

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.



Foundation Being seen in China articles

Discovery Being found in China article

Execution Start trading in China articles

Focus: compliance + customs

Audience: overseas exporters

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What “product licensing” means in China

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.

Practical takeaway: The key question is how the product is sold in China (direct-to-consumer from overseas vs. sold by a China-based business).

When a Chinese product licence is usually needed

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, e.g., a wholesaler, retailer, or Chinese 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.

Quick guidance

- Direct-to-consumer “one-off” overseas sales often do not need a China product licence (common exception: electrical goods).
- If a Chinese business sells your product inside China (wholesaler/retailer/online store), local product licensing may be required.
- Customs can inspect and seize goods that do not meet local standards.
- Provide overseas testing/certification documents online to help partners and authorities understand compliance.
- B2B importers typically handle customs paperwork and may need to arrange local licensing before shipments begin.
- If you use multiple distribution channels, licensing can help products move more freely through customs.

B2B vs. B2C responsibility

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.

Time and testing requirements

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.

Note: These points are general and can be changed by local authorities. Always validate requirements for your product category and destination province/city before shipping.



Quick checklist

Use this as a fast scan before exporting.

- Is the product being sold by a Chinese business inside China (retailer / wholesaler / online store)?
- If yes, does the product category require local licensing?
- Are there special rules for your category (e.g., electrical goods and CCC certification)?
- Do you have recognised test reports/certifications available to share online?
- Has your importer confirmed customs paperwork requirements?
- Have you allowed time for licensing or local testing if required?

Common pitfall: Assuming overseas certifications automatically replace Chinese requirements. Sometimes additional local testing/licensing is required.

Need help?

If you need support reviewing product licensing implications for China and how it affects your sales channels, please get in contact. support@accesstochina.com

- 🔗 [Test a web page from China](#)
- 📄 ["Chinese product licensing" paper \(PDF\)](#)