



Center for Economic Vitality

Western Washington University

College of Business and Economics

Schedule B Numbers

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Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System

The Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System, also known as the harmonized system (HS) or harmonized code (HC), is an internationally accepted system for describing products using a ten-digit number. The first six digits of a product's ten-digit code is the same for all products of that type; they are "harmonized" throughout the world. The final four-digits of the harmonized code will vary from country to country, as each country is allowed to choose specific numbers to further classify its products. In the U.S., these ten-digit commodity codes are called the Schedule B number for exports and the Harmonized Tariff Schedule for imports.

What is a Schedule B Number?

A Schedule B number is the United States' 10-digit classification code that is used to track products being exported. The U.S. Census Bureau manages the Schedule B system in order to calculate U.S. export statistics. Schedule B numbers, not HC numbers, must be provided on the Shippers' Export Declaration (SED) and other export documentation.

Schedule B vs. Harmonized Tariff Schedule

While the Schedule B is used to classify U.S. exports, the Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTS) is the system for classifying imports into the U.S. The U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC) manages the HTS system. The primary reasoning for the HTS is to assist in the application of import duties and track import statistics.

Simply saying "harmonized code" does not clarify if the number is actually the Schedule B or HTS. If a company imports and exports the same product, it will have two harmonized codes. It is important to note that these numbers can be slightly different for the same product depending on whether it is being imported or exported.

Why You Need a Schedule B Number

Anyone looking to export their product(s) needs to know their applicable Schedule B Number(s) in order to:

- Verify the correct import tariff rate(s)
- Determine whether the product qualifies for a preferential tariff under a free trade agreement
- Complete the SED, Certificate of Origin or other shipping documents

Things You Should Know About Your Product

When determining your Schedule B number, it is important to know every aspect of your product in order to come up with the most accurate classification. In particular, the following components may be important when determining your Schedule B number:

- Unit size (pounds, number of pieces, weights, volume, measurements, etc.)
- Types of materials used

- Packaging
- The intended use of the finished product

How to Find a Schedule B Number

There are several different tools and resources to help you determine your product's Schedule B number on your own.

Search Engine

The Foreign Trade Division (FTD) of the U.S. Census Bureau provides a free Schedule B search engine on their website. This is the most commonly used tool for classifying products. The search engine is designed to better assist exporters and provide a smoother, more intuitive and correct way to classify products.

Schedule B Search Engine

<https://uscensus.prod.3ceonline.com/>

Schedule B Book

Another useful resource for determining the appropriate Schedule B number for your product would be the Schedule B book. *The Schedule B: Statistical Classification of Domestic and Foreign Commodities Exported from the United States* is produced by the U.S. Census Bureau and can be ordered from the Government Printing Office (GPO). You can purchase the Schedule B book from the GPO's website at <http://www.gpo.gov/>.

Commodity Specialist

A commodity specialist at the U.S. Census Bureau Foreign Trade Division can also help you determine the correct Schedule B number for your product. You can contact the Foreign Trade Division at (800)549-0595. For specific products, you can call 301-763-3259 for durable goods, and 301-763-3484 for non-durable goods.

Trade Information Center and Local Export Assistance Centers

You can also contact your local Export Assistance Center, or contact the Trade Information Center at 800-872-8723 or by email at tic@trade.gov.*

Seattle Office

Phone: 206-553-5615

Email: Seattle.Office.Box@mail.doc.gov

Address: Seattle U.S. Export Assistance Center
2001 6th Avenue, Suite 2610
Seattle, WA 98121

Spokane Office

Phone: 509-344-9398

Email: Spokane.Office.Box@mail.doc.gov

Address: Spokane U.S. Export Assistance Center
801 W. Riverside Ave.
Spokane, WA 99201

** Please note that fees may or may not be associated with contacting either a commodity specialist or the Trade Information Center and Local Export Assistance Centers.*

The Center for Economic Vitality is also available to assist you with identifying the appropriate Schedule B classification for your product, or work with a professional to assist you.

An Important Note about Schedule B Numbers

Please note that if you utilize a third party to identify your Schedule B number, it is critical that you validate the given Schedule B number, as it is the responsibility of the company to indicate the correct code(s) on any export documents. Export documents are legal documents and it is critical that this information is reported accurately. Additionally, if any changes are made to the product or the product's packaging, the Schedule B number should be reevaluated. Any alternations to a product can change its Schedule B number and reporting incorrect codes can cause delays in the delivery of products. Lastly, these numbers change occasionally and it is important to periodically check for updates to a products listing.