Shipping Indian Factory Goods to Amazon FBA

SourcingFrom

Updated 12 Oct 2026 8 min read

This guide covers the plumbing between an Indian factory and an Amazon fulfilment centre: who is the importer, who preps and labels, how cartons must be packed and which route the goods take. Amazon is never your importer, and in the US prep is now the seller's job, so the factory needs a clear spec.

The Short Version

- Amazon will not act as importer of record for any FBA shipment, so be the importer yourself.
- Since 1 January 2026 Amazon no longer preps or labels items in the US, so send the factory a one-page prep spec.
- Get carton dimensions and weights on the proforma, before production.
- Avoid the supplier's forwarder on terms you have not seen. Use your own forwarder and broker.
- Inspect the first small order hardest, and check FNSKU labels against SKUs while you are there.

A Canadian Amazon seller posted a simple question in August 2024. They'd found an Indian supplier for an apparel line, 60 pieces weighing about 20 kilos, and wanted to know how to get it into Amazon's warehouses (r/FulfillmentByAmazon, August 2024). The replies covered freight, which was eye-watering per piece at that size, and one commenter added the line we'd underline: do QC checks and inspections "irrespective of how small the quantities are". Nobody in the thread mentioned labels, cartons or who would be the importer. That's typical, and it's where FBA orders from India actually go wrong.



This guide is the plumbing between an Indian factory and an Amazon fulfilment centre - who files the customs entry, who sticks the labels, how the cartons must be packed and which route the goods take. It isn't about what to sell. For that, and for the ways to make sourcing from India profitable, read 10 ways to turn a profit sourcing Amazon products from India. One honest caveat - Amazon changes its inbound rules often and by marketplace, so check Seller Central for your marketplace before each first shipment.

Last researched 12 October 2026 · Next review 12 January 2027 · Written by SourcingFrom

1. Amazon Is Never Your Importer

This is the rule that surprises first-time sellers most. Amazon, including its fulfilment centres, won't act as importer of record for any FBA shipment, of

any size or value, from any origin (Seller Central, import and export inventory). In the US it can be named only as the ultimate consignee, written as "c/o FBA" before the Amazon entity's name, and a shipment that tries to enter with Amazon as importer is refused and returned at the shipper's expense.

So somebody else has to be the importer, and it should be you. The trap here is specific to small orders from India. When a supplier ships on its own courier account, the courier often ends up as importer of record, and US sellers found that duty refunds then went to FedEx and UPS instead of them (FS-SHP-017, r/ecommerce, 2026). Ship DDP on a supplier's account and you've also handed your customs record to somebody else. What an importer of record carries, and how to set yourself up as one, is on importer of record.

The short rule we'd follow - your name on the entry, your customs broker filing it, your bond in the US. Everything else in this guide gets easier once that's settled.

2. Prep Is Now Your Job, so Make It the Factory's

From 1 January 2026 Amazon stopped offering prep and item labelling for FBA shipments in the US marketplace (Amazon SP-API changelog, July 2025). No more paying Amazon to stick FNSKU labels, bag or bundle on arrival. Sellers and their providers now do it, and a guide quoting the Seller Central notice says shipments created after the cut-off that arrive without proper prep and labelling aren't eligible for reimbursement if items are damaged or lost (Pattern, 2025). Other marketplaces are following on their own dates, so check yours.

That leaves two choices. A prep centre in your market, which adds a stop, a fee and a few days. Or the factory in India, which is cheaper and catches problems earlier, if you give it a spec it can follow.

Here's the catch. Most Indian makers ship to trade buyers and importers, not into Amazon, and their idea of export packing is whatever the last buyer asked for. Small workshops may pack in handmade boxes with hand-written labels (FS-QMS-021, a buyer on Hacker News). That's fine for a boutique. It won't get through an FBA receiving dock. So assume nobody at the factory has prepped for FBA before, and send a one-page spec with the PO -

- **Item labels.** The FNSKU label file for each SKU, the label size, and where on the pack it goes. Ask for a photo of the first labelled unit before they label the rest.
- **Bags and sets.** Which items need poly bags (with the suffocation warning your marketplace requires), and which are sold as sets and need a "sold as set" label.
- **Carton labels.** One shipment label per carton, generated in Seller Central once you've created the shipment, so the factory needs the carton count and weights before you can create it.
- **Carton content.** One SKU per carton where possible. Mixed cartons are allowed but slow everything down.



Packaging has its own minimums too. Printed cartons and bags often carry their own MOQ, sometimes higher than the product's (FS-QMS-017, an Indian contract manufacturer, 2026). Put the packaging in the same RFQ as the product, or the packaging becomes your real minimum.

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01 **No Amazon prep in the US since 1 Jan 2026.** Item labelling and prep moved to sellers, and unprepped arrivals created after the cut-off lose reimbursement eligibility, so the factory spec matters more than it did. *(Amazon SP-API changelog, Pattern.)*

02 **The supplier's courier account makes the courier your importer.** US sellers buying from India found FedEx and UPS named as importer of record, so tariff refunds went to the couriers. *(FS-SHP-017, r/ecommerce, May 2026.)*

03 **The supplier's forwarder can hold your stock over its own debts.** A US Amazon seller's goods from India were held at a US port because the Indian agent hadn't paid the US agent. *(FS-SHP-019, r/AmazonSeller, July 2024.)*

What we don't know yet

- ☐ How many Indian exporters already prep to FBA spec. We'd like to ask in our next supplier survey, by product type.

