U.S. Tariffs on Chinese Imports Set for Adjustment! Which Product Categories May See Tariff Cuts? How Should Cross-Border Sellers Prepare?

On September 9, 2026, U.S. Eastern Time, the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) officially announced the timeline for a new round of tariff adjustments between China and the United States. The two sides will establish a dedicated mechanism under a trade committee to select non-sensitive goods for reciprocal, two-way tariff reductions, with each side covering goods worth approximately USD 30 billion or more. Around September 24, U.S. Eastern Time, the United States will officially release the adjustment list. Business owners engaged in U.S.-bound foreign trade and cross-border e-commerce on platforms such as Amazon should be sure to read this article.

01Why Would Tariffs on Chinese Imports Be Reduced?



Many sellers' first reaction is: Will all Section 301 tariffs imposed since 2018 be cancelled in one go?

The answer is: No.

The adjustment targets the additional punitive Section 301 tariffs imposed by the United States on China during the 2018 trade war, with rates ranging from 7.5% to 25%. Over the years, these additional tariffs have directly increased procurement costs for U.S. importers, prompting many orders to shift from China to Southeast Asia. Light-industry products have been among the hardest hit.

The biggest highlight of this policy: reciprocal, two-way tariff reductions.

The United States will reduce tariffs on approximately USD 30 billion worth of goods exported from China to the United States, while China will simultaneously implement reciprocal tariff reductions on goods imported from the United States. This is not a unilateral concession by China. The two sides will establish a regular China–U.S. Trade Committee mechanism and include only selected non-sensitive goods on the list. Strategic high-tech categories such as semiconductors and power batteries will not be included in the tariff-reduction scope.

The U.S. public comment period has now ended, and a preliminary list of candidate products has been prepared. At this stage, the two sides are checking the final list. The outcome will be determined by the HS-code list to be released by USTR on September 24, and the consultations remain subject to change.

02 How Will the Tariff Reductions Work?

The key principle: only the additional punitive Section 301 tariffs imposed in 2018 will be removed; the underlying Most-Favoured-Nation (MFN) base tariffs applicable to the goods will remain in place.

All imported goods entering the United States are subject to underlying MFN tariffs, while Section 301 tariffs were additional punitive duties imposed at the time. The objective of this tariff reduction is to cancel or lower these additional duties, potentially bringing the tariff rate on goods back down to the MFN base rate, or even lower for certain products.

Here is an example that cross-border sellers can easily understand: a bag exported to the United States has a base MFN tariff rate of 10%, plus an additional 25% punitive Section 301 tariff.

Current situation (not included on the list): the importer pays total duties of 35% (10% MFN + 25% Section 301).

If included on this tariff-reduction list: only the 10% base tariff would be payable, with the additional 25% Section 301 tariff exempted.

☑ **Three Key Rules**

Limited scope, partial tariff reductions: each side will cover goods worth USD 30 billion. This represents only some product categories within the China–U.S. annual trade volume of hundreds of billions of dollars; not all products on the Section 301 list will receive tariff reductions.

Reciprocity: as the United States reduces tariffs, China will simultaneously implement tariff reductions of an equivalent scale on goods imported from the United States.

Dynamic list management: the Trade Committee will continue to adjust the list. Even if a product is included this time, it may be removed from the list in the future.

03Which Products May Be Included on the Tariff-Reduction List?

Notice: The following reflects publicly discussed market expectations and is not the final official list. The final determination will be based on the tariff-code list released by USTR.

☑ **Product Categories Most Likely to Benefit (Key Areas to Watch)**

Low-end consumer goods (a key focus of this round of tariff reductions): apparel and footwear, household goods, toys, holiday decorations, and bags and luggage. These labor-intensive consumer goods are everyday necessities for U.S. consumers and were among the products most severely affected by high Section 301 tariffs, with the greatest outflow of orders. Factories and cross-border sellers dealing in home textiles, decorative items, footwear, bags and luggage, and toys should pay close attention to the official list on September 24.

Light-industry products / daily necessities: certain textiles, towels, bedding, ordinary fabric products, etc.

Other non-sensitive categories: certain non-critical industrial components, non-sensitive medical consumables, and non-sensitive energy-related products.

Key point: only non-sensitive products are eligible. High-end medical devices, core precision components, and strategic materials are not on the tariff-reduction list.

❌ Product Categories Almost Certainly Excluded from This Round of Tariff Reductions

Semiconductors, power batteries, new energy vehicles, high-end equipment, critical minerals, and military-related products. The United States considers these strategic and sensitive industries, so the tariff barriers will remain unchanged.

💡 Seller self-check: Organize the HS codes corresponding to your main products in advance. Once the list is released on September 24, immediately cross-check the official codes to

determine whether your products are included in the tariff-reduction list.

Key point: products within the same broad category may be treated differently. For example, ordinary, simple furniture for civilian use may receive tariff reductions, while specialized industrial furniture may remain subject to the existing tariffs. The tariff code is decisive.

04 Risk Alert! Do Not Be Overly Optimistic

01 ✖ Risk 1: The list has not been finalized, and the consultations remain subject to change

The two sides are still in consultations, and the official list will not be released until September 24. Do not promise customers tariff relief in advance. If a product is not included on the list, this could easily lead to commercial disputes and claims for compensation.

