

How to import and export yourself and your motorcycle in Mexico

Well Before You Go

Get out your title and check to be sure the VIN on the title EXACTLY matches the VIN on the bike. You can also use registration cards in place of the title. Recently purchased bikes can sometimes use the purchase and registration form copies. They must be notarized and preferably have the type of notary stamp that embosses the paper as opposed to an ink stamp. Not having correct proof of ownership can stop your trip right at the border.

Once you cross the border, all of the signs are in Spanish. You can easily accomplish immigration of yourself and your vehicle by following the instructions below. The people behind the counters do this all day. If you just hand them what they need, you'll get it done. Most of them speak only Spanish, but bilingual clerks are often in the background.

What You Will Need (as of 12/30/2009)

1. Eyeglasses if you need them
2. **Pen!!!! Don't go there without one!**
3. Valid Passport
4. Photo copy of passport (business page) and drivers license on one sheet of paper
5. Drivers license
6. Vehicle title or registration card **and** one copy of front page of title or card
7. Credit card in your name. Not Discover.
8. Bridge Toll about \$2 Note: this varies from place to place

Cliff Notes

1. Pay toll, cross bridge.
2. Import bike/self
3. **SELF: MIGRACION**: Give your passport to person behind the counter. They will give you back your passport, and a 2 part form to fill out. Fill out the 2 part form, return passport, get back passport and 1 part of form
4. Get copy of 2 part form at **copy vendor** \$1.00. Price not posted. Sometimes the copy vendor is located outside the building.
5. **Vehicle: IMPORTACION TEMPORAL DE VEHICULOS**: Bike Title, copy of title, passport, drivers license, copy of passport and DL (one page), credit card with your name (must match bike title), copy of tourist immigration paper you just had copied. Sign 2 credit

card slips. One tax to import you, one tax to import bike. You will also sign vehicle permit in 2 places. Be sure you get back: Passport, DL, Credit Card, Immigration form w/ bank paperwork and receipt, vehicle permit with receipt. **Do not** apply permit to bike

6. **About 30 miles into Mexico:** They will stop you alongside the road and may ask for your permit and verify the VIN # or your passport. Don't bury them deep until after this stop.

Exit Country

1. Export Bike. Go to **IMPORTACION TEMPORAL DE VEHICLES**. Give them the Permit and Receipt. They may go out and photograph or visually inspect the VIN number on your bike. You get back your original receipt and receipt of proof of exportation
2. Export self. Go to **MIGRACION**: Give them your passport and bank paperwork with receipt stapled on it. Get back passport, original receipt.
3. Pay toll, cross bridge
4. Passport needed at US entry.

The Long Version

- At Matamoros some LEOs asked us to show our drivers licenses before we were allowed to pull up to toll booth to cross bridge
- Pay toll at booth before bridge, about \$2. They don't want pesos, so they charge a higher rate for Pesos.
- Enter individually after paying toll
- When you are on the Mexican side there may or may not be someone to tell you where to go and where to park. You want to find the area for **MIGRACION and IMPORTACION TEMPORAL DE VEHICLES**
- Protect your valuables. Take turns completing the paperwork so there is always someone watching the bikes and gear.
- People offering to show you where the 3 places to go are looking to be paid. You don't need them.
- Enter the building and look for the Doors that say **MIGRACION (Immigration)**, usually another room.
- Give the person behind the counter your passport. They will inspect it and give you a 2 part carbonless for 8.5x6.5 called **Estados Unidos Mexicanos** at the top. (Tourist immigration form)

- Take the form to the tables. Pens are seldom found here, bring yours! Fill out #1 to #13, follow the sample on the table. It is asking for your name, date of berth, sex, marital status, address, city and/or hotel you will be traveling to, passport number, expiration date, occupation, and mode of transport. Nice if you all agree on where you are going. Don't fill this form out wrong, they may make you "pay" for a new one and wait a long time for it. Easy enough to follow the sample. You do not sign it.
- Don't fill this form out wrong, they may make you "pay" for a new one and wait a long time for it. This is a scam and essentially an attempt to get you to pay a bribe (mordita). This scam is rare.
- Return the form and your passport to the window. They will take the form, study it, stamp your passport and the back copy of the tourist immigration form.
- Take this immigration form to the copy center. It may be located inside or outside of the building. You pay what they ask or you think is right.
- Go to window marked IMPORTACION TEMPORAL DE VEHICLES or temporary importation of vehicles.
- You will need to give them your bike title, copy of front of title, passport, drivers license, copy of passport and drivers license (one page), credit card with your name on it that matches bike title, tourist immigration paper you had copied, and the copy of the tourist immigration paper that you originally gave to the copy center to copy for you. If you don't have all these copies, they will kick you out of line to go have them made.
- They will ask you if you are pulling a trailer (remolque).
- They will print out a temporary vehicle permit. They will put about \$29 (will change with time) on your credit card or 390. They will make you sign one or two copies of the receipt, and it will be in pesos. You will get one back stapled to the vehicle permit. They will ask you to sign the back of the vehicle permit in two places. They will rip it in two, giving one to you that also has the permit sticker attached to it. On the front it will have your VIN number and they will tell you it is good for 180 days, which means you can go back across the boarder and reenter in the morning. **YOU MUST RETURN THIS PERMIT WHEN LEAVING THE COUNTRY (or before it expires). If you don't it will be a major hassle and you may not be allowed to import bikes in the future.**
- They asked us all to verify the year and model of our bikes.
- They then will import you as a tourist. They stamp the import papers and charge your credit cards \$21. (this rate will change with time) or 262 pesos. They will make 2 copies of this receipt. You will sign one or two. They will then print out a computer generated 8.5x11 form from a bank, in our case Banjercito. They may point to Importe: 262 . That is the amount of pesos you pay to import yourself \$21 or 262 pesos. (amounts may change with time) They will staple the receipt, the computer generated bank paper and the tourist immigration form (carbonless)

- Be sure to get back your bike title, passport, drivers license, credit card, immigration form with bank paperwork and receipt, vehicle permit with receipt stapled to it. **Don't put vehicle sticker on bike, just carry it with you.**
- There were no currency exchanges open on Sunday at 2:30 in Matamoros (Brownsville), we crossed back and exchanged. At Ojinaga (Presidio) they are usually open whenever we go there.

If you are planning to spend the night in the states and cross again in the morning you may find the line to enter the US is VERY long. If you ask, Mexican border guards may help you cut in line to cross back over bridge. You can usually lane split but it pays to ask.

Keep your passport out to re-enter US. It costs about \$2 for the bridge toll.

- About 30 miles into Mexico, there is usually a place where they will stop you to inspect for your vehicle permit. Keep your vehicle permit in an easy to access spot. They may inspect your VIN number on your bike at this point. Typically, this is the last time you will need your permit till you exit the country.

You can thank Linda Theisen for this detailed description. She based it on crossing at Brownsville Texas and an anonymous editor added some info that may apply at other crossings.