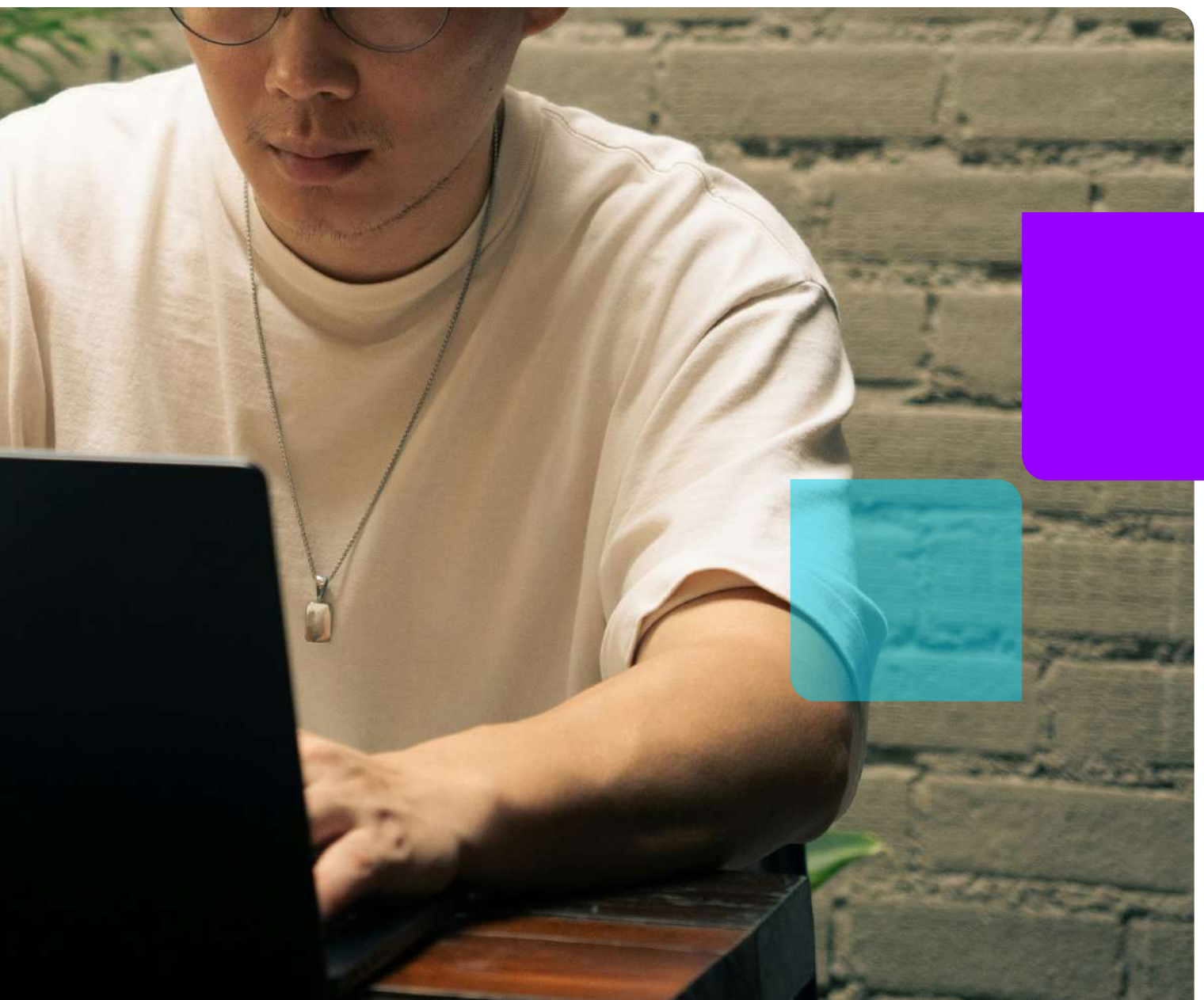




The Ultimate Guide To Sourcing On 1688





Introduction



If you're looking to source products from China, you have likely come across 1688.com. The platform is China's leading online B2B marketplace for businesses dealing with wholesale orders and sourcing. 1688.com caters to businesses of all sizes, including those looking to open eCommerce stores and is a cost-effective option when considering wholesale marketplaces.

As an international payments expert, Zyla offers a dedicated payment solution for international buyers outside of China to pay suppliers when purchasing from 1688.com.