02 ✕ Risk 2: The list covers only USD 30 billion worth of goods; not all Section 301 products will receive tariff reductions

Only selected non-sensitive goods will receive tariff reductions, while many product categories will continue to be subject to the existing high tariffs. Do not assume that all U.S.-bound shipments will benefit.

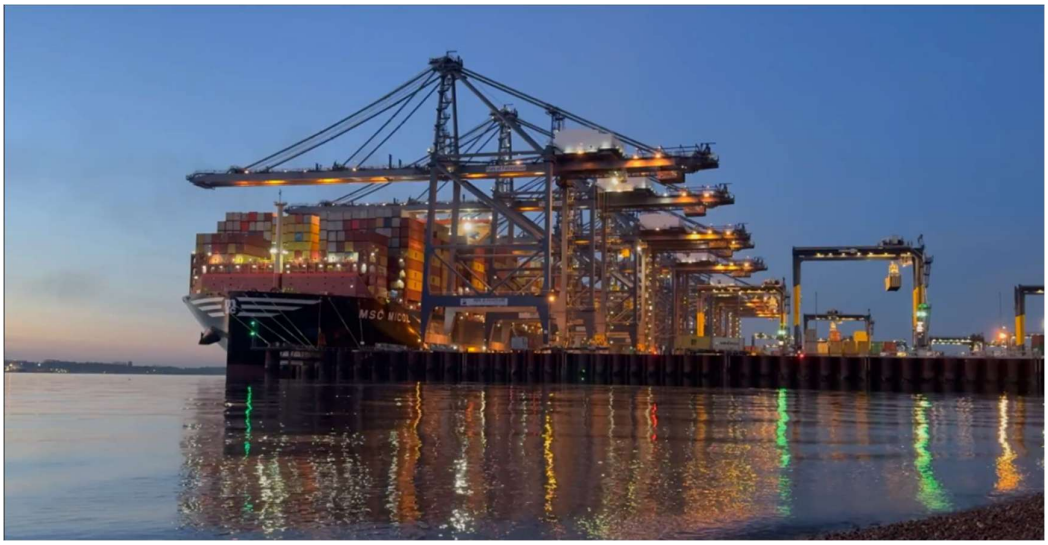
03 ✕ Risk 3: Lower tariffs ≠ the disappearance of barriers to the U.S. market

In addition to tariffs, the United States has various non-tariff barriers that continue to affect exports, including product safety certifications, labor standards, rules of origin, supply-chain reviews, and FDA requirements. Tariff reductions are a cost-side benefit; they do not mean that orders will automatically come in.

04 ✕ Risk 4: The list may be adjusted over time

Under the Trade Committee mechanism, the tariff-reduction list may be adjusted in the future. Even if a product is included this time, it may later be removed. Businesses should not base their entire operating strategy on the tariff benefits.

05 Cross-Border Sellers: Five Things You Can Do Now



1. Review the U.S. HS/HTSUS tariff codes for your products

Compile the U.S. import tariff codes corresponding to your main SKUs. Once the official list is released, check the codes directly to determine whether the products qualify for tariff reductions. Do not rely solely on Chinese product names.

2. Calculate costs and prepare two quotation options in advance

If the tariff reductions take effect and duty costs fall, assess whether to retain the savings as profit or moderately lower quotations to win customers. At the same time, keep baseline quotations that assume no tariff reduction in case the policy falls short of expectations. B2B manufacturers may discuss the possibility of policy changes with overseas customers in advance, but should not make definite commitments.

3. Plan inventory and production schedules rationally; do not gamble on policy benefits

Do not blindly increase stock or build up inventory in overseas warehouses before the list is published. If the products are ultimately not included, this could result in substantial cost and inventory losses.

4. Track official information through multiple channels

Pay close attention to announcements from the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), China's Ministry of Commerce, local councils for the promotion of international trade, and customs risk alerts. Distinguish official information from unofficial rumors circulated by online self-media accounts.

5. Diversify risk and do not put all your eggs in the U.S. market basket

Regardless of whether tariffs are reduced, the risk of geopolitical and trade friction will persist over the long term. It is advisable to continue expanding into the EU, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America to diversify the risk of relying on a single market. At the same time, continue to ensure product compliance, intellectual property compliance, and customs classification compliance.

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Final Summary

This reciprocal China–U.S. tariff reduction is an important interim adjustment since the implementation of Section 301 tariffs in 2018. In short, apparel, footwear and bags, toys, household goods, and ordinary light-industry daily necessities are the categories most likely to benefit.

In essence, this is a limited, reciprocal, and bounded easing of tariffs, not a comprehensive cancellation of trade-war tariffs. The benefits are concentrated on the cost side. Foreign-trade businesses and cross-border sellers should take a rational view and wait for the official U.S. list to be released on September 24.

Foreign trade is challenging, and tariff policies directly affect orders and profits. Feel free to share this with colleagues handling U.S.-bound shipments so that we can make the most of this policy window together.

Disclaimer: The information in this article has been compiled from public news reports and official press conferences. It does not constitute guidance for trade operations. Actual

business activities should be based on the official documents issued by the governments of China and the United States.