

## Transporting a Mercury Cougar



If you have just found your dream Mercury Cougar but it is hundreds of miles away and you need to get it home or you have finally finished restoring your Cougar and want to get it moved to an event, your best bet for transportation that is safe is going to be hiring a professional auto transporter to move the car from one place to another. Many people will trailer a vehicle to move it but if you need to move one a great distance, hiring a reliable auto transport company is going to be the best way to have the vehicle moved.

While the company will handle the physical move, there are also some very important things that you, as the vehicle owner, need to take care of in advance to get the vehicle prepared to go.

### **Physically Prepare the Car**

Your car may be moved on and off the carrier during the time it is being transported as other vehicles are loaded or unloaded. Due to this, it needs to be in good enough condition to be driven. If you own a Mercury Cougar that is inoperable you need to let the company know this upfront so they can schedule the right carrier. Since inoperable vehicles cannot be driven, the company will need to have a truck with a lift available ahead of time. If the wrong carrier is scheduled because you have not alerted the company to the driving condition of the vehicle, this can seriously delay your shipment as the company will have to re-schedule your transport. To physically prepare the vehicle you can follow a few simple tips.

- Charge the battery
- Make sure the tires are inflated to the proper level
- Have working brakes
- Lower the fuel to less than a half tank (This will keep the weight lower and possibly help keep your cost down for shipping)
- Fill fluids and make sure you have no fluid leaks (Leaky fluids can be flammable and can cause damage to other vehicles. Many drivers will refuse to load a car if they can see leaks)
- Wash the car
- Mirrors should be folded back to avoid damage
- Antennas need to be folded down or removed so they will not be bent or broken during shipment
- Remove all personal content from inside (This includes CD's and all other items that are not part of the vehicle)
- Remove all loose accessories from the exterior of the vehicle (This includes spoilers and non-stock accessories that can fly off or be pulled off easily)
- Parking Passes and Toll Tags need to be removed (Toll tags can be charged during shipment if scanners pick them up as they are hauled past toll areas)

- Have the alarm disabled. If it cannot be disabled, the driver needs to know how to disarm it if it should set off during shipment.

All vehicles that are shipped by professional classic car transporters need to be washed so there is no dirt or grease that could hide possible signs of cosmetic damage. If there is any damage prior to the vehicle being picked up it needs to be well-documented with not only notes, but also with detailed photographs. Pictures should also be taken of all surface areas of the vehicle and filed for safe keeping until delivery is made. The photos should be time and date stamped for reference. While damage occurs in less than 5% of all professional automobile transport it is very important to maintain detailed records of the condition of the vehicle before it is shipped as it will help protect you if you should happen to file a claim for damage with the company at a later date. To learn more about classic car shipping, see <https://www.a1autotransport.com/classics/>.

### **Personal Property**

As mentioned before, all personal property needs to be removed from the vehicle before it is loaded for shipment. This is not to inconvenience the vehicle owner, but it is to protect the personal property from damage or loss while the vehicle is shipped. The carrier will insure the vehicle from bumper to bumper but the coverage will not include property left inside.

Per Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations, companies that haul motor vehicles are only permitted to haul the car and they cannot haul other items. A spare tire and tie changing tools such as a tire iron or jack can be left in the trunk but aside from that, the vehicle should be empty. If a driver arrives to load a vehicle and sees anything left inside, he will most likely have you empty it before it is loaded.

Personal items can move around if they are left inside of a vehicle when it is being transported and this can cause serious damage to the interior of the car. Items have also been known to fly through windows and cause damage to other cars on a carrier and if this should happen, the vehicle owner responsible for the property left inside can be held legally liable for repair of any damage caused due to their personal property.

Once you have the car fully prepared for transport, you need to have a spare key made to give to the driver that will unlock all doors and the trunk as well as start the car. DOT regulations require this and the driver will need to be able to start the car to load and unload other vehicles along the way as well as unlock the doors and trunk during possible inspections at some point during the drive.

## **International Auto Shipping**

### **1. Research import rules and regulations.**

Every country has individual rules and regulations in regards to the age and type of vehicle they allow to be imported. Some countries only allow newer model vehicles, while others just require that the car passes current safety and emissions standards. Even if it appears that your Mercury Cougar may be one of those not allowed into your destination country, it is important to contact the Customs department directly. Certain concessions can be made for classic vehicles, so some older models may still qualify for importation.

### **2. Collect mandatory documents.**

As there are country-specific regulations, there are also country-specific forms which you can obtain from the Customs department of your destination country. Many of these forms are now available online to make for easier access. The following is just a sampling of the items required, but is by no means all-inclusive:

- Driver's License
- Current Vehicle Registration
- Title
- Purchase Contract (if vehicle is new)
- Bill of Lading (provided by transport company)

Many companies offer GPS or satellite tracking for international and domestic auto transport, this can be a great help as well as a stress reliever as you will be able to track your vehicle's whereabouts from the time it is picked up until it is delivered safely to your hands again. Be sure to get everything, including the price quote and all other pertinent transport information, in writing and ask upfront if the company offers tracking so you will know whether you will be able to track it during shipment.