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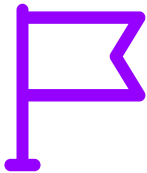
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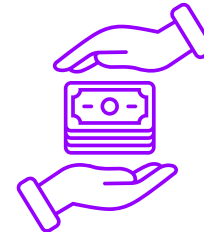
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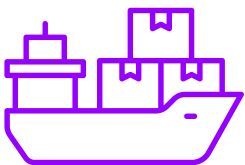
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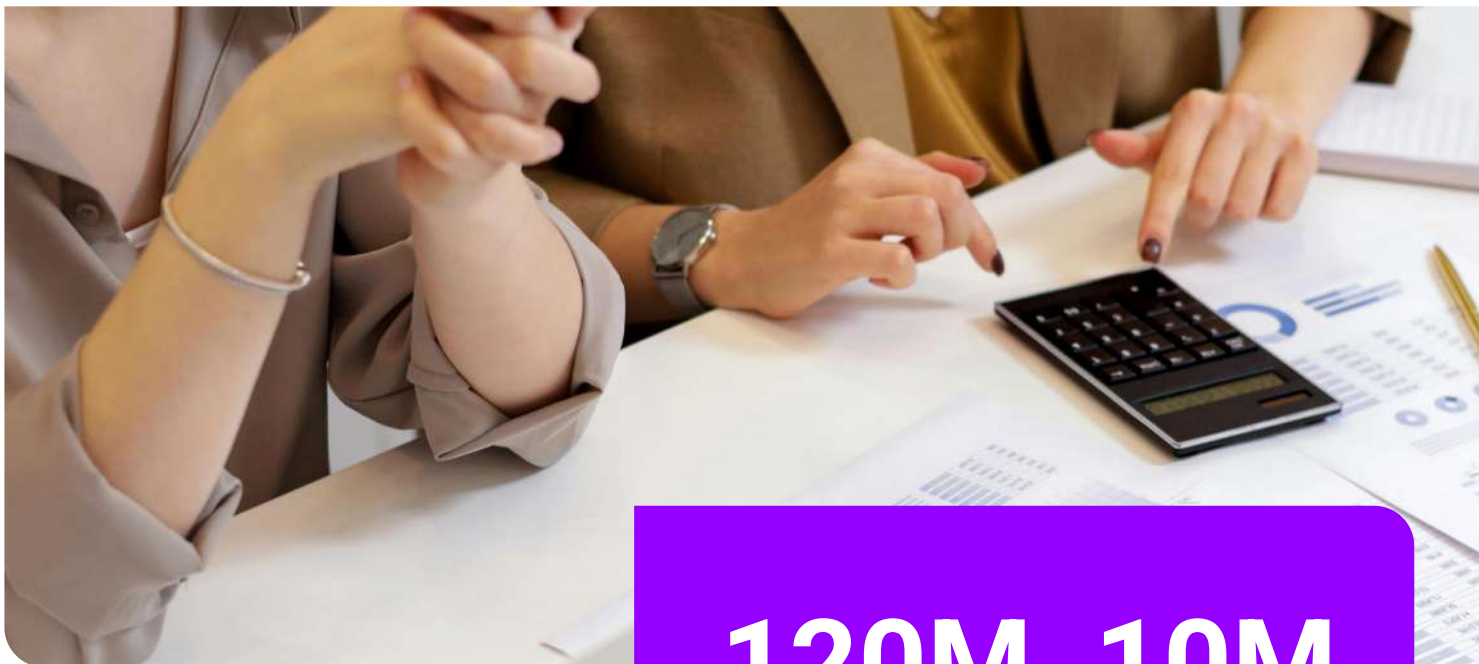
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1

Background of 1688.com

1. Background of 1688.com



As a subsidiary of Alibaba Group, 1688.com launched in 2010 with an initial focus on connecting local manufacturers, factories and wholesalers with local buyers.

When comparing prices on other B2B platforms, the products on 1688.com could be anywhere from 4% to 15%¹ lower in most instances, and up to 40% in other cases². This is a substantial saving for small-to-medium sized businesses. Part of its appeal, also, comes from the ability to make small orders of as little as two pieces. As more merchants discover the benefits of purchasing from 1688.com, early adopters and those who are able to leverage the platform will gain an advantage over their competitors.

