

Importing Electronic Components from China to India

The Procurement Checklist

A working checklist for procurement managers who import components directly. Print it, keep it on your desk, and run every import against it. Nothing here replaces your CHA or your CA — it keeps you asking the right questions before money moves.

How to use this: sections 1–5 are the checklist for a direct import. Section 6 shows what drops off the list when an Indian importer holds the paperwork instead of you.

1 Before you buy — supplier vetting checklist

Ten minutes of vetting before payment saves weeks after. Tick every box — or note in writing why you skipped it.

- Business licence verified** — Ask for the supplier's Chinese business licence and match the registered company name to the name on the proforma invoice and the bank account. Mismatch = stop.
- Part traceability stated** — Where do the parts come from — franchised stock, OEM excess, or open market? Get the answer in writing on the quote, not verbally.
- Date codes and lot codes upfront** — Ask for date codes and photos of reels, labels and packaging before payment. A supplier who won't show the stock is telling you something.
- Sample policy checked** — Will they send samples or lot photos before you commit to full quantity? A flat no on a large order is a warning sign.
- Inspection option for critical lines** — For high-value or safety-critical parts, confirm they accept third-party inspection or provide test reports before dispatch.
- Payment terms sane** — 100% advance to a personal bank account is a red flag. Pay a company account that matches the licence name; negotiate part-payment or escrow where you can.
- Everything on email** — Quotes, part numbers, date-code commitments and RMA terms belong in email, not only in chat apps. Chat history is a weak dispute document.
- Return / RMA terms agreed** — What happens if parts fail incoming inspection? Agree it before payment, not after.

2 The document set

Six documents move every import. Know what each one is for before the shipment moves.

Document	What it is for
Proforma invoice	The supplier's offer — parts, prices, terms. You pay against it. It is not a customs document.
Commercial invoice	The transaction document customs assesses value on. Names, part numbers and unit prices must match your PO.
Packing list	What is physically in each carton. Customs and your stores both use it; quantities must match the invoice.
AWB / Bill of Lading	The transport contract and proof of shipment (AWB for air, BL for sea). You need it to claim the cargo.
Bill of Entry	The Indian customs declaration filed for clearance — your legal proof of import and your document for GST input credit.
Certificate of origin	States where the goods were made. Asked for when duty treatment under a trade agreement applies.

Your CHA files the Bill of Entry against your IEC (Importer-Exporter Code). No IEC, no import — check it is active before the shipment leaves China.

3 HSN classification basics

Most electronic components sit in **Chapter 85** of the customs tariff. The 8-digit HSN code on the Bill of Entry drives the duty rate and the IGST rate — so classification is a cost decision, not a formality.

REAL EXAMPLES

MLCC (multilayer ceramic) capacitors — HSN **8532 2300**

Thick-film chip resistors — HSN **8533 2929**

- **Duty and IGST rates vary by HSN and they change.** Check current rates on ICEGATE or with your CHA at the time of each import. Don't reuse last year's numbers.
- **Fix the 8-digit code before the shipment leaves.** Reclassification after arrival means delay, and sometimes a customs query.
- **Keep an HSN master for recurring parts.** Part family → 8-digit HSN → notes. It removes the guessing on the next order.

4 Air or sea — the decision table

	Air freight	Sea freight
Transit time	Typically 7–10 days door-to-door.	Several weeks port-to-port, plus inland clearance and trucking.
Cost profile	Higher per kg. Sensible for small, high-value shipments.	Lower per kg. Wins on volume and weight.
When it fits	Line-down risk, NPI builds, samples, small reels.	Planned production stock, heavy or bulky cargo.
Watch-outs	Chargeable (volumetric) weight, fuel surcharges.	Port congestion, longer money-in-transit.

Rule of thumb: if one week of stopped production costs more than the freight difference, fly it. Do the arithmetic per shipment — not on habit.

5 Common failure points

Where direct imports actually go wrong — and the fix for each.

- **Wrong HSN.** Wrong rate, customs query, delay. Fix: keep the HSN master current and confirm codes with your CHA before shipping.
- **Undervaluation.** A supplier “helpfully” under-declaring the invoice creates risk that sits with you, the importer — penalties, seizure, a flagged IEC. Declare the real transaction value.
- **Missing or inactive IEC.** No IEC, no Bill of Entry, no clearance. Check IEC status before the shipment moves, not at the airport.
- **No GST input credit path.** If the import isn’t cleared on your GSTIN — grey channel, or a courier entry misdeclared — the IGST paid is a straight cost. Cleared properly, it’s a credit.
- **Unverified parts.** Counterfeit and remarked parts exist in the open market. Date-code checks, marking inspection, and third-party testing on critical lines cost less than a field failure.
- **Loose paperwork.** Invoice, packing list and Bill of Entry quantities that don’t reconcile invite queries. Match them before filing.

6 The shortcut — buying through an Indian importer

Everything above assumes you carry the import yourself. Buying the same parts from an India-based independent distributor — like **Nikivya Semiconductor** — moves most of this checklist onto the seller's desk:

- **One GST invoice** — You buy in INR from a GST-registered Indian company. Input credit is straightforward; no forex, no advance payment to China.
- **Customs handled** — HSN classification, Bill of Entry, duty payment and CHA coordination are done on the seller's IEC — before the parts reach you.
- **Verification on receipt** — Parts are checked on arrival — date codes, markings, packaging — before dispatch to you.
- **Import paper trail kept** — A complete import record stands behind every lot, available if your auditor or customer asks.

ABOUT NIKIVYA SEMICONDUCTOR

Independent distributor. Stocks MLCC capacitors and thick-film chip resistors in India; sources across 80+ manufacturer lines. Standard sourcing 4–6 weeks; emergency air 7–10 days. MSME, IEC and GST registered.

Send a part number and quantity — we reply with availability, price and lead time.

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