

What Is India Actually Good at Making?

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Updated 12 Oct 2026 5 min read

India is strongest in specific products, not broad categories. Import records from the US, Australia, the UK and New Zealand show it leading in household linen, knotted carpets, babywear, women's woven tops, lab-grown stones, jute bags and saddlery, and mid-table or weaker in basic apparel, precision work, furniture and footwear.

Key takeaways

- India is 37.4% of US imports of bed, table, bath and kitchen linen and 36.4% of New Zealand's.
- India supplies 62.4% of US hand-knotted carpet imports.
- About a quarter of babies' knitwear and women's woven blouses in key markets come from India.
- Plain cotton T-shirts are a mid-table line for India at 6.9 to 8.0% of imports.
- India tends to lead where a product starts from a home fibre, craft or raw material, and is weaker on imported components and tight tolerances.

India is strongest in specific products, not broad categories. Your own countries' import records show it supplying a third or more of household linen, most knotted carpets, about a quarter of babies' knitwear and women's woven blouses, nearly all lab-grown stones and close to half of jute sacks in markets like the US and New Zealand. It's a mid-table supplier of basic apparel and a small one in consumer electronics outside phones, furniture and plastics.



Most answers to this question say "textiles, spices and handicrafts". That's true and useless, because it hides the gap between a heading where India supplies 60% of a market and one where it supplies 5%. So I've gone to the importers' own customs records, the ones your government keeps, and read them heading by heading. One caveat – share shows where buyers already choose India. It doesn't promise that a new supplier will be good.

SourcingFrom Intelligence

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- 01** **Where India leads in the US (2025):** synthetic and lab-grown stones 87.5% of imports, knotted carpets 62.4%, jute and packing sacks 45.5%, diamonds 46.1%, bed, table and bath linen 37.4%, women's woven blouses 25.4%, babies' knitwear 23.2%. (*UN Comtrade, US import records, our analysis*)
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- 02 **The same pattern in smaller markets:** New Zealand buys 36.4% of its household linen from India, and Australia 57.9% of its knotted carpets and 24.9% of its seamless steel tubes. (*Stats NZ and UN Comtrade, 2025*)
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- 03 **Where India is mid-table:** cotton T-shirts at 6.9 to 8.0% of imports in Australia, the US, the UK and New Zealand, and knit apparel overall ranked 4th to 6th. (*UN Comtrade and Stats NZ, 2025*)

Where Does India Really Lead?

Home textiles. This is India's strongest consumer category in every market we track. India is the US's number two supplier of home textiles (18.9%), and number two in New Zealand and Australia, behind China each time (UN Comtrade, 2025). Drill down to bed, table, bath and kitchen linen and India is 37.4% of US imports and 36.4% of New Zealand's, up from 27.1% in 2020 (Stats NZ). The towels and sheets are woven in Karur, Panipat, Solapur and Erode. Our [bed linen](#) page covers the buying.

Rugs. India is the US's number one carpet supplier at 38.0%, ahead of Türkiye at 22.8%, and its share of hand-knotted carpets is 62.4% (UN Comtrade, 2025). The weaving is concentrated in a few towns around [Bhadohi and Mirzapur](#), Jaipur and Panipat.

Specific garments, not basics. India supplies about a quarter of babies' knitted garments in the UK, US and Australia, and about a quarter of women's woven blouses in the US and UK (UN Comtrade, 2025). Those are value-added pieces – fine cotton, prints, embroidery, small-run detail. See [babywear](#) and [women's woven tops](#).

Lab-grown stones and diamonds. India supplies 87.5% of US and 80.5% of Australian imports of synthetic stones, the heading that includes lab-grown diamonds, and 46.1% of US cut diamond imports (UN Comtrade, 2025). The cutting is in [Surat](#).

Jute bags and sacks. An overlooked one. India supplies 57.4% of UK and 45.5% of US imports of sacks and bags for packing (UN Comtrade, 2025). Start at [jute bags](#).

Saddlery and leather goods. India supplies 21.9% of the UK's saddlery and harness, and it's the EU's number two leather goods supplier at 10.2% (UN Comtrade, 2025). See [saddlery](#).

Heavy metal parts. Less obvious to consumer buyers, but India supplies a quarter of Australia's seamless steel tubes and leads US imports of iron and steel castings ([castings and forgings](#)).

Rice and spices are the food lines, with India the top rice supplier to Australia at 32.1% (UN Comtrade, 2025). Spices come with a testing burden, which [same spice, three borders](#) explains.

Where Is India Weaker?

Basic apparel. India is a solid but mid-table apparel supplier, ranked 3rd to 6th in every market we track, and its share of plain cotton T-shirts runs at 6.9 to 8.0% (UN Comtrade and Stats NZ, 2025). Knitwear is losing share in the UK and the EU. Plain basics are a price fight with China and Bangladesh, and buyers in forums say India's edge is in the value-added work, not the blank tee.

Precision work. The worst buyer reports we've logged are in machining, plastic tooling, medtech and electronics components. One medtech buyer said the factories were "well equipped and capable on paper, but the reality when audited was very poor" ([r/manufacturing, November 2025](#), from our forum log). Leather, soft goods and craft collect the best reports. That's a pattern, not a rule, and big export-only factories behave differently from domestic factories trying export for the first time.

Tiles, from the US view. Morbi's ceramics are gaining share in the UK (2.5% to 6.9%, 2019 to 2025) and the EU, but US voices see Indian tile as big-box grade below Spain and Italy (our forum log). See [ceramic tiles](#).

Furniture and plastics. India holds 1 to 2% of furniture imports in every priority market and has gained no ground in Australia under its trade agreement (UN Comtrade). That doesn't mean bad furniture. Jodhpur and Saharanpur make fine solid wood. It means you'll be one of fewer buyers and should expect a learning curve on drying and finishes.

Footwear. Slipping. India's share of EU footwear imports fell from 6.2% to 4.7% between 2019 and 2025 (UN Comtrade).

Why Does India Win in Some Products and Not Others?

Our data shows where, not why, so this is a reading, not a finding. The pattern is that India leads where the product starts with a fibre, a craft or a raw material it has at home - cotton, jute, wool, hides, diamonds to cut - and where a named cluster has done one thing for generations. It's weaker where the product depends on imported components, tight tolerances or very large uniform runs. If your product sits on the first list, India deserves a serious look. If it sits on the second, test hard with paid samples. The longer case is on [why India](#), and the towns behind each line are in [India's factory cities](#).

Ready to act

Need hands-on help?

Shortlisting makers in the right cluster for your product and checking them on the ground is execution work. SourcingSync can do it.

[Talk to SourcingSync](#) ↗



FAQ

What are the best products to import from India? ^

By import share: household linen, hand-knotted rugs, babies' knitwear, women's woven tops, lab-grown stones, jute bags, saddlery and leather goods.

Is India good for clothing? v

Should I source electronics from India? v

Is India cheaper than China? v