120M

Registered Users

10M

Suppliers

31M+

Monthly Web Visits

1,700

Sub-categories

50

Industries

Including raw materials, industrial products, apparel, household goods, small commodities, electronics and food & beverage

136

Countries/Regions

where account registrations are allowed

¹ Provided by 1688.com

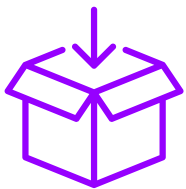
² SinoInspection

³ Using Similarweb, based on December 2022 data

1. Background of 1688.com



Type of Sellers



Wholesalers

Wholesalers make up the bulk of shops on 1688.com. The majority have a minimum order quantity of only a few pieces, as well as a minimum spend amount. As a rule, wholesalers hold more inventory and stock than factories.



Brand Owners

Brand owners are similar to wholesalers in that they offer a low minimum order quantity. However, while wholesalers will often sell white label goods, branded stores on 1688.com will operate a storefront with their brand name and logo.



Factories & Manufacturers

Factories specialise in receiving production orders, with the minimum order quantity (MOQ) starting at 1,000 pieces in some cases. There is a 'Find a Factory' option in the 1688 app, which buyers can use to filter for factories in different categories. Generally, factories do not keep inventory but make products based on orders.



Sourcing Agents or Virtual Factories

Similar to a middleman, these merchants help buyers find a reliable supplier, negotiate the best price, assist with documentation, coordinate with the factory or perhaps oversee the production to ensure it aligns with specifications. As sourcing agents, they don't hold stock; rather, they help to secure products within the promised lead time.



2

**Why Source
From 1688.com**



There are several reasons 1688.com offers buyers an advantage over other wholesale sourcing platforms in China.

Low, Transparent Prices

As the majority of suppliers on 1688.com are factories and wholesalers, customers are able to bypass export agents or trade companies who add on a service fee or margin. On other platforms, these factories often rely on trading companies to reach a global audience; on 1688.com, they have an online presence and listed contact details, allowing buyers to purchase goods directly at a lower price. Furthermore, strong competition and tiered pricing means prices are lower and the more units you purchase, the cheaper the per unit price.

Variety of Products

As the largest local wholesaling platform in China with dozens of categories listed, 1688.com allows buyers countless options when it comes to products and suppliers. The majority of factories in China are listed on 1688.com, which gives buyers a variety of choices, compared to attending a trade show or expo.

Low Minimum Order Quantity

Unlike other wholesale websites with high minimum order quantities, many sellers allow buyers to purchase one or two pieces. This benefits small businesses who may not yet have the budget for large orders to purchase a wider range of products, while it allows more established businesses to evaluate the quality before committing to a large order.

High Quality Sellers

Suppliers on 1688.com are required to have a Chinese business licence, with details listed on their store page, including the company's date of incorporation, registered capital and company address. Buyers also have the option of procuring from 1688.com's cross-border site, global.1688.com, which exclusively promotes reliable suppliers selling trending products in the global marketplace.

Keep in mind: 1688.com was originally developed as a platform for local Chinese suppliers to reach local buyers. As such, the website is listed in Chinese with no English support. Furthermore, the majority of the factories and suppliers won't have English speaking employees to assist with requests from overseas. There are tools to assist with the language barrier, Google Translate and Google Lens among them.



3

**How To
Get Started**

Opening a 1688 Account

All users must register for an account on 1688.com in order to begin purchasing. There are two ways to open a 1688.com account:

Via Taobao on mobile

To register for an account on a mobile device, you will need to register via Taobao. Both Taobao and 1688 accounts may share the same details as they are both subsidiaries of Alibaba Group. If you already have a Taobao account, you can use those details to log into 1688.com.

Via 1688.com on PC

To register via the website, visit www.1688.com and click on the [免费注册](#) tab, which means ‘Sign up for free’.



Top tip: If you can't read Chinese, use Google Translate to convert the page into English. Make sure you're using Chrome as your browser, right click and select 'Translate into English'.



- A pop-up will appear for a user agreement. Please select to register as an individual. (Again, use Google Translate to change the text into English if necessary.)



Important: Registering for a company account on 1688.com is meant for domestic suppliers and sellers only. Foreign companies or non-local individuals are required to register as an individual, even if doing so on behalf of a company.

- Fill in your information on the registration page and click **同意并注册** means 'Agree and register'.

