



SAUDI IMPORT CERTIFICATION • JULY 2026

What does your goods type actually need?

A decision tree. Find your product, follow the branch, and get the authority, the platform, the certificate and the documents.

Built only from published rules. Every branch names its source.

Do not start at your product.

Start at Gate 0. Then Gate 1. Only then jump to your goods type. Most refused shipments do not fail on the product. They fail on a gate the importer did not know was there.

01

GATE 0

Is it allowed in at all? Banned, restricted, or free. Page 5 answers it. Page 7 tells you which authority signs the permit if you are restricted.

02

GATE 1

Who regulates it? The SFDA, or SASO. This one question decides your entire route. Page 10 splits the two lists. Pages 13 to 18 show what each route asks you for.

03

YOUR PAGE

The certificate, the platform, and the thing that catches people. Pages 20 to 46, one goods type at a time. Page 47 is the six traps. Page 49 is what nobody has published yet.

1.0

THE TWO GATES

Nobody skips these. Two questions decide the whole route, and both of them come before your product does.

Is it allowed in at all?

Three answers, and only three.

BANNED

Nothing you can do. Weapons and ammunition. Drugs and intoxicants. Counterfeit currency. Fireworks. Electric shockers. Radar detectors. Listening devices. Hidden cameras built into watches, pens, glasses and drones. Any medicine, cream, tonic or herb not registered with the SFDA.

SOURCE • ZATCA PROHIBITED GOODS LIST

**BANNED BY
SECTOR**

Used or refurbished car spare parts. Right hand drive vehicles and any conversion from right hand drive. Armoured vehicles. Salvage, former taxi, former police and school transport vehicles. Used appliances still holding controlled refrigerant gas.

SOURCE · SASO AND ZATCA AND MEWA

RESTRICTED

It comes in, but only with written approval from a named authority, obtained first. The Gulf Common Customs Law article 24 says entry is prevented except under an approval from the competent authority. Which authority is the whole question. Next page.

SOURCE · GCC COMMON CUSTOMS LAW

FREE

Nothing above applies. Go to Gate 1.

If it is restricted, who signs?

ZATCA runs a free restricted goods clearance service. The authority pushes its permit straight into customs. But you have to know whose door to knock on.

Food, medicine, devices,
cosmetics, feed

SFDA

1.2

GATE 0

Chemical materials in any form	NCEC
Chemicals used to make explosives, and civil explosives and fireworks	Ministry of Interior
Chemicals that can be turned into narcotics	SFDA with the Interior narcotics directorate
Dual purpose explosive or narcotic materials	High Commission for Industrial Security

Chemical Weapons Convention chemicals	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ozone, mercury and persistent pollutant substances	MEWA, operated through NCEC
Agricultural pesticides, fresh produce, live aquatic species, falcons	MEWA
Vehicle energy efficiency	SASO
Restricted communications equipment	CST
Books and publications	Ministry of Media

WHAT CATCHES PEOPLE

Saudi Arabia does not publish one master table mapping every product class to its authority. This is assembled from those authorities own published pages. If someone hands you a complete list, they built it too. Confirm your own class before you book.



SFDA, or SASO?

One question decides your whole route, your platform, your certificate and your timeline.

SFDA REGULATES IT

Food and drink

Medicines

Medical devices

Cosmetics

Public health pesticides

Animal feed

Animal grooming and care

Tobacco and nicotine, including vape liquid and heated tobacco

YOUR ROUTE

Route: Ghad, then Faseh. Saber is not your platform.



Everything else is SASO.

Route: Saber, under the Saleem programme, run by SASO.

EVERYTHING ELSE

Electricals and appliances · Communications and IT devices · Chemicals · Machinery · Building materials · Textiles and footwear · Toys · Vehicles and parts · Kitchenware

WHAT CATCHES PEOPLE

The standard your product is tested against may carry an SFDA code and still be enforced by SASO. The prefix tells you who wrote the standard. It does not tell you who lets the shipment in.

Since 1 October 2025
the shipment certificate
is a mandatory
prerequisite for
submitting any customs
declaration.

SASO, on the record, and it applies to all imported products whether they are subject to technical regulations or not. If you are still treating the certificate as paperwork you sort out while the box is on the water, that is now a stopped declaration.

