

How to Buy and Import Furniture from China

From few months ago, lots of customers inquired us to help them import furniture from China through emails. Because they think it is very difficult to find a good supplier from thousands of furniture companies. And very headache for them to negotiate price and indentify the quality. Keep reading and learn how to **find suitable suppliers, avoid problems, negotiate price, pay money and ship the goods.**

I : Why import furniture from China?

Furniture is a major cost for any home or office that can be considerably reduced by buying and importing furniture from China at wholesale price. An individual may balk at the prospect of going to China to buy furniture, however prices are substantially lower than retail prices in the home country to justify a trip to China for buying furniture.

IN 2004, China begun to be the largest exporter of furniture in the world. China manufactures most of the furniture of the leading designers in the world. These furniture designers are of course silent about this fact.



Customer purchased in Shunde Furniture City



Furniture from China are uniquely designed to avoid the use of nails, screws and glue. When made of wood with top quality, this type of furniture can last for centuries.

This engineering design amazingly connects the different components of the furniture without any trace of the connection. It is as though the entire furniture was built from just a single piece of wood.

There are close to **50,000 furniture manufactures** in China. Most are small to medium sized manufacturers. Most manufacture generic or brand-less furniture although some have started to produce branded pieces.

You will find a amazing furniture world when sourcing from China. There so many kinds of exquisite futures for choice, which can't be bought for your local market. But how to import the best quality with reasonable price items? This is a question!

II : Importing Furniture from China

China made furniture are highly preferred by importers. Importing furniture from China though is a tough process.

1.Sourcing

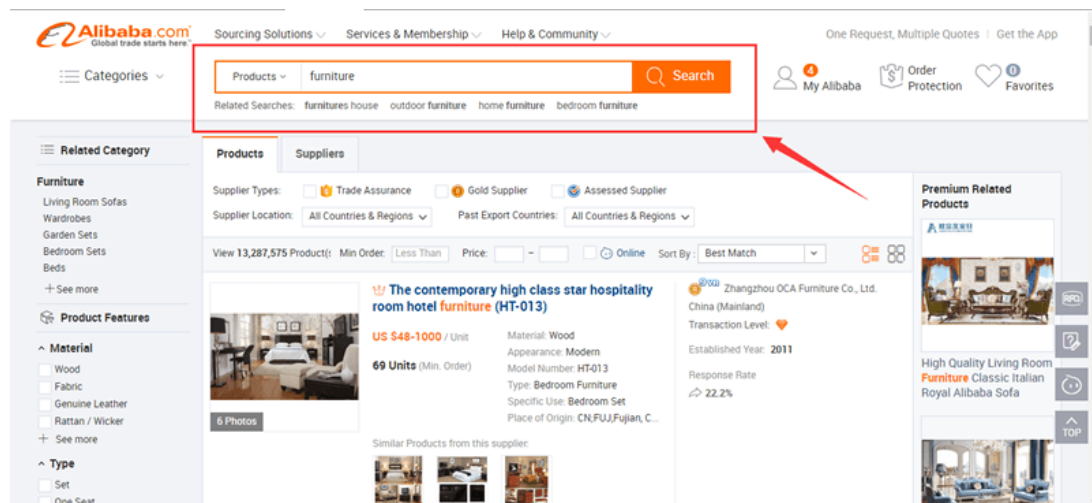
Most China furniture are displayed in Furniture Malls as most potential customers opt visiting malls than individual furniture shops. In these malls you will find a variety of furniture with varied pricing structures. Considering most sale representatives can't speak English and they don't offer shipment services, in this situation, you'd better hire a **China sourcing agent** to be interpreter and handle all exportation

matters. Typically these agents will charge **5% to 10% of total purchase value** to handle all aspects of shipments.



2. Alibaba

One of the most important steps in building an online business is to find reliable suppliers to make your product idea a reality. Most start-up online businesses are often faced with this dilemma: Where and how do I source products and suppliers? **The answer is Alibaba.**



Alibaba has become one of the top B2B marketplace businesses rely on for cheap and top quality products, which they can either resell or have their own private labels on. Products and suppliers are mostly from China.