- You will receive a one- time password at the mobile number indicated for verification. Enter the code and submit by clicking **提交**.
- To activate your 1688 account, tick the check box to accept the agreement and click 'Confirm'



Completing your profile (optional):

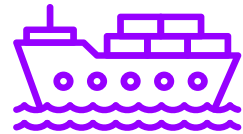
1688.com will request that you complete your account profile on the following page.



How It Works



Receive funds from bank accounts and marketplaces



Use Zyla to pay your 1688 suppliers via the Cross-border Pay service



Opening a Personal Alipay Account

On Mobile:

- 1 Open Alipay mobile app (iOS and Android) and click 'Register'
- 2 Select your country code and your mobile number
- 3 Enter the verification code sent to your mobile number

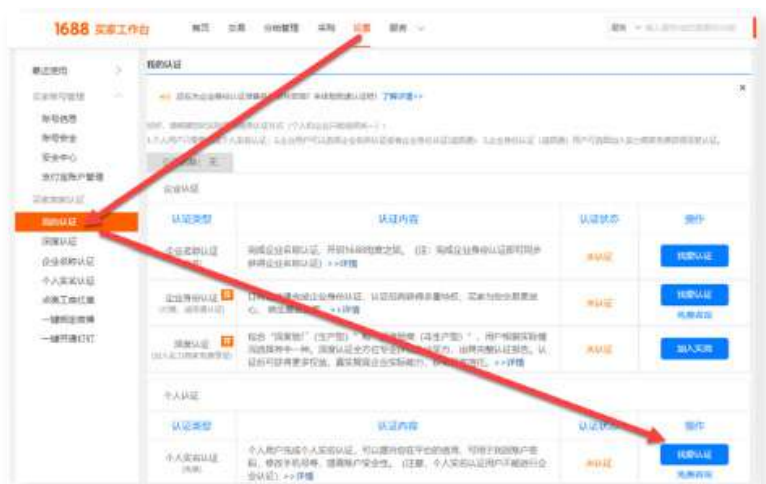
On Desktop:

- 1 Log into www.alipay.com and select 'Register'
- 2 Next, click 'Personal Account' and select your nationality/region
- 3 Fill in your mobile number and enter the verification code sent to your mobile number

Bind Your 1688 and Alipay Account

For 1688 accounts opened by individuals based outside of China, the verification process requires you to connect with a verified personal Alipay account.

- Click on your 1688 account name and navigate to **账户管理** (account management)
- Under **我的认证** (my verification), go to **我要认证** under **个人认证** (verify using personal details)
- You will be redirected to the quick verification page. Enter your Alipay login ID and password, then click the orange button 'link to Alipay account'
- You are now verified and your Alipay account is connected to your 1688.com account