Saber. Two certificates, not one.

PCOC

Product certificate. One per product. Issued by a conformity assessment body accepted by SASO. Not by SASO itself. SAR 500 before VAT. Commonly one year. Some routes run longer. Read the dates on your own certificate rather than the dates in a guide.

SCOC

Shipment certificate. One per consignment. SAR 350 before VAT. This is the one customs looks for. It is issued electronically through saber.sa.

Not regulated does not mean nothing to do.

There are 61 technical regulations live in Saber today. Mechanics 26. Electrical and electronics 13. Chemistry 10. Construction 7. Textiles 5.

01 If your product is in one of the 61

Product certificate from a conformity body first. Then the shipment certificate. Then the customs declaration.

02 **If your product is in none of them**

A self declaration at product level, which is free. Then the shipment certificate at SAR 350. Still a certificate. Still before the declaration.

03 **The account is yours, not your suppliers**

A Saber account needs a Saudi commercial registration. A foreign supplier cannot register the product itself. It has to run through the importer.

04 **CE marking is not a route in**

It has no legal standing in Saudi Arabia. The test reports behind it can be handed to the conformity body as evidence, and IECEE CB certificates are recognised in their own right. The mark on the box is not what clears the shipment. The record in Saber is.

SFDA. Ghad, then Faseh.

Two systems, in order. Registration first, clearance second.

01

Ghad

Register the establishment, then register the product. ghad.sfda.gov.sa

1.7

PATH B

02 Faseh

Request clearance for the consignment.
faseh.sfda.gov.sa

03 Faseh is not Fasah

Faseh clears SFDA goods. Fasah is the national customs single window at fasah.sa, run by Tabadul. Two systems, near identical names, completely different jobs. People lose days to this and then blame the port.

04 The old systems are closed

eCosma moved into Ghad in 2023. Food registration moved into Ghad in May 2025. The old device notification route is gone. If a guide names any of them, it is out of date and so is everything else on the page.



2.0

YOUR GOODS TYPE

Thirteen branches. Find yours, read one page, and you have the authority, the platform, the certificate and the trap.

Go straight to your page.

Pages 5 to 18 are the spine. Everyone goes through them.

Food and drink	20	Machinery and used plant	34
Supplements	22	Building materials	36
Cosmetics	24	Textiles and footwear	38
Medicines and devices	26	Toys and children	40
Electricals and appliances	28	Vehicles, parts, tyres	42
Phones, computers, radios	30	Kitchenware and packaging	44
Chemicals	32	Everything else	14

Halal is much wider than meat.

AUTHORITY

SFDA

PLATFORM

Ghad, then Faseh

2.2

FOOD AND DRINK

SFDA circular 10130, dated 11/4/1445 which is 26 November 2023, extends halal certification well past the meat counter. It covers meat and its derivatives, dairy, gelatin, collagen and animal enzymes, animal fats and oils, pastries, pizza, samosa, pies, cakes, chocolate, sweets, drinks, dietary supplements, and ready and light meals. In practice: anything carrying an animal derivative.

A general halal certificate is not enough. The body that issued it must be recognised by the Saudi Halal Center. Check the certifier, not just the certificate, at halal.gov.sa.

WHAT CATCHES PEOPLE

Arabic labelling. An Arabic sticker is allowed only if the manufacturer applied it, it cannot be removed in ordinary handling, and it hides nothing on the original label. A sticker your own team applies at the warehouse is a rejection cause. Production and expiry dates cannot sit on a stick on label at all.

The dose decides the regulator.

AUTHORITY

SFDA, one track or the other

PLATFORM

Ghad, then Faseh

Glucosamine at 1000 mg a day or less is a food supplement. Above 1000 mg a day in pharmaceutical form it is a medicine.

Melatonin at 2 mg a day or less is food. Above that, or carrying a medical claim, it is a medicine.

The two tracks are not close. The food track wants specifications, safety data and labels. The medicine track wants a full registration dossier and a manufacturing inspection. Different timeline, different cost, different answer to the customer waiting for stock.

Either way the sequence is the same one on page 16. The product is registered on Ghad first, then the shipment is cleared on Faseh. The clock starts when you register, not when the vessel sails, so a first time product needs that work done before you book anything.