3. Shunde Furniture Mall

Shunde is an district of Foshan city in China, which dedicated to the manufacture and sale of furniture. It is referred to as Furniture City and the Furniture Wholesale

Market of China. In Shunde you will find over 1,500 manufactures of furniture and about 3,000 Chinese and international furniture dealers. Their furniture are displayed in shops located inside a 5 kilometer long market with over 20 streets.

- **Louvre Furniture Mall.** High-end furniture with high quality and excellent rates is what you will find in this mall. It is extremely comfortable and easy to explore. This mall is the main source for China's furniture industry. The shops in this mall are known to be reliable and highly scam-free. Surely the price is not so cheap.
- **Sun-link Furniture Wholesale Market.** There are southern and northern furniture centers in this market. Products in northern center is higher quality than southern center. You can also get a better shopping experience in northern center.
- **Tuanyi International Furniture City.** This mall also has some good choices if you have time to have a check(cheapest products comparing with above two markets).As to our past experience, it takes almost one week if we shop above malls, but normally most our customers don't have so much time to shop and buy slowly.

4.Furniture Fairs



- **China International Furniture Fair (CIFF)**

This is China's most established and biggest furniture fair and probably also in the world. There is one scheduled every March and another every September.

- **Guangzhou Canton Fair (CF):Every April and October(Phrase II)**

It is important to note that most furniture manufacturers in China specialize in one furniture category each. If you need bedroom sets, living room sets and dining room sets, you may need to deal with different sets of suppliers.

5.The most common types of furniture manufactured in China include:

- Sofa
- Bedroom Furniture
- Beds
- Living Rooms Furniture
- Dining Room Furniture

- Children's Furniture
- Bathroom Furniture
- Hotel Furniture
- Office Furniture
- Wood Furniture

- Metal Furniture
- Wicker Furniture
- Plastic Furniture
- Office Furniture
- Hotel Furniture

III、 Minimum Order Quantity

The minimum order quantity (MOQ) is always one of the most important things to consider when sourcing for a China furniture supplier.

For whole sale, some manufacturers have high MOQ but would offer low price. But some small and medium importers cannot reach. China furniture suppliers sometimes are flexible and a compromise can always be reached especially if you are ordering a variety of different types of furniture.

For retail, please pay attention to ask suppliers whether they are in stock. It is easy to buy stock items but price is normally 20%~30% or more higher than wholesale price.



IV、 Negotiating the Price

If you cannot personally go to the Furniture Malls in China or attend any of the Furniture Fairs, you may opt to work with a sourcing agent from China. This individual or firm can help you source for the furniture you need.

You can initially check the website of prospective furniture suppliers and ask the sourcing agent to check the quality and design. The sourcing agent can also help you negotiate for the best possible price and will help you all the way to shipment of your orders. A **sourcing agent** acts as your representative in China.

Negotiating

“Negotiating is the art of reaching an agreement by resolving differences through creativity”



V 、 How to Pay China Suppliers

The best method to choose when paying your China furniture supplier depends on the amount you are going to be paying.

China suppliers may be notorious for delayed deliveries but they are not known to be scammers. Given this image does not give importers reason not to be careful because even in remote instances, there are really scammers.

Here are the common ways importers pay China suppliers:

1.International Wire Transfer

This is the oldest payment mode and the most commonly used for small and medium sized transactions. The buyer pays a down payment before production starts and the full payments as per their agreed payment term.

Importer risk losing his money should anything goes wrong. Supplier also stands to lose when after down payment and production, the buyer, for whatever reason, loses interest on his order.

2.Letter of Credit

This is one of the most secured payment mode. This is commonly used for transactions over \$50,000. LCs though involve a lot of paper work with the bank. The bank also charges exorbitant fees to get an LC.

3.Online Escrow

This payment term is ideal for small transactions only usually below \$ 5,000. You can find escrow services in the internet. This is not a very secure payment mode because there is not much paper work involved making future disputes difficult.