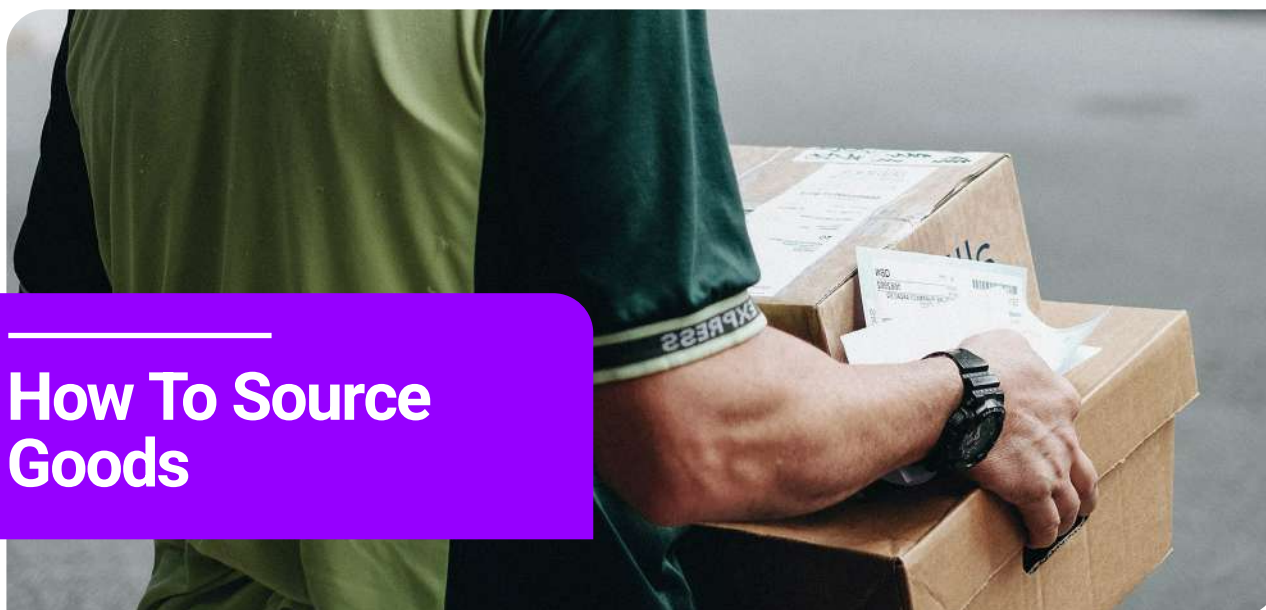




4

Product Sourcing

4. Product Sourcing



With 50 industries represented on 1688.com and over 1,700 sub-categories, there's no lack of products to search for. Top categories include fashion, accessories, sports equipment, home decoration, office supplies, automobile supplies food & beverage and raw materials.

The platform offers a convenient tool where buyers can upload an image of the product to return search results.



Global 1688.com

eCommerce sellers may want to consider the cross-border offshoot of 1688.com. The global site is targeted towards international trade and as such, filters suppliers who are willing to distribute overseas, can offer low MOQs and list trending goods.



4. Product Sourcing

Using A Sourcing Agent

There are several ways to source on 1688.com as a foreigner.

For those with little cross-border business experience or who are overwhelmed by the language barrier, sourcing agents can assist with language translations, timely delivery of your products and quality control. Agents generally charge a commission between one and three percent.

Sourcing agents will generally have a vast and reliable network of suppliers and manufacturers and can even negotiate on your behalf.

If you feel confident in sourcing yourself, you'll need to take care of selecting a supplier, communication and payments on your own.

Some of the disadvantages of using a sourcing agent include: not having a direct line to your supplier and thereby creating communication lags, especially if your agent becomes unavailable; and not having a relationship with your supplier. This may become more important as your business grows and you want to control factors such as lead time and quality. Your agent might even switch suppliers without notifying you.



4. Product Sourcing

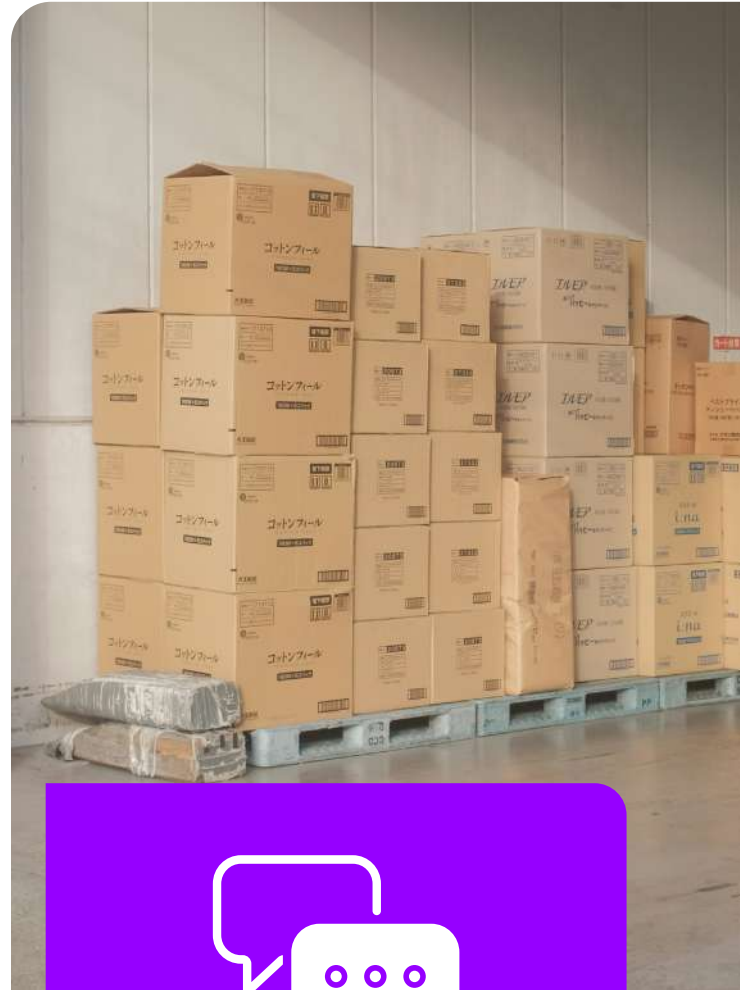
Selecting A Supplier

Visit the 1688 website. Once you have searched for your product, you can filter the search results by:

