

Crane Worldwide Logistics

Incoterms® 2020 comparison matrix

Printable educational reference for all 11 rules: transport mode, named location, delivery/risk transfer, main carriage, clearance, insurance, unloading, best-use notes, and cautions.

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How to choose a term

- Confirm whether the move is any-mode/multimodal or sea and inland waterway only.
- Decide whether delivery should occur at origin or closer to destination.
- Separate freight cost from risk — paying freight does not always mean keeping risk.
- Assign export and import clearance to parties who can actually perform them.
- Write the acronym, named place/port, and Incoterms® 2020 into the contract.

Common Incoterms mistakes

- Using FOB for container handoffs that happen before goods are on board — compare FCA.
- Assuming CFR or CIF risk transfers at the destination port because the seller paid freight.
- Omitting the named place/port or the edition from the contract wording.
- Treating Incoterms as a substitute for insurance, payment, or title terms.

Legend ● Seller ● Buyer ● Not required

All 11 Incoterms® 2020 rules

Always name the agreed place or port and cite Incoterms® 2020 in the contract.

TERM	VALID TRANSPORT	NAMED LOCATION	DELIVERY / RISK TRANSFER	MAIN CARRIAGE	EXPORT	IMPORT	INSURANCE	UNLOADING	BEST USED FOR	USE CAUTION
EXW Ex Works	Any mode or multimodal	Named place (usually seller's premises)	Delivery: Seller / exporter Risk: Seller / exporter When goods are placed at the buyer's disposal at the named place	● Buyer	● Buyer	● Buyer	● Not required	Buyer (after taking delivery at origin)	Domestic handoffs or buyers with strong origin capability Situations where the buyer controls the entire logistics chain from the seller's door	Cross-border shipments where the buyer cannot practically handle export formalities Cases where loading liability at the seller's site is unclear
FCA Free Carrier	Any mode or multimodal	Named place (carrier or another person nominated by the buyer)	Delivery: Origin terminal Risk: Origin terminal When goods are delivered to the carrier/nominated person at the named place	● Buyer	● Seller	● Buyer	● Not required	Buyer after main carriage (unless otherwise arranged)	Containerized exports Multimodal moves where handoff occurs at a terminal or carrier depot before vessel loading	Situations that truly require delivery on board a named vessel (consider FOB for non-container sea cargo)
CPT Carriage Paid To	Any mode or multimodal	Named place of destination	Delivery: Carrier handoff Risk: Carrier handoff When goods are handed to the first carrier	● Seller	● Seller	● Buyer	● Not required	Buyer at destination unless otherwise arranged	Multimodal lanes where the seller should book freight but risk transfers at origin	Buyers who assume risk only transfers at destination because the seller paid freight
CIP Carriage and Insurance Paid To	Any mode or multimodal	Named place of destination	Delivery: Carrier handoff Risk: Carrier handoff When goods are handed to the first carrier	● Seller	● Seller	● Buyer	● Seller	Buyer at destination unless otherwise arranged	Multimodal shipments where the seller books freight and must provide insurance	Buyers who need higher insurance limits than the rule baseline
DAP Delivered at Place	Any mode or multimodal	Named place of destination	Delivery: Final delivery Risk: Final delivery When goods are placed at the buyer's disposal ready for unloading at the named place	● Seller	● Seller	● Buyer	● Not required	Buyer	Door or terminal deliveries where the seller should carry risk to destination arrival	Sites where unloading capability or access is uncertain
DPU Delivered at Place Unloaded	Any mode or multimodal	Named place of destination	Delivery: Destination terminal Risk: Destination terminal When goods are unloaded and placed at the buyer's disposal at the named place	● Seller	● Seller	● Buyer	● Not required	Seller	Deliveries where the seller can safely manage unloading at the named place	Sites where the seller cannot control unloading equipment or access
DDP Delivered Duty Paid	Any mode or multimodal	Named place of destination	Delivery: Final delivery Risk: Final delivery When import-cleared goods are placed at the buyer's disposal ready for unloading	● Seller	● Seller	● Seller	● Not required	Buyer	Sellers with strong destination customs capability who can deliver duty-paid	Markets where the seller cannot act as importer of record Unclear VAT/duty recovery arrangements
FAS	Sea or inland waterway only	Named port of loading	Delivery: Origin terminal Risk: Origin terminal	● Buyer	● Seller	● Buyer	● Not required	Buyer after main carriage	Bulk or break-bulk cargo placed alongside a nominated vessel	Containerized cargo that is handed over at a terminal before alongside placement

TERM	VALID TRANSPORT	NAMED LOCATION	DELIVERY / RISK TRANSFER	MAIN CARRIAGE	EXPORT	IMPORT	INSURANCE	UNLOADING	BEST USED FOR	USE CAUTION
Free Alongside Ship			When goods are placed alongside the vessel at the named port of loading							
FOB Free On Board	Sea or inland waterway only	Named port of loading	Delivery: On board vessel Risk: On board vessel When goods are on board the vessel at the named port of loading	● Buyer	● Seller	● Buyer	● Not required	Buyer after arrival	Bulk or break-bulk ocean shipments where delivery on board is operationally realistic Lanes where the buyer wants to control the ocean booking	Containerized or multimodal cargo handed to a carrier/terminal before vessel loading—compare FCA Situations where the named port of loading or vessel nomination process is unclear
CFR Cost and Freight	Sea or inland waterway only	Named port of destination	Delivery: On board vessel Risk: On board vessel When goods are on board the vessel at the port of shipment	● Seller	● Seller	● Buyer	● Not required	Buyer at the destination port unless otherwise arranged	Sea/inland-waterway shipments where the seller should book freight to a named destination port Buyers comfortable carrying voyage risk while the seller pays freight	Multimodal or non-water moves—compare CPT Shipments where insurance must be seller-provided—compare CIF
CIF Cost, Insurance and Freight	Sea or inland waterway only	Named port of destination	Delivery: On board vessel Risk: On board vessel When goods are on board the vessel at the port of shipment	● Seller	● Seller	● Buyer	● Seller	Buyer at the destination port unless otherwise arranged	Sea shipments where the seller should provide both freight and baseline insurance	Multimodal cargo—compare CIP Buyers needing higher insurance cover than the CIF baseline

This reference is provided for general educational purposes and is not legal advice or a substitute for the complete ICC Incoterms® 2020 rules or the parties' contract. Crane does not select contractual terms for the parties.