

Chinese product licensing

The points below are general and may be modified by local authorities at any time.

Outside China, we refer to this as “Product Certification,” which is enforced by the “Trading Standard” office. This is referred to as “Product Licensing” in its English translations.

A Chinese product license is typically not required for products sold directly to consumers from overseas, as these are considered “one-off” sales. An exception to this rule is electrical goods. The certification standard for electrical goods is CCC. Most international electrical goods already have this certification.



As with any country's Customs, China will inspect and seize goods that do not meet local standards. This does not often happen to goods sold directly to consumers from an overseas company.

The central question is whether the product is sold directly by a Chinese business, such as a wholesaler, retailer, or online store. Local Product Licensing must be in place.

Many products will not require Product Licensing in China. To help the Chinese authorities and local retailers understand your products, make your testing certification (e.g., EU certification) available online.

As covered in Business-to-Business (B2B), it is the importer's responsibility to arrange the correct paperwork for Chinese Customs. They may need to arrange Chinese Product Licensing before you start exporting to China.

If you plan to utilise multiple distribution channels, you may need to arrange for the product to be licensed in China. Once the licensing is agreed upon, Customs will have access to the information, and products should move freely through Chinese Customs.

The product licensing process can be time-consuming. It will depend on the testing documentation you can provide to the Chinese authorities and whether a recognised international testing organisation performed the testing.

If the testing papers are not acceptable to the Chinese authorities, local Chinese testing may be required, which will incur additional time and expense.

Practical takeaway: Both Product and trademark licenses will need certification renewal. Currently, between 10 to 15 years. The time period will be on the certification. We recommend you start the renewal a year before the end of the licensing period. If you miss a renewal, you may lose your certification.