- Categories (商品分类)
- Cross-border capabilities (跨境特色), which includes international certification and patent certification

Other options include:

- MOQ: Enter your preferred MOQ in the field 起订量以下
- Time: Dispatch within 24 hours (tick checkbox 24 小时发货; not available for cross-border delivery)
- Trustworthiness: This option is only available to suppliers who have achieved a certain standard in quality and timely delivery (tick checkbox 实力商家)
- Price
- Manufacturing time: Enter the maximum number of days in the field next to 上架时间
- Location (所在地区): This allows you to filter by proximity to your logistics provider, potentially saving on shipping costs and time



Top tip: Don't forget to use Google Translate if necessary. You can also translate into other languages by clicking on the Google Translate icon on the right of the address bar



As with all of Alibaba Group's brands, trust is an integral part of the platform. On a supplier's shop page, you can see how many years they have been operating on 1688.com their response rate, return rate, other customers' rating and whether they offer buyer protection. You can also access a cumulative history of transactions from the last 90 days compared to the industry average. This will allow you to benchmark their service and capabilities against their competitors.



5

Communication

5. Communication



Communication with suppliers is one of the most important but sometimes most difficult aspects of product purchasing.

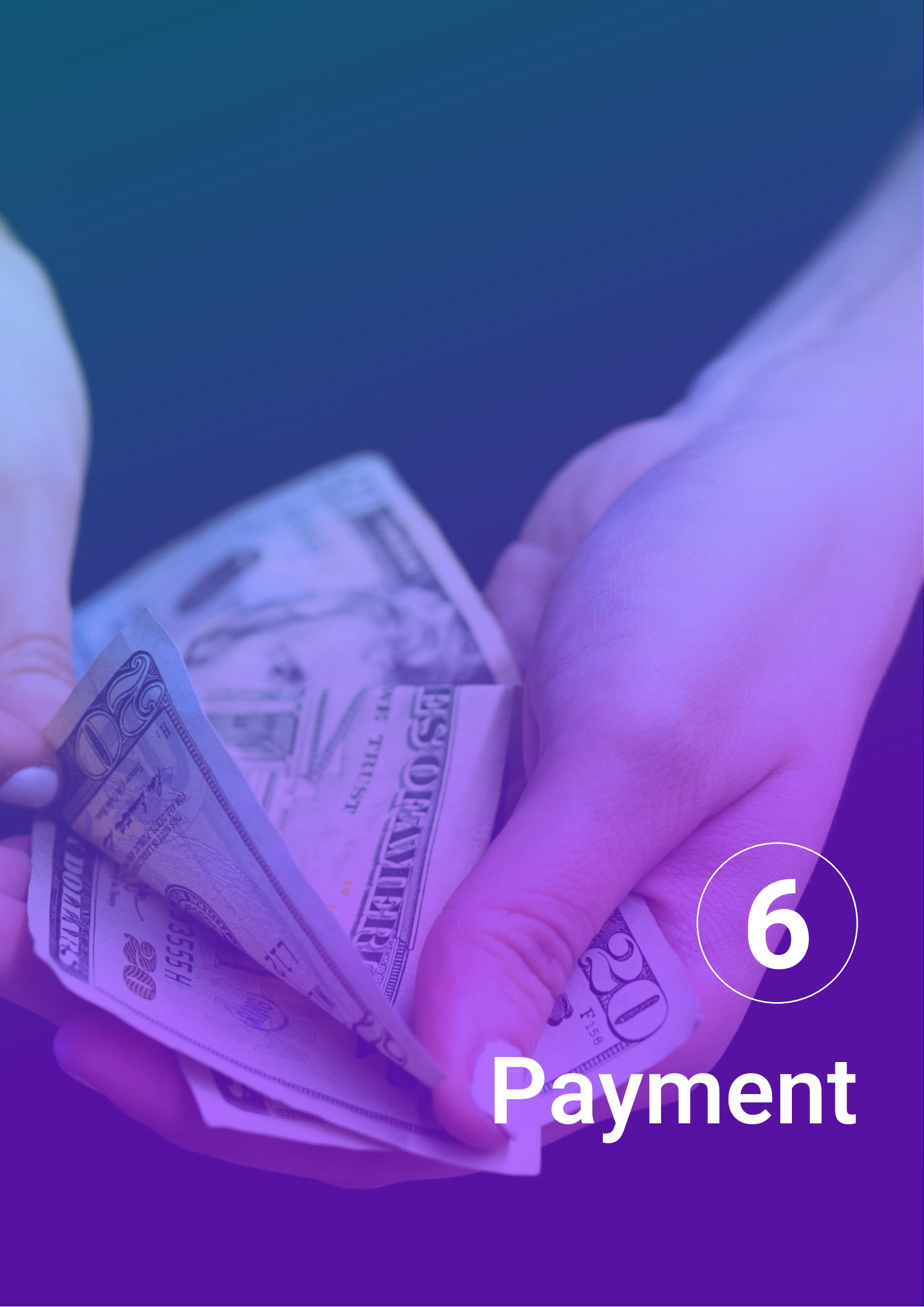
A sourcing agent can help with translations and requests; without one, you have to rely on digital tools and your own abilities.