WHAT CATCHES PEOPLE

If your formulation sits near a line, use the SFDA product classification service before you place the order. It is free and it is advisory. It settles which track you are on. It does not replace registration on that track.

Concentration can move you out of cosmetics.

AUTHORITY**SFDA****PLATFORM****Ghad, then Faseh**

Salicylic acid above 3 percent in a rinse off product, or above 2 percent in a leave on product, is treated as a medicine.

2.4**COSMETICS**

An antidandruff shampoo that works pharmacologically is a health product, not a cosmetic.

Throat lozenges carrying volatile oils with menthol at 5 mg or more are health products.

Cosmetics follow the same SFDA sequence as food. Register the product on Ghad, then clear the shipment on Faseh. The registration belongs to the product, so repeat orders of the same item reuse it. A reformulated item does not reuse it.

WHAT CATCHES PEOPLE

Same bottle, same shelf, same label. A formulation change your supplier made for another market can move the product into a different regulator without anyone telling you. Read the formulation before you read the price list.

Mechanism decides. Not shape.

AUTHORITY

SFDA

PLATFORM

Ghad, then Faseh

Medicated eye drops are a medicine.
Lubricating eye drops are a device. Same
dropper, different regulator, different dossier.

2.5

MEDICINES AND MEDICAL
DEVICES

Silver and honey wound dressings stay devices.

Remaining shelf life at the Saudi port of entry, and this one is precise. If total shelf life is under 1 year, at least 40 percent must remain on arrival. If total shelf life is over 1 year, at least 7 months must remain on arrival.

None of this sits on Saber. Do not spend a week hunting for a technical regulation that was never written for your product, and do not accept a Saber product certificate from a supplier as proof that a medical device is cleared. It is the wrong gate.

WHAT CATCHES PEOPLE

Plan the sailing around that shelf life number. A fully compliant device with a valid certificate is still refused if it arrives too late in its own life. This is one of the most common reasons a correct shipment is turned away, and it is entirely avoidable at the booking stage.

Three things sit on top. None of them replace the certificate.

AUTHORITY**SASO****PLATFORM****Saber**

01 Energy efficiency label

Applied for through SASO own services, not through Saber, then used as an input to the product certificate. Covers air conditioners, fridges and freezers, washing machines, lighting, electric motors, dryers, water heaters, dishwashers, tyres and light vehicles. Televisions and ovens are not on that list. They sit under standby power rules instead.

02 The G mark, and the tracking symbol, are two different things

The Gulf conformity marking is a badge, and the Gulf standards body says plainly it is not a quality mark. The tracking symbol is separate, carries a QR code, and has to stay permanently visible. The symbol is required for exactly two categories: childrens toys, and low voltage electrical equipment. Not for appliances generally.

03 Saudi Quality Mark

Mandatory for ten categories only. Six of them are building materials. The other four are gas appliances, electrical wiring and extension cords, plugs, switches and socket outlets, and oxo biodegradable plastic additives. General appliances, electronics and IT are not on the list, whatever a supplier tells you.

The change most guidance has not caught up with.

AUTHORITY

SASO

PLATFORM

Saber, since February 2025

2.7

PHONES, COMPUTERS, ANYTHING WITH A RADIO

Conformity for communications and IT devices moved to Saber in February 2025, under a SASO technical regulation published in August 2024 that gave the market a 180 day runway. Certificates come from conformity bodies accepted by SASO.

CST no longer runs a conformity platform. It still handles spectrum and wireless licensing, its own equipment rules, and approval for demonstrating devices that are not yet certified.

WHAT CATCHES PEOPLE

If a consultant is quoting you a CST portal first and Saber second workflow in 2026, they are reading a page that is more than a year out of date. A large amount of the guidance circulating right now, including material dated this year, still describes the old sequence. Ask them when they last opened the source.

Chemicals. Two systems, and you may be in both.

Authority depends on the list. Platform Saber, plus a permit authority.

01 In Saber

There is no single horizontal chemicals regulation. Most chemicals are not regulated, which means a free self declaration and then the shipment certificate. Specific regulations do exist for adhesives, lubricating oils, detergents, and paints and varnishes.

