



Pre-Shipment Inspection Checklist for China

What an inspector checks before your goods leave the factory
— with pass and fail criteria for every point.

42

CHECK POINTS · SIX GROUPS

Group 1 — Quantity and cartons

6 POINTS

#	What the inspector does	Pass	Fail
1	Counts total cartons presented	Matches packing list exactly	Any shortfall, or cartons "still in another building"
2	Opens sample cartons, counts units inside	Units per carton match the declared count	Mixed quantities between cartons
3	Calculates total units against the PO	Matches the ordered quantity	Over- or under-shipment not agreed in writing
4	Confirms production is $\geq 80\%$ complete and packed	Enough finished stock for a valid sample	Goods unpacked, unfinished, or partly at a second site
5	Checks carton condition	Clean, dry, undamaged, sealed	Crushed corners, water staining, resealed cartons
6	Verifies carton numbering and sequence	Sequential and complete	Gaps in numbering, duplicated numbers

Group 2 — Workmanship and appearance

8 POINTS

#	What the inspector does	Pass	Fail
7	Compares colour against the sealed sample	Within agreed tolerance in daylight	Visible shade variation across the batch
8	Inspects surface finish	No scratches, dents, blemishes above the minor threshold	Defects visible at arm's length
9	Checks seams, joints, welds or stitching	Even, secure, correctly aligned	Loose stitching, gaps, weak joints
10	Examines edges and trims	Finished, deburred, no sharp edges	Rough or unfinished edges
11	Verifies print and artwork placement	Correct position, orientation, no smudging	Misaligned, mirrored or blurred print
12	Checks assembly and fit	Parts align, no forcing required	Gaps, misalignment, parts that do not seat
13	Confirms accessories and spare parts	Present in the agreed quantity	Missing screws, manuals, adaptors
14	Classifies every defect found as critical, major or minor	Counts stay within AQL limits	Any critical defect, or majors above the accept number

Group 3 — Measurements and weight

5 POINTS

#	What the inspector does	Pass	Fail
15	Measures product dimensions against the spec	Within stated tolerance	Outside tolerance on any critical dimension
16	Weighs the product	Matches the declared unit weight	Variance suggesting a material substitution
17	Measures the retail box	Matches the packaging spec	Will not fit agreed shelf or shipper dimensions
18	Measures and weighs the export carton	Matches the supplier's detail sheet	Cartons heavier or larger than declared
19	Compares measured weights with the shipping marks	Marks match reality	Marks copied from an old spec — a freight and customs problem later

Group 4 — Function and safety tests

7 POINTS

#	What the inspector does	Pass	Fail
20	Operates the product as a customer would	Functions as specified	Any failure to operate
21	Tests moving parts through full travel	Smooth, complete movement	Sticking, grinding, incomplete travel
22	Powers on electrical items and runs a basic function check	Powers up and performs	Dead units, intermittent operation
23	Checks plug type and voltage rating	Correct for the destination market	Wrong plug or rating — a market-entry blocker
24	Tests closures: zips, buttons, clasps, hinges	Operate repeatedly without failure	Failure within the agreed cycle count
25	Applies load or stress tests where specified	Holds the rated load	Deformation or failure below rating
26	Performs a carton drop test	Contents undamaged after the drop	Product damage — packaging will not survive transit

Group 5 — Labels, marks and compliance

9 POINTS

#	What the inspector does	Pass	Fail
27	Checks the brand logo	Correct artwork, size and placement	Distorted, outdated or wrong-colour logo
28	Verifies the product label	Matches the approved artwork	Wrong version, typos, wrong language
29	Checks care, material or composition labels	Present, correct, correctly attached	Missing or contradicting the spec
30	Scans every barcode type on the product and carton	All scan and return the right code	Any barcode that will not scan — a retail rejection
31	Verifies country-of-origin marking	Present and correct for the destination	Missing — a customs problem, not a quality one
32	Checks regulatory marks (CE, UKCA, FCC, EAC and equivalents)	Present where required	Missing, or applied without documentation
33	Checks hangtags and swing tickets	Correct, attached, priced if required	Missing or wrong market's tags
34	Confirms warning and instruction text	In the destination market's language	English-only where local language is mandatory
35	Verifies shipping marks on the export carton	Match the buyer's requirement	Wrong consignee, port or reference

Group 6 — Packaging and container loading

7 POINTS

#	What the inspector does	Pass	Fail
36	Checks unit packaging	Correct material and construction	Substituted or thinner material
37	Checks inner packing and protection	Adequate for transit	Insufficient padding, loose items
38	Verifies the export carton specification	Correct ply, size and strength	Downgraded board
39	Checks palletisation	Stacked, wrapped and strapped as specified	Unstable stacks, wrong pallet type
40	Inspects the container before loading	Clean, dry, no holes, no odour	Damage or contamination
41	Supervises the loading sequence and count	Full agreed quantity loaded, secured	Miscount, poor stowage, crushing risk
42	Records the container seal number and photographs it	Seal number documented and matches paperwork	Seal missing, or number not recorded

AQL quick reference

HOW THE ACCEPT AND REJECT NUMBERS ARE CALCULATED

Worked example

Order: 5,000 units · Sample: 200 · Limits: 0 / 2.5 / 4.0

Class	Accept if $\leq$	Reject if $\geq$
Critical	0	1
Major	10	11
Minor	14	15

Nine major defects in the sample: **pass**. Eleven: **fail** — and the entire 5,000-unit batch is rejected, not the eleven units.

Sample size comes from lot size, not from a percentage. Under ISO 2859-1, General Inspection Level II, an order of 3,201–10,000 units draws a sample of 200. A 5,000-unit order and a 9,000-unit order are sampled identically.

Tightening the AQL costs money — a lower limit means more rejections and more rework, and suppliers price that in. A pass is a statistical statement, not a guarantee.