3. Cartons That Pass the Receiving Dock

Amazon's US rules cap a carton at 50 lb, unless it holds one item that's heavier, which then needs a "Team Lift" label (and "Mechanical Lift" over 100 lb). Cartons of jewellery and watches are capped at 40 lb, and overweight cartons can lead to future shipments being blocked (Seller Central, shipping and routing requirements). There's also a limit on each side of the box. Trade blogs disagree on whether the long side went up in 2025, so check the current figure in Seller Central and write it into your spec.

Why spell this out to an Indian factory? Because export cartons for trade buyers are built for pallets and forklifts, and nobody minds a heavy one. Ask for the carton dimensions and weight on the proforma, before production, so you can create the shipment in time and nobody repacks in a warehouse at your cost.



If your goods are packed on pallets, the pallets need the ISPM 15 treatment mark too, which Indian exporters don't always use by default (see wood packaging).

4. The Route From the Factory to the Fulfilment Centre

There are three routes that work, and one that causes most of the horror stories.

Your Forwarder to a Prep Centre, Then to Amazon

The safest first order. Your forwarder collects from the factory, your broker clears it in your name, and a prep centre checks, fixes and books the delivery. Slower, but every mistake is caught on your side of the ocean by someone you pay.

Your Forwarder Direct to Amazon

Cheaper and faster, and right once the factory has proved it can prep. Your forwarder needs the Amazon shipment ID and the delivery appointment, and you need the factory's labelling to be perfect, because nobody looks inside before Amazon does.

Courier for Small Lots

At 60 pieces sea freight makes little sense and air or courier dominates the landed cost (FS-QMS-022, the Canadian seller's thread). Fine, as long as the courier entry names you as importer, not the courier (section 1).

Route	Best for	Watch out for
Your forwarder, prep centre, then Amazon	A first order	Slower, with an extra stop
Your forwarder, direct to Amazon	A factory that has proved it can prep	Nobody looks inside before Amazon does
Courier	Small lots	The courier entry must name you as importer

The route to avoid is the supplier's forwarder, booked by the supplier, on terms you haven't seen. When a payment dispute arises between the Indian agent and the agent at destination, your goods sit in the middle, and US buyers describe exactly that (FS-SHP-019, r/AmazonSeller and r/FreightBrokers, 2024). Some small Indian suppliers also can't run an export themselves and hand the goods to a logistics firm, leaving you to sort the clearance (FS-SHP-055, UK and US buyers, 2024 and 2025). How to pick your own forwarder is on choosing a freight forwarder.



5. Inspect Before the Labels Go On

On Amazon a quality problem doesn't come back as a complaint. It comes back as returns, reviews and a stranded listing. So the inspection matters more than on a wholesale order, and it has to happen in India, before the goods are sealed into labelled cartons.

Indian makers themselves say third-party QC is usually bought only when "the order size is good" (FS-QMS-029, an Indian manufacturer, 2025). That's exactly backwards for an FBA seller testing a product with a small first order. Inspect the first order hardest. Check the FNSKU labels against the SKUs while you're there, because one wrong label on a whole carton is a listing full of wrong items. How inspections work, and what sampling level to ask for, is on AQL sampling.

If you can't send your own person, SourcingSync can inspect at the factory, check the labelling and carton spec, and hand the goods to your forwarder,

so the first time anyone opens a box isn't at the Amazon dock.

6. A Few Category Rules That Catch FBA Sellers

FBA doesn't change the product rules of your market. It just means a failure turns into a stranded listing instead of a customs hold. Three categories to check before you order -

- **Children's products** need the testing and certificates of your market, and Amazon asks for them. See children's product safety.
- **Food, supplements and cosmetics** going to the US need an FDA-registered facility and a clean record. See FDA import alerts.
- **Leather, brass and dyed textiles** carry chemical limits that differ by market. See restricted substances.

And on paying for the first order, PayPal is the usual method with Indian suppliers for small first buys, with sellers moving to wires once there's a relationship (FS-SUP-030, FBA sellers on forums). It protects less than people think, which how to pay an overseas supplier safely explains.

FAQ

Can I ship from India straight to an Amazon warehouse?

Yes, with yourself as importer of record, your broker clearing the goods and the factory prepping and labelling to Amazon's spec. Many sellers use a prep centre for the first order.

Can my Indian supplier be the importer of record?

Will Amazon label my products for me?

Do Indian factories know how to prep for FBA?

Should I use DDP from my supplier?

7. Back to the Canadian Seller

That 2024 thread asked the right first question, how to get the goods there, and the replies answered it with freight rates. The better answers were the ones nobody gave. Who's the importer, who prints the labels, how heavy are the cartons, and who looks inside before Amazon does. Settle those four in the PO, and a first FBA order from India is just a shipment. Hope this helps.