02

The Chemical Materials Management Law

Its implementing regulation was published on 29 August 2025 with nine lists. The list your material sits on decides who signs the permit. Interior for explosives precursors and civil explosives and fireworks. SFDA with the Interior narcotics directorate for drug precursors. The High Commission for Industrial Security for dual purpose material, which is not GAMI whatever you have read. MEWA through NCEC for Rotterdam, Stockholm, Minamata and Montreal Protocol substances. Foreign Affairs for Chemical Weapons Convention chemicals.

03

NCEC clearance

SAR 3,500 up to 20 tonnes, then SAR 175 per tonne, on a 10 working day service. Ozone depleting substances and HFC gases are allocated on quota, so the permit is not simply a form.

04

Safety data sheet

Required in English, and not older than three years.

The honest gap, and what we do about it.

AUTHORITY
SASO

PLATFORM
Saber

2.9

MACHINERY AND USED PLANT

New machinery runs the standard route. Machinery regulations parts 1 to 3 are live in Saber, so most equipment needs a product certificate and then a shipment certificate.

Used machinery is where the published material runs out. We are not going to tell you there is a ten year age limit, because we could not find one written anywhere. The five year rule people quote at you is a vehicle rule, not a machinery rule. Whether a used machine needs a product certificate at all is not settled in anything published.

WHAT CATCHES PEOPLE

What we do instead. Get the position for your HS code from a conformity assessment body in writing before the machine is loaded. On used capital equipment a written answer from the body that will actually issue the certificate is worth more than any guide, including this one.

This is where the Quality Mark actually bites.

AUTHORITY	PLATFORM
SASO	Saber

2.10

BUILDING MATERIALS

Construction holds 7 of the 61 technical regulations in Saber. Building materials regulations parts 1 to 4 are live.

Six of the ten mandatory Saudi Quality Mark categories are building materials: ready mixed concrete, cement, ceramic and porcelain tiles, reinforcement steel bars, flat steel products, and aluminium composite panels.

The licence sits with the manufacturer, not with you. Ask for the licence number, check that it covers the exact product and the exact plant you are buying from, and keep a copy on the file. If you move mill or plant part way through a contract, you are checking it again.

WHAT CATCHES PEOPLE

If you are shipping any of those six, the Quality Mark is not optional and it is not the same thing as the product certificate. It is an additional licence with its own process. Budget the time for it at the quotation stage, not at the port.

In scope at 80 percent textile fibre by weight.

AUTHORITY

SASO

PLATFORM

Saber

2.11

TEXTILES, CLOTHING AND
FOOTWEAR

Conformity type 3 for underwear and childrens textiles. Type 1a for everything else. Footwear is type 3 for products intended for children under 36 months.

Childrens clothing carries drawstring requirements to standard and a formaldehyde limit under 20 parts per million.

Labels must not carry Quranic verses or the word Allah. Footwear must not use animal skins forbidden by law.

WHAT CATCHES PEOPLE

Footwear labelling differs from Europe in a way that catches relabelled lines. Brand and country of origin go on each shoe, hard to remove, in Arabic or Arabic and English. Upper, lining and sole materials go in the technical file. Saudi Arabia does not require the European material pictograms on the label itself. If you are shipping an EU line here, that is a real difference and not a formality.

One of only two categories carrying the tracking symbol.

AUTHORITY

SASO, under the Gulf regulation

MARKS

G mark, plus the tracking symbol

2.12

TOYS AND CHILDRENS
PRODUCTS

Scope is play products for children under 14. Puzzles over 500 pieces, soothers, bicycles, sports equipment for children over 20 kg and gaming consoles are outside it.

Chemical limits: phthalates at 0.1 percent of plastic mass or less, heavy metal migration limits, and nitrosamines banned for anything a child under 36 months puts in the mouth.

Warnings in Arabic. Age grading visible before purchase. Declarations of conformity in Arabic and English. The Gulf type examination certificate runs five years. Test reports no older than three years, from accredited laboratories.

WHAT CATCHES PEOPLE

Whether toys also need a Saber product certificate on top of the G mark is not clear in the published material. The toy regulation is listed among the 61 live in Saber, which points strongly one way, but no primary source states it plainly. Confirm by HS code before you rely on either answer.

