary Import Bond. Recognized in over 85 destinations, virtually all goods, whether hand carried or cargo shipped, are covered by Carnets.

But the Carnet doesn't only reduce costs. It also acts as a United States registration of goods and is valid on multiple trips for up to one year. It covers a broad range of merchandise including trade show booths, personal computers, satellites, industrial machinery, diagnostic equipment, jewelry, photographic and video equipment, repair tools, live animals, rare gems, vehicles and more. And there are no surprises. Carnet fees are paid prior to your departure so you know what the cost will be before you leave.

Roanoke Trade Services is an international insurance brokerage firm that has provided marine insurance and U.S. Customs Bonds for international shippers since 1935. Over twenty years ago, the United States Council for International Business appointed Roanoke Trade as a national service provider of Carnets. With nine service offices nationwide, we have the resources to provide you with a Carnet in as few as 24 hours—sooner in some cases—and have service professionals that can answer your questions quickly and accurately.

Other Benefits of using a Carnet

There are other ways the Carnet can help ease the process of temporary importation, as well. Because the Carnet is valid for up to one year, users can travel to as many Carnet member countries as necessary during that period. In addition, partial and split shipments can be made. You don't have to take all of the merchandise listed on your General List on each trip so one Carnet can cover the needs of several trips for different purposes.

Merchandise Covered on a Carnet

Commercial Samples — Commercial Samples includes any and all items which are temporarily imported for the purpose of being shown or demonstrated for the solicitation of orders. Examples might include a heart monitor system, pipes and fittings, or goods to be exhibited at a foreign trade show.

Professional Equipment — This category is typically “tools of the trade” and includes equipment or goods needed to work while in a foreign country. Examples include equipment for the press or for television; engineering, electrical, surgical, entertainment and sporting equipment; and exhibition booths used to display merchandise.

Exhibitions and Fairs — This category includes trade, industrial, agricultural or crafts exhibitions as well as fairs, exhibitions for a charitable purpose or to promote learning, crafts, scientific or cultural activity, or religious knowledge or worship. Carnets issued for this category do not include exhibits in shops for the purpose of selling goods.

In addition to the above categories, Carnets can also be issued for scientific equipment, private or commercial road vehicles, aircraft and pleasure boats. Because the Carnet covers temporary exports only, it cannot be used for goods that will be consumed in another country such as hand-outs or pamphlets, food items, plants, or other perishables.

Other Export Documents

Remember, however, that a Carnet does NOT take the place of other specific export documents and licences that may be required by the U.S. government and that customs and governmental regulations specific to respective countries must be followed.

Applying for a Carnet

You can apply for a Carnet via the internet by visiting **CarnetsOnline.com**. Or, Roanoke Trade can provide you with a free copy of Carnet Voyager, the software application that allows you to apply for a Carnet via e-mail. Carnet applications can also be completed on paper and mailed or faxed to your nearest issuing office. For more information visit **CarnetsOnline.com** or contact your nearest Roanoke Trade office at 1-800-CARNETS.