

Frequently asked questions about the GSP

GSP-Eligible Articles

Which imports into the United States qualify for duty- free treatment under the GSP?

To be eligible for duty-free treatment pursuant to GSP, an import must meet the following requirements (described in more detail below):

- (1) It must be included in the list of GSP-eligible articles;
- (2) It must be imported directly from a BDC;
- (3) The BDC must be eligible for GSP treatment for that article;
- (4) The article must be the growth, product, or manufacture of a BDC and must meet the value- added requirements;
- (5) The exporter/importer must request duty-free treatment under GSP by placing the appropriate GSP Special Program Indicator (SPI) (A, A+, or A*) before the HTSUS number that identified the imported article on the appropriate shipping documents (CBP Form 7501).

Which articles are eligible for duty-free treatment?

Articles classified by CBP under approximately 3,500 eight-digit tariff rate lines are generally eligible for duty-free treatment from all GSP beneficiaries. An additional 1,500 articles are eligible for duty-free treatment when imported from LDBDCs. The combined lists include most dutiable manufactured and semi-manufactured products and also certain agricultural, fishery, and primary industrial products that are not otherwise duty-free. LDBDCs are designated as such pursuant to section 502(a)(2) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended, and, in practice, are typically GSP beneficiaries that are on the United Nations' list of least developed countries.

How do I determine if a particular item is GSP-eligible?

Articles eligible for GSP treatment are identified in the current edition of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTSUS), which is published by the U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC). The complete HTSUS can be downloaded from the USITC web site (<http://www.usitc.gov/tata/hts/index.htm>). There is also a searchable version of the HTSUS available at the USITC website. The USITC also maintains “DataWeb,” a searchable database of import statistics and other information, including product eligibility information for GSP and other U.S. preference programs,

which can be found at: <http://dataweb.usitc.gov>. Another source (less official, updated periodically) is on the USTR website at <https://ustr.gov/issue-areas/trade-development/preference-programs/generalized-system-preferences-gsp/gsp-program-i-0>

Can any article be designated as eligible for GSP?

No. Certain articles are prohibited by law (19 USC 2463) from receiving GSP treatment. These include most textiles and apparel articles, watches, footwear, work gloves, and leather apparel. In addition, the GSP statute precludes eligibility for import-sensitive steel, glass, and electronic articles.

How is an article identified as GSP-eligible in the HTSUS?

The letter A in the “Special” tariff column of the HTSUS identifies GSP-eligible articles at an eight-digit level. The following table presents three HTSUS tariff lines to illustrate variations in the treatment given to different GSP articles. Under each entry for a GSP-eligible article in the HTSUS, the SPI code A, A+, or A* in the “Special” column identifies the article as GSP-eligible under certain conditions. The SPI code A designates articles that are GSP-eligible from any BDC. The SPI code A+ indicates articles that are GSP-eligible only from LDBDCs (Least Developed Countries). The SPI code A* indicates that one or more specific BDCs, listed in General Note 4(d) to the HTSUS, have lost GSP eligibility for that article.¹

HTSUS Subheading	Article description	Rate of Duty (%)		
		Column 1		Column 2
		General	Special	
8406.10.10	Steam turbines for marine propulsion	6.70%	Free (A,...)	20%
8413.30.10	Fuel-injection pumps for compression-ignition engines	2.50%	Free (A*, ...)	35%
8708.92.50	Mufflers and exhaust pipes, not for trackers	2.50%	Free (A+,...)	25%

¹Source: United States Trade Representative