Three separate rulebooks, and one thing we will not pretend to know.

AUTHORITY

SASO and ZATCA

PLATFORM

Saber

01

Cars

Model year not more than 5 years old, counted backwards excluding the current year. Right hand drive and any conversion from it are banned. So are armoured vehicles, salvage, former taxis, former police cars, school transport marked vehicles, and anything with a tampered chassis number. Used vehicles are now inspected in the country of shipment through Saber before they sail. That replaced the old arrangement where the car arrived, failed, and went home at your cost.

02 Spare parts

The regulation covers 24 items including braking systems, safety glazing, lamps, filters, mirrors, seat belts, airbags and wiring. It excludes tyres, batteries and main parts such as engine and gearbox, which have their own instruments. Used or refurbished spare parts are banned outright and the wording is categorical.

03 Tyres

A Gulf tyre regulation exists and is live in Saber. On maximum tyre age at import we will be straight with you: the five year rule you have been quoted is from the UAE, not Saudi Arabia. We could not find a Saudi age limit in any published text. Do not plan a container of aged stock around a rule nobody can show you in writing.

Everyone puts this on the food track. It is not on the food track.

AUTHORITY**SASO, not SFDA****PLATFORM****Saber, not Faseh**

Kitchen tools and appliances that touch food fall under a SASO technical regulation, reference 04-06-19-171, and go through Saber with a certificate of conformity from a body SASO recognises.

2.14

KITCHENWARE AND FOOD PACKAGING

It is a wider category than people expect. Pots, pans, cutlery, utensils, plastic and paper containers, cling film and foil, disposable cups and plates, and the packaging that food is sold in. If it touches the food and it is not the food, start here.

The confusion is real and it has a cause. The standards these products are tested against carry SFDA codes, because the SFDA wrote them. Who writes the standard and who clears the consignment are two different questions, and this is the category where mixing them up costs the most.

WHAT CATCHES PEOPLE

Send a kitchenware consignment to Faseh and it will sit there while you work out why nothing is moving. Same for food packaging and food contact materials. Route it through Saber.



3.0

BEFORE YOU BOOK

Six traps that cost money, and the six places where the published rules genuinely run out.

Six traps, in the order they cost you money.

01

Waiting for the certificate until the goods are in port

Since 1 October 2025 you cannot submit a customs declaration without the shipment certificate. Cargo that sits costs money every single day it sits.

3.1

THE SIX TRAPS

02**Reading not regulated as nothing to do**

It means a free self declaration and a SAR 350 shipment certificate. Not zero.

03**The Arabic sticker your own team applies**

Manufacturer applied only, irremovable, hiding nothing on the original. Dates never on a stick on label.

04**Trusting the CE mark**

It is not a route into Saudi Arabia. It never has been.

05**Faseh and Fasah**

One clears SFDA goods. One is the national customs single window. Different systems, near identical names.

06**Expecting the supplier to register the product**

Saber accounts need a Saudi commercial registration. The registration is yours to do, and the supplier cannot do it for you.

Where the published rules run out.

We could have written this without this page. Most guides do. Here is what is genuinely unsettled in the published material as at July 2026, and what we tell clients to confirm in writing before they book.

01

Whether used machinery needs a Saber certificate, and whether any age limit exists at all

3.2**WHERE THE RULES RUN OUT**

- 02 Maximum tyre age at import
- 03 Whether toys need a Saber product certificate on top of the G mark
- 04 Whether replacement car parts need a full certificate or a supplier declaration
- 05 Certificate of origin attestation, where the available sources contradict each other
- 06 Palletisation, announced and then reported as suspended, with no clear current position

WHAT CATCHES PEOPLE

None of this makes a shipment impossible. It makes it something you confirm rather than assume. The importers who get caught are the ones who found a confident answer online and stopped looking.



Not sure which branch you are on?

Send us the HS code. We will tell you the route, the authority, the certificate and the documents. And where the answer is not published, we will tell you that too, and get it in writing from the body that issues the certificate.

Sent clears customs in house at all nine Saudi ports under its own ZATCA licence. ISO 9001 and ISO 45001. Approved vendor with Saudi Aramco, NEOM and SABIC.

the way forward...