



# China Sourcing Health Check for Growing Importers

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## Introduction

Many businesses start sourcing from China in a practical, informal way. That often works in the beginning.

Over time, however, the sourcing process becomes more complex. More suppliers get involved. More products are added. Quality expectations become harder to manage. Internal teams become stretched. Problems that were once occasional start becoming recurring.

This health check is designed to help you assess where your current sourcing process stands.

It is not a legal audit or a technical inspection. It is a practical business review tool to help you identify whether your sourcing model is:

- under control
- becoming reactive
- or in need of stronger support

Use this checklist to review your current setup honestly.

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## How to Use This Health Check

For each statement below, score your business:

- **2 points** = Yes, this is in place and working well
- **1 point** = Partly in place / inconsistent
- **0 points** = No / weak / unclear

At the end, total your score and review your result.

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## Section 1: Supplier Control

1. We carry out proper checks before committing to a new supplier.
2. We are confident our key suppliers are capable of meeting our requirements consistently.
3. We do not rely too heavily on one supplier without a clear backup plan.
4. We have a structured way to review supplier performance over time.
5. Supplier communication is clear, consistent, and properly followed through.

**Section 1 Score: \_\_\_\_ / 10**

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## Section 2: Product and Specification Control

6. Our product requirements are clearly documented.
7. Packaging and labelling requirements are properly defined.
8. Internal teams are aligned on what the supplier is expected to deliver.
9. We would be able to explain our product requirements clearly to an alternative supplier if needed.
10. We are confident that avoidable misunderstandings about product details are limited.

**Section 2 Score: \_\_\_\_ / 10**

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## Section 3: Contracts and Commercial Clarity

11. Our supplier agreements are properly documented, not just agreed informally by email or chat.
12. Pricing, delivery, and responsibilities are clearly agreed.
13. We have taken steps to reduce the risk of unauthorised supplier changes.
14. We are confident our contract terms are commercially clear and usable in practice.
15. Our business is not relying on assumptions where written clarity is needed.

**Section 3 Score: \_\_\_\_ / 10**

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## Section 4: Quality Control and Inspection

16. We have a clear plan for when inspections or checks should take place.
17. We do not rely solely on the supplier's own assurances about quality.
18. We have a practical process for checking product quality before shipment where appropriate.
19. We are confident that packaging, quantities, and labelling are being checked properly.
20. We use inspections or verification in a way that supports wider sourcing control, not just last-minute firefighting.

**Section 4 Score: \_\_\_\_ / 10**

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## Section 5: Operational Follow-Through

21. Key sourcing tasks are clearly owned internally.
22. We are not constantly chasing suppliers for updates that should already be controlled.
23. We usually know when a sourcing issue is emerging before it becomes expensive.
24. Our sourcing process feels structured rather than reactive.
25. Senior management is not spending excessive time dealing with avoidable sourcing issues.

**Section 5 Score: \_\_\_\_ / 10**



## Total Score

**Your Total Score: \_\_\_\_ / 50**

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## What Your Score Means

### 40–50: Stronger sourcing control

Your sourcing process appears relatively structured. That does not mean there is no risk, but it suggests your business already has a decent level of supplier control and sourcing discipline.

You may still benefit from targeted support in specific areas such as:

- supplier verification
- contract strengthening
- inspections
- or a sourcing health review to identify weaker points before they become bigger issues

### 25–39