You can communicate directly with factories and wholesalers, via the details listed on their shop profile. The majority will provide options for chatting via WeChat as well as Aliwangwang, the official chat tool on 1688.com.

Most suppliers have a limited understanding of English or other languages, so it's important to keep communication simple, professional and concise.

Some Questions To Ask Include:

- ✔ Can products be sent outside of China or are they for domestic sale only?
- ✔ What is the return policy?
- ✔ What is the delivery timeframe?
- ✔ What is the inventory and/or manufacturing timeframe?
- ✔ Product certifications (if your product requires these)



6

Payment

6. Payment

zyla CONTACT US | (855) 797-3366

WHAT WE DO WHO WE SERVE PRICING WHO WE ARE RESOURCES LOG IN FREE ACCOUNT

Global business with a local touch

We offer local currency accounts, competitive FX rates and access to 100+ global marketplaces all from a single platform, making international business payments as easy as local ones.

[OPEN A FREE ACCOUNT](#)

The most cost-effective and secure way to pay cross-border suppliers is by using Zyla's Cross-border Pay solution, which allows registered companies in select countries to authorise and automate payments using Zyla.

1688 Sourcing Solution With Seamless Payment Method

Compared to bank transfers, the exchange rate is generally more competitive, with minimal fees.



Easy & Seamless

Frictionless procurement experience without worries of Alipay account suspension



100% Safe

The one-and-only fully compliant flow of funds to make 1688.com supplier payments



