Packing and Loading

There are several checks you will need to add to your packing and loading process if you don't already do them, that are for checking shipping containers before packing them. This ensures only the goods that should be packed have been packed.

Packing advice

It is important to pack containers or packages in one go and not leave partially loaded containers unattended or unlocked.

Only authorised personnel involved in the packing of goods should be present in the load area.

Visitor, worker, and contractor parking should be in a separate area from where export freight is packed, handled and loaded. If this is not possible, steps should be taken to mitigate the risk of goods being transferred between the vehicles and containers.

How to conduct a container check

Customs has identified inspection points that are areas of the container that must be checked before loading your goods. Each inspection point has its own set of checks that should be carried out, which are detailed here.

Container checks should be recorded with the name of the person who completed the checks and name of the supervisor who signed it off.

For standard containers, there are seven inspection points that must be checked. Refrigerated containers require the refrigeration unit (motor) to be checked as well as the inspection points for standard containers.

1. Outside and undercarriage
2. Inside and outside of doors
3. Right side wall
4. Left side wall
5. Front wall
6. Ceiling
7. Inside floor
8. Refrigeration unit (refrigerated containers only)

1. Outside and undercarriage
   - Support beams are visible.
   - Check for repairs.

This is an example of what you are looking for when checking for repairs

2. Inside and outside of doors
   - Confirm that the locking mechanisms are secure and reliable.
   - Check for any loose bolts.
   - Check for plates, repairs, or different coloured bonding materials.

3 & 4. Left and right sides

- Tap side walls. Listen for any hollow sounds.
- Check for repairs.

5. Front wall

- Confirm blocks and vents are visible.
- Confirm length of container.
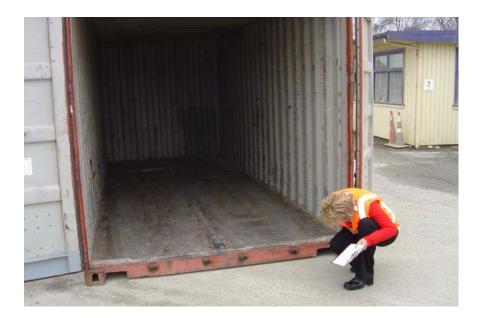- Tap wall. Listen for any hollow sounds.

6. Ceiling

- Confirm blocks and vents are visible.
- Check for repairs.

7. Inside floor
- Confirm floor is flat and that there is no need to step up.
- Check for repairs.
- Confirm that floor is a standard height along the container i.e. is not sloping.

8. Refrigeration unit (refrigerated containers only)