US Car Import Statistics

Which used cars come into the US from overseas, where they were built, what they are worth and how they arrive. January to September 2026.

Latest update: November 2026, with US Census Bureau data through September 2026. About 9,660 used cars arrived in the US by sea or air in the first nine months of 2026, 6% fewer than a year earlier. Japanese-built cars, close to two thirds of the total, grew 4%. European-built cars fell 15%, though they are worth about ten times as much each, and more than half their value flies in.

Used cars only, not new cars. New cars shipped from factories, almost all US car imports, are not included except in the all-vehicle table. The used cars here are mostly enthusiast and collector cars: older Japanese-market cars under the 25-year rule and high-end European cars.

We count cars that arrive by sea or air. Census also records about 4,300 foreign-built used cars this year that crossed the land border from Canada, mostly through Detroit, Buffalo, Ogdensburg and Blaine: German, Japanese and Korean-built cars most likely bought in Canada. They are left out, as are cars built in Canada or Mexico. Census does not count cars by mode, so car counts are estimated from each entry's sea and air share of declared value.

Countries are where the cars were built. A Porsche bought in London counts as German. US import duty follows the same rule. Values are declared at US entry, the value duty is charged on.

By the numbers: January to September 2026

Measure	2026	2025	Change
Used cars arriving by sea or air	about 9,660	about 10,220	-5.5%
Built in Japan	6,127	5,909	+3.7%
Built in Europe	3,310	3,880	-14.7%
Declared value	$469.7 million	$625.6 million	-24.9%
Average per car	$48,616	$61,183	-20.5%
Flown in (value)	$259.4 million	$348.4 million	-25.5%

Month by month (estimated)

Used cars arriving by sea or air each month. August 2026 includes one batch of 397 Italian-built cars flown into Savannah.

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
2025	1,205	862	1,252	877	1,191	1,240	1,389	1,099	1,110
2026	964	759	902	1,097	1,048	1,070	1,146	1,568	1,110

Top 15 countries where the cars were built

Built in	Used cars (est.)	vs 2025	Avg per car	Main way they arrived
Japan	6,127	+4%	$11,012	RoRo 54%
Germany	1,455	-16%	$109,331	Air 54%
Italy	853	+114%	$160,927	Air 78%
United Kingdom	740	-50%	$95,969	Air 57%
Brazil	130	-30%	$4,701	Container 84%
France	67	+6%	$397,990	Air 92%
Spain	44	+69%	$15,378	Container 56%
Sweden	25	+14%	$24,483	Container 47%
Turkey	20	-13%	$21,639	Container 94%
Austria	19	+19%	$31,621	RoRo 53%
Russia	17	-15%	$3,072	Container 88%
Australia	15	-53%	$36,289	Container 94%
Belgium	15	-32%	$37,121	RoRo 58%
Netherlands	14	-55%	$56,216	Container 42%
Thailand	10	-58%	$180,472	Container 100%

Japan for volume, Europe for value

Japan. About 6,130 Japanese-built cars at about $11,000 each, almost all older Japanese-market cars legal to import once they are 25 years old. By value, 54% came by RoRo, 44% in containers and 3% by air. In 2027, cars built in 2002 become eligible.

Europe. About 3,310 European-built cars at about $120,000 each. German-built cars lead with about 1,460, down 16% but picking up since May. British-built cars halved. French-built cars average about $398,000. Italian-built cars look like they doubled, but most of the rise is one batch of 397 cars flown into Savannah in August at about $19,400 each; without it, Italian imports rose about 14%.

What comes in from Japan

Most common models in US shipping records for used Japanese cars, mid-October to mid-November 2026 (a snapshot by number of records, not a full count): Toyota Crown, Nissan Skyline, Toyota Land Cruiser, Suzuki Jimny, Subaru Sambar, Nissan Silvia / 180SX, Subaru Legacy, Mitsubishi Pajero, Toyota Altezza, Toyota Estima, Suzuki Carry, Honda Odyssey. By type: JDM performance cars, 4x4s and off-roaders, kei trucks and

vans, luxury sedans, vans and people carriers, kei sports and small cars, in that order. Most land at Jacksonville, Tacoma, Los Angeles and Newark.

Country notes

Japan. About 6,130 used Japanese-built cars arrived by sea or air from January to September, 4% more than in 2025, at an average declared value of about $11,000. By value, 54% came by RoRo, 44% in containers and only 3% by air. Five of the nine months beat the same month of 2025. Our read: almost all of these are older Japanese-market cars that became legal to import under the 25-year rule, and demand is steady rather than surging. Each January another model year becomes eligible: the 2001 models now eligible. Census counts a car by where it was built, so this also includes Japanese cars bought in Australia, New Zealand or the UK.