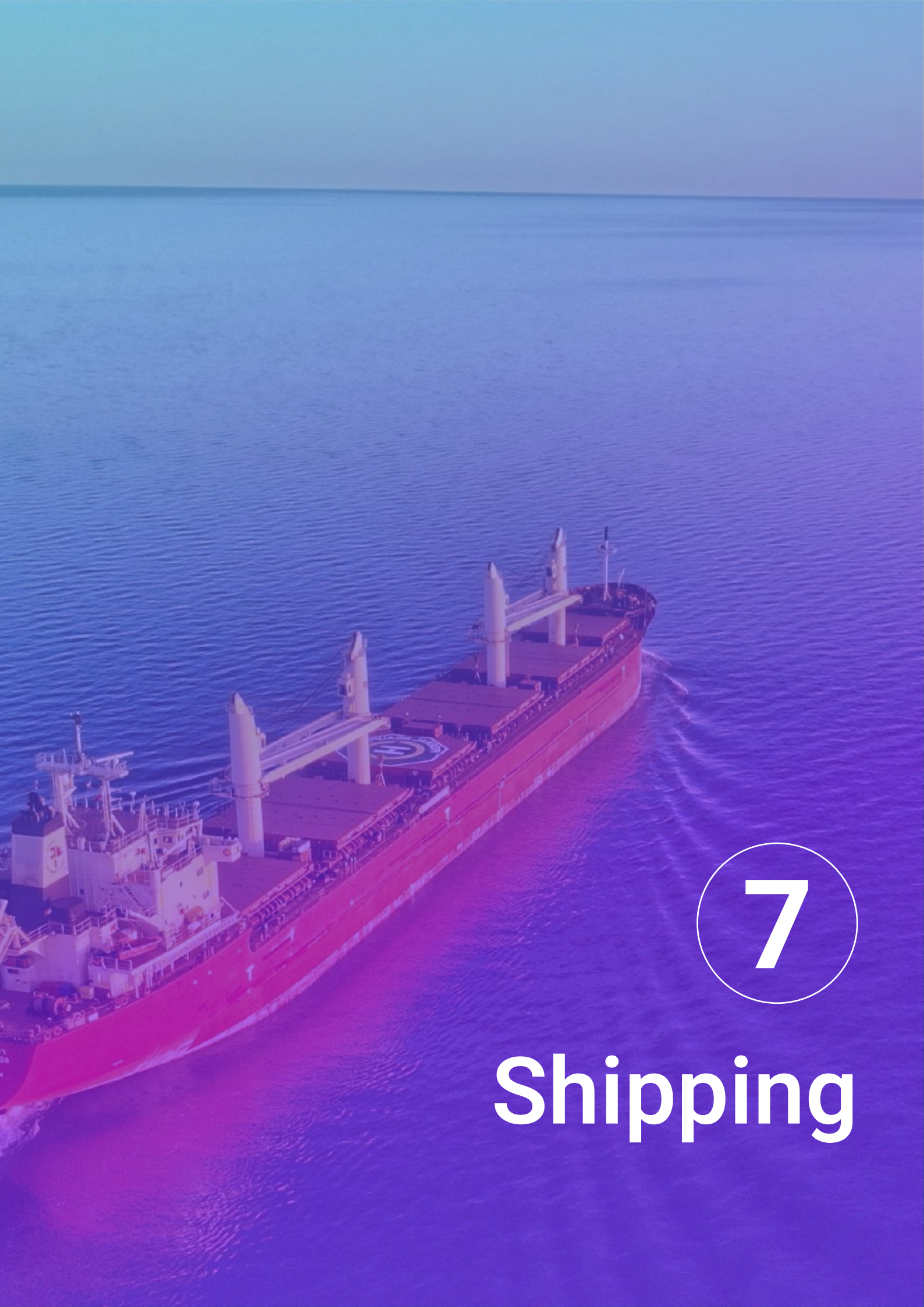
No Annual Limits

No threshold limits for yearly foreign exchange payments



Lower Your Costs

Competitive exchange rate for conversions to RMB

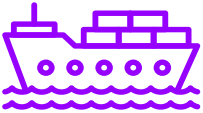


7

Shipping

7. Shipping

As shipping costs can vary widely depending on the delivery method, it is one of the most important aspects to consider when making a purchase. Below are the four most common methods of delivery from China to United States.

	ePacket	Air Express	Ocean freight	Special Line
				
Description	China's express postal service	International air carriers such as DHL, FedEx, UPS	Buyers purchase full containers (FCL) or partial containers (LCL) to travel by boat	Chartered flights and distribution channels along popular routes
Best For	Small, lightweight packages of low value	Urgent deliveries, items of value	Heavy or bulky shipments	Products destined for Amazon FBA warehouses, items of value
Cost	Low	High	Low	Medium
Delivery Time	Regular	Fastest	Slow	Fast

Have You Considered A Freight-forwarding Partner?

Freight forwarders are intermediaries specialising in cross-border shipping. They take the headache out of getting your cargo from the factory to your warehouse with services that include preparation of documentation, insurance, customs clearance and storage options. They can also advise on the best shipping method for your cargo.

Recommended shipping partners:

DSers



Top tip: Find out how to reduce shipping costs with our handy guide.





8

**How Zyla
Can Help**

8. How Zyla Can Help



Zyla is an international payments platform designed to simplify cross-border transactions for businesses of all sizes. As a brand of Ant International, we share a purpose to make it easy to do business anywhere' by offering inclusive and affordable services to small- and medium-sized businesses and online merchants trading globally.

With a free-to-open Zyla Account, paying suppliers on 1688.com is fast, seamless and secure. For more information on how Zyla can help your business, contact Zyla team.

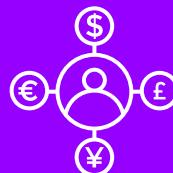
Collect. Convert. Pay. Manage.



Collect international payments from global marketplaces



Convert money at a time and rate that suits you






Pay in multiple currencies from a single account



Manage your money and FX transactions all in one place

Contact Zyla Team

-  **Phone:** (855) 797-3366
-  **Email:** support@us.zyla.com
-  **Website:** zyla.com/pay-1688-suppliers/

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