4.Sourcing Agents / Companies

This is not actually a payment mode but if you are working with a sourcing agent or company, you can course your payment through them. Small buyers often take advantage of this payment as this is safer than an online escrow service.

The sourcing agent/company will pay the China supplier through COD or Chinese escrow. This is a good option because the sourcing agent/company can opt to reject and not pay the supplier if the quality of the delivery does not conform to the agreement.

5.International Credit Cards

International credit cards are seldom used when supplier is a factory. International credit cards are often used when importing small electronic accessories.

6.Cash

Although risky, most furniture orders are paid in cash especially when buyer is represented in China by a sourcing agent or company. This payment option often gets the lowest prices. Cash option should only be used in small orders or when a buyer fully trusts the supplier.

7.Western Union

After PayPal, Western Union is the easiest payment option. For small and sample orders, most China suppliers prefer this payment mode. This is a high risk payment option for importers because an individual and not the company will be receiving the payment. WU however is fast and charges a very small fee. Paying through Western Union though is often correlated to internet scams.

VI、 How do I have to book, load, and ship furniture imported that I buy in China?

1.Choosing Between a Groupage or a Full Container Load

The furniture you will be [importing from China](#) will definitely be shipped through sea freight.

Cargo shipped through sea are contained in 20 x 40 feet containers. An entire home of 250 square meters/2500 square feet of cargo will fit into a 40-foot container. More detailed container information please [click here](#).



If your cargo is at least 5 pallets, the most ideal option is to ship them through full cargo load (FCL). If your cargo is of a lesser volume, the most ideal option is through a groupage or loose cargo load (LCL). This means that your cargo will share container space with other cargoes.

If you want your cargo to be protected from getting into contact with other cargoes, you can opt for FCL even if it is of a small volume. The best way is to load the furniture with your other cargoes like **floor tile , lights, sanitary wares**.

2.Shipment Management

When importing furniture from China (or any goods for that matter), you can let your supplier handle the shipping. This is common for most first time importers because it is the simplest process. The thing is, you will probably end up paying more. You have other shipping options that can help you save time and money.



- **Handle shipping yourself.**

This entails booking cargo space directly with the shipping company and managing Customs Declarations in China and in your country.

If you choose to use this shipping option, you will need to monitor the carrier of the cargo yourself and deal directly with them. This is a time consuming process.

This option is not ideal for small and medium importers. Big companies though can very well choose this option because they have more manpower.

- **Have a freight forwarder in your country handle your shipment**

This is a convenient option because you will be dealing with local agents in your country. This is the option most often used by small and medium scale importers.

The downside of this shipping option is most forwarders in your country may not have an office in China. They will be working with agents in China and will add a mark-up to what the local agents will charge.

This option can be inefficient and expensive.

- **Have a freight forwarder in China handle your shipment.**

This is the fastest way you will receive your shipment thus most importers use this shipment option. The freight forwarder is in close contact with your supplier and informs them of the status of your shipment. This option also gives the best rates.

- **Have a freight forwarder in your country and in China handle your shipment.**

This is probably the best choice for small and medium importers. You are in direct contact with both the forwarder sending your shipment and also with the ones who will be receiving your shipment. With this option, you are on top of everything.

VII、 Transit Times



When you order furniture from China, you should consider both the time it takes for the supplier to prepare your orders and the transit time. China suppliers are known to be most often delayed with their deliveries. That plus the transit time will mean that it will take some time for you to receive your orders.



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Transit time from China to the US takes between 14 to 50 days, give and take a few more days for customs clearance. This does not include delays due to unforeseen circumstances such as bad weather. It is therefore a good idea to estimate that it will take about 3 months for your furniture to arrive from China.

If you are having a high stock turn-over in your store and need immediate replenishment, it may be a wise idea to use air freight. This is only viable if you are shipping small volumes of furniture. Air freight is more expensive, but faster.

Importing furniture from China can either be relatively easy or difficult. If you are equipped with full understanding of the process, it will be an enjoyable experience. Otherwise, it will be stressful.

Finally, below two videos surely will give you clear and objective introductions about why buy and import furniture from **Foshan China**.

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