

Shipping from China to Sandakan

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Asia Pacific

China → Sandakan · via SDK air / Sandakan sea · clearance by Royal Malaysian Customs Department (JKDM)



Cargo handling on the China-Sandakan lane.

We move freight cargo from South China into Sandakan through SDK air / Sandakan sea. Sandakan is east Sabah commercial port, which shapes the kind of cargo that moves on this lane and how it should be packed.

The clearing authority is Royal Malaysian Customs Department (JKDM). Historical dwell on this gateway is around 2-4 days, and it lengthens in Sep-Nov.

Routing and transit on this lane

Peninsular Malaysia is served through Port Klang and Tanjung Pelepas with very frequent South China sailings. East Malaysia (Sarawak and Sabah) is a separate customs territory in practice — cargo transships at Klang or Singapore and adds 5–8 days plus a second clearance step, so quote Kuching and Kota Kinabalu separately.

Air gateways used	KUL (Kuala Lumpur), PEN (Penang), BKI (Kota Kinabalu)
Air transit, China to gateway	3–5 business days
Sea gateways used	Port Klang, Tanjung Pelepas, Penang
Sea transit, China to gateway	5–9 calendar days
Gateway serving Sandakan	SDK air / Sandakan sea
Inland leg to Sandakan	+1 day from the gateway
Typical clearance / dwell	2–4 days
Peak season to plan around	Sep–Nov

Duty, tax and clearance into Sandakan

Imports into Malaysia are cleared by Royal Malaysian Customs Department (JKDM). The headline position is: Sales tax 5–10% plus 10% low-value-goods tax on online orders under MYR 500; duty 0–30%, largely 0% under ACFTA. The de-minimis threshold is MYR 500 (low-value goods sold online are taxed regardless).

Conformity is the part most first-time importers underestimate: SIRIM certification and MCMC label for electrical and radio products; halal certification for food ingredients. Getting this wrong is expensive because it usually cannot be fixed after the cargo has landed.

Restrictions and known friction points for Malaysia: Electrical goods without a SIRIM label are routinely detained. Alcohol, e-cigarettes and vape liquid are restricted. Direct-to-consumer parcels are subject to the low-value goods tax collected at the point of sale.



Handling on the SDK air / Sandakan sea routing serving Sandakan.

Air, sea or overland into Sandakan?

Mode	Transit to gateway	Best suited to
→ Air Freight	3-5 business days	time-critical, high-value and low-volume cargo
☐ Sea Freight	5-9 calendar days	volume cargo where cost per kilo matters more than speed

Transit shown is China departure to the Malaysia gateway and excludes the +1 day inland leg to Sandakan and 2-4 days of clearance.

Pre-shipment checklist for Sandakan

- Plan around the China-side windows too: Chinese New Year and Golden Week both compress capacity on the Malaysia lane.
- Compare gross weight against volumetric weight ($L \times W \times H \div 6000$) — the higher figure is what gets billed on air and express.
- Photograph carton markings and seal numbers before departure — it makes any claim far easier to settle.
- Declare lithium batteries, magnets, liquids and powders up front — retro-declaring after booking usually means re-planning the whole shipment.
- Ask for the HS code in writing from your supplier and verify the Malaysia duty rate against it yourself.
- Budget for the inland leg: +1 day beyond gateway clearance to reach Sandakan.

Mode guides for Sandakan

- [➔ Air Freight to Sandakan](#)
- [🚢 Sea Freight to Sandakan](#)

Frequently asked questions

How long does shipping from China to Sandakan take?

China to the Malaysia gateway is 3–5 business days by air, 5–9 calendar days by sea. On top of that, allow 2–4 days of clearance with Royal Malaysian Customs Department (JKDM) and a +1 day inland leg to Sandakan.

What duty and tax will I pay importing into Sandakan?

Royal Malaysian Customs Department (JKDM) applies: Sales tax 5–10% plus 10% low-value-goods tax on online orders under MYR 500; duty 0–30%, largely 0% under ACFTA. The de-minimis position is MYR 500 (low-value goods sold online are taxed regardless). Under a DDP arrangement these are pre-paid, so nothing is collected on arrival in Sandakan.

Can you ship batteries or sensitive cargo to Sandakan?

Yes. Battery cargo by air follows IATA PI 965–970 depending on how the cells are packed, and moves on certified channels via KUL (Kuala Lumpur), PEN (Penang), BKI (Kota Kinabalu). Surcharges apply and the declaration has to be made before booking.

Which port or airport does cargo for Sandakan clear through?

Cargo for Sandakan is routed via SDK air / Sandakan sea. Sea gateways for Malaysia are Port Klang, Tanjung Pelepas, Penang; air gateways are KUL (Kuala Lumpur), PEN (Penang), BKI (Kota Kinabalu). We pick whichever gives the shortest total door time for your address.

When is the busiest time on the China–Malaysia lane?

Space and rates tighten around Sep–Nov, plus the China-side windows of Chinese New Year in January or February and Golden Week in early October. Book one to two weeks earlier in those periods.

How is the chargeable weight calculated for Sandakan?

We compare actual gross weight against volumetric weight — length × width × height in centimetres divided by 6000 for air — and bill the greater of the two, rounded up to the next kilogram. Light, bulky cargo is almost always billed on volume.

Other delivery cities in Malaysia

- [China to Bintulu](#)
- [China to Samalaju](#)
- [China to Lahad Datu](#)
- [China to Sibu](#)
- [China to Tawau](#)
- [China to Kuala Lumpur](#)

- [China to Shah Alam](#)
- [China to Klang](#)
- [China to Johor Bahru](#)
- [China to Penang](#)
- [China to Ipoh](#)
- [China to Melaka](#)

[All Malaysia freight information →](#)

References & official sources

Duty rates, thresholds and conformity requirements for Malaysia change by ministerial decision, sometimes mid-year. The figures on this page are buyer-planning references, not a customs ruling — confirm the current position for your own HS code with Royal Malaysian Customs Department (JKDM) or your broker before you ship.

- [Royal Malaysian Customs Department](#)
- [SIRIM QAS International](#)
- [Port Klang Authority](#)
- [WTO — Tariff Profiles \(applied MFN duty by country\)](#)
- [IATA — Lithium battery shipping guidance \(PI 965–970\)](#)
- [World Bank — Logistics Performance Index](#)
- [ICC — Incoterms 2020 rules \(DDP, DAP, FOB definitions\)](#)

Page data last reviewed: August 2026.

Shipping by industry

This page covers the route and clearance picture for the destination. Packing, classification and the compliance step that actually holds a shipment depend on what you are sending — these guides cover that by commodity.

- [Home Storage Products Furniture & Home Products](#)
- [Fashion Textiles, Apparel, Footwear & Leather](#)
- [Laboratory Equipment Medical, Laboratory & Precision Instruments](#)
- [Locks & Safes Fire, Safety & Traffic Products](#)
- [Salon Furniture Beauty, Personal Care & Wellness](#)
- [Pet Products Consumer Goods & Gifts](#)
- [Umbrellas Consumer Goods & Gifts](#)
- [Private Label Products E-commerce & Retail Channels](#)
- [Bolts Metal Products & Industrial Components](#)
- [CNC Machines General Machinery & Industrial Equipment](#)

- [Industrial Furnaces General Machinery & Industrial Equipment](#)
- [Solar Inverter New Energy, Power & Electrical](#)

[All 139 industry guides →](#)

FCL Container Rates — China to Sandakan

Live port-to-port ocean freight for a full container into Sandakan, by origin port. Ocean freight only — origin haulage, customs clearance and destination delivery are quoted separately.

Shekou → Sandakan

Container	Rate (USD)
20GP	1,500
40HQ	2,850

- Carrier: STIC

[Full route page — Shekou to Sandakan →](#)

Spot allocations move week to week — reconfirm the rate against the current sailing before booking.

Price Trend — Sandakan

Live rate for the linked route page, shown here for a quick read before you click through.

Get a rate for Sandakan

This lane is quoted per shipment rather than from a published rate card, because the landed cost depends on the commodity, its density, the conformity requirements above and the delivery point. Send the cargo details and we will come back with a full DDP

figure.

[Request a quote](#) → [See the Malaysia route page](#) →

Freight Rates to Malaysia

Current published rates — USD

☐☐ SEA

Sea · FCL Port-to-Port (Spot)

20GP **USD 1,199.72**

40HQ **USD 2,249.72**

Updated 2026-08-17

☐☐ SEA

Sea · FCL Port-to-Port (Spot)

20GP **USD 1,249.72**

40HQ **USD 2,349.72**

Updated 2026-08-17

☐☐ SEA

Sea · FCL Port-to-Port (Spot)

20GP **USD 949.72**

40HQ **USD 1,749.72**

Updated 2026-08-17

☐☐ SEA

Sea · FCL Port-to-Port (Spot)

20GP **USD 1,249.72**

40HQ **USD 2,349.72**

Updated 2026-08-17

☐☐ SEA

Sea · FCL Port-to-Port (Spot)

20GP **USD 1,349.72**

40HQ **USD 2,549.72**

Updated 2026-08-17

☐☐ SEA

Sea · FCL Port-to-Port (Spot)

20GP **USD 1,499.72**

40HQ **USD 2,849.72**

Updated 2026-08-17

☐ SEA

Sea · FCL Port-to-Port (Spot)

20GP USD 1,349.72**40HQ USD 2,549.72**

Updated 2026-08-17

☐ SEA

Sea · FCL Port-to-Port (Spot)

20GP USD 1,499.72**40HQ USD 2,849.72**

Updated 2026-08-17

☐ SEA

Sea · FCL Port-to-Port (Spot)

20GP USD 1,499.72**40HQ USD 2,849.72**

Updated 2026-08-17

☐ SEA

Sea · FCL Port-to-Port (Spot)

20GP USD 1,499.72**40HQ USD 2,849.72**

Updated 2026-08-17

 Cargo Weight (KG)

☐ Enter the actual gross weight of your shipment in kilograms. If you're unsure, fill in the volume fields below and we'll calculate it for you.

☐ Or enter volume (cm) — volumetric weight ÷ 6000

× ×

Non-integers rounded up. Larger of actual vs volumetric is used.

☐ Number of Boxes

Total chargeable weight = weight per box × number of boxes.

 When you have not filled in the volume information, our prices may be inaccurate.