

Ocean/Intermodal Container Inspection Checklist



Spending a few minutes looking over a container, or for that matter, a trailer or any transport conveyance, prior to loading your cargo, should not only be normal protocol, but can spare you and your client a lot of trouble.

Here are the particulars:

External Inspection

Walk around the outside of the container checking for obvious holes, punctures or other defects. While small dents, scraps and the like are considered normal “wear and tear,” look for:

- ☐ Structural defects such as weld fractures, particularly at the corner posts.
- ☐ Heavily bulged or indented side panels or corrugations.
- ☐ Deformed, fractured or heavily corroded cross members on the undercarriage.
- ☐ Damaged, missing or inadequate landing gear, lights, reflectors and tire tread and inflation on the chassis.
- ☐ Any damage to the doors that may cause the hardware to be inoperable.

Internal Inspection

Walk inside the container and:

- ☐ Be sure it is clean, dry, odor-free and in all aspects suitable to receive and transport your cargo.
- ☐ Look for protruding nails on the floor (used by previous shippers to secure blocking/bracing wood) that could harm cargo, packaging, including inflatable dunnage, or personnel.
- ☐ Check for any repairs that are not consistent with your external inspection.
- ☐ Close the doors to be certain they close properly and are not bent or bowed. Check to see that the door gaskets are intact and in good condition (not cut, torn or cracked).
- ☐ Check for any repairs that are not consistent with your external inspection.
- ☐ Perform a “light” test: with the doors closed and someone inside, determine if any light enters through any undetected holes or other openings.
- ☐ Check the roof bows to ensure they are not bent, deformed or pulled free.
- ☐ Check for missing, buckled or rotted floor boards.
- ☐ Ensure there are an adequate number of lashing fittings, such as padeyes or other tie-down points, to allow you to properly secure your cargo within the container.

Prior to Loading	Yes	No	Comments
Has the driver been identified prior to arrival?			
Has the driver presented a photo ID?			
Has a copy of the driver ID been taken?			
External	Yes	No	Comments
Has the container been inspected for defects?			
Has the container been inspected for weld fractures at corner posts?			
Has the container been inspected for heavy bulges or indents to side panels?			
Has the container been inspected for deformed or corroded cross members?			
Has the chassis been inspected?			
Does the chassis have damaged, missing or inadequate landing gear?			
Does the chassis have damaged or missing lights or reflectors/tape?			
Does the chassis have flat or poorly inflated tires or poor tire tread?			
Is the CSC (Convention for Safe Containers) inspection plate on the left door current?			
Do the doors and hardware work?			
Is the door hardware original or has it been modified?			
Do the doors close properly and are not bent or bowed?			
Are the door gaskets intact and in good condition?			
Are the door hinge pins intact and not able to be removed?			
Internal	Yes	No	Comments
Is the floor flush with the door threshold plate?			
Are there any rotted or buckled floor boards?			
Is the container clean, dry and free of odor?			
Did you check for any light entering through any holes?			
Are there any roof bows that are bent or pulled free?			
Are there an adequate number of cargo tie-downs?			
Are the cargo tie-downs in good condition?			
Are air vents near upper corner posts clear of obstructions?			
After Loading	Yes	No	Comments
Are there any void spaces that would allow cargo to shift?			
Is the cargo well secured against movement?			
Is the container sealed with an ISO PAS 17712 compliant seal?			
Is the number of the seal noted on the bill of lading?			

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