

Traveling through various countries, and dealing with each of their customs officers, is another reason to travel as lightly as possible. The more expensive camera gear you're carrying- the more attention you will draw. There are three major concerns with customs: charging a duty tax, establishing the purchase origin, and whether you are working, or a tourist, as this may have visa implications.

PRINT SIZE: A5
14cm x 21cm /
5.83" x 8.27"



REGULATIONS RESEARCH

Before leaving on your trip, contact the local embassy for your destination countries. Find out what regulations they may have regarding photo equipment. Please note that they tend to take a harder line with video cameras than still cameras. Even if you intend to shoot video with your still camera, label it as a still camera, and do not mention video.

FILLING OUT FORMS

If you are traveling with a couple of camera bodies and several lenses, you will not likely garner much attention. However, there is no guarantee. Your safest option is to complete official paperwork before leaving your home country. In the United States the form is called "CBP Form 4457", and it can be filled out at a local customs office.

ATA CARNET

Your best option for protection against confiscation and import taxes is an "International ATA Carnet". This form clears photography equipment in over 100 countries worldwide. It lasts for one year, and may be used repeatedly, as long as the equipment listed doesn't change. Search online to find an ATA Carnet office near you.

PRO TIPS

1. Do not pack your gear in the original boxes.
2. Scan the original purchase receipts (if you still have them) and keep them in .pdf files on your mobile device, as well as a printed copy with travel documents.
3. Use colored gaffer's tape and place a piece of tape on each piece of equipment to identify them as a group.
4. Create a master checklist of all gear that includes a description, serial number, and purchase date (if possible). Keep one copy with your travel documents and a second copy in your camera bag. When registered at a hotel- keep these lists in a hotel safe.