Germany. About 1,460 used German-built cars arrived by sea or air, 16% fewer than in 2025, at an average declared value of about $109,000. More than half the value came by air. The year started slowly, then picked up: May, June and August all beat 2025, and August, at about 330, was the busiest month in the two years shown. Our read: values this high point to high-end and collector cars. Census counts a German-built car as German wherever it was bought, so this includes Porsches and Mercedes bought in the UK or elsewhere in Europe. Census data does not show which models are behind the change.

Italy. About 850 used Italian-built cars arrived by sea or air, against about 400 in 2025. Most of the rise is one August entry: 397 cars recorded as flown in through Savannah at about $19,400 each, far below the usual value of an Italian import. Without it, Italian-built imports were about 460, up about 14%, at roughly $280,000 a car. 78% of the value came by air. Our read: a batch like that is more likely a commercial shipment, or a recording quirk, than a wave of collector cars, so we would not read the doubling as a trend. The steady part of the Italian trade is a few dozen high-value cars a month, most of them flown in for auctions, shows and private buyers.

United Kingdom. About 740 used British-built cars arrived by sea or air, half as many as in 2025. 2025 had two unusual months, January and July, with more than 300 cars each; apart from those, 2025 ran at about 110 a month and 2026 at about 80. The average declared value is about $96,000, and 57% of the value came by air. Our read: duty on British-built cars works differently from EU-built cars, so check the current rate in our import duty tracker before you buy. Census counts cars by where they were built, so a Porsche bought in London counts as German, and duty follows the same rule.

France. 67 used French-built cars arrived by sea or air, against 63 in 2025, at an average declared value of about $398,000, the highest of any origin. 92% of the value came by air. Our read: France sends few cars, but they are among the most valuable that come into the US, and nearly all fly. That points to auction and collector purchases, though Census data does not show the cars themselves.

How the cars arrive

By declared value, cars arriving by sea or air.

Mode	2026	2025	Change
In containers	$132.4 million (28%)	$193.8 million (31%)	-31.7%
By RoRo and other non-container vessels	$77.9 million (17%)	$83.4 million (13%)	-6.6%
By air	$259.4 million (55%)	$348.4 million (56%)	-25.5%

All passenger vehicle imports, new and used

For scale: almost all US car imports are new cars, and used imports are well under 1% of the total by value. All countries, Canada and Mexico included.

Built in	2026	2025	Change
Mexico	$28.72 billion	$34.02 billion	-15.6%
Japan	$26.66 billion	$27.41 billion	-2.8%
South Korea	$23.47 billion	$23.98 billion	-2.1%
Canada	$17.30 billion	$19.06 billion	-9.2%
Germany	$13.58 billion	$15.59 billion	-12.9%
United Kingdom	$4.94 billion	$5.44 billion	-9.4%
Slovakia	$4.06 billion	$3.55 billion	+14.4%
Sweden	$2.54 billion	$1.84 billion	+37.8%
China	$1.66 billion	$1.25 billion	+33.0%
Italy	$1.57 billion	$1.76 billion	-10.7%

Collector pieces

This category covers collections and collectors' pieces of historical interest, including cars that qualify as collectors' items alongside other historical objects, so it is not a car count. All countries.

Country of origin	2026	2025	Change
All countries	$52.4 million	$63.9 million	-18.1%
United Kingdom	$13.7 million	$10.8 million	+27.8%
Japan	$7.7 million	$6.7 million	+14.9%
France	$7.0 million	$6.3 million	+11.5%
Italy	$5.1 million	$23.3 million	-78.1%
Germany	$3.8 million	$2.0 million	+94.2%

Importing a car: our rates

Ocean and air freight to the US from our import calculator, as of November 2026. Duty, US port charges and delivery from the port come on top.

- Yokohama to Long Beach or Tacoma by RoRo: $2,850, about 17 days
- Yokohama to Oakland by container: $8,750, about 21 days
- Rotterdam to New York: $2,750, about 18 days
- Southampton to New York: $2,750, about 26 days
- Rotterdam to Oakland: $3,350, about 43 days
- Frankfurt to the US by air: $15,500

For collector and high-end cars, we recommend a dedicated container, or two cars on the floor of one container; air pays off when a show or auction date sets the clock. Duty on cars 25 years and older is about 10% for EU-built cars and 12.5% for British and Japanese-built cars as of November 2026; modern cars pay more. A licensed customs broker files the US entry, and our team prepares the paperwork. Current duty rates: wcshipping.com/import-car-tariffs

Source: US Census Bureau trade data, January to September 2026 and 2025, compiled by West Coast Shipping. Cars arriving by sea or air; car counts estimated from declared value by mode. Values are declared import values in US dollars. Country notes are our own reading of the numbers and of public reporting.

West Coast Shipping, international car shipping since 2007, with our own warehouses in California, Florida and New Jersey.
Import quotes: wcshipping.com/import-cars | +1 510 236 3008
Latest version of this report: wcshipping.com/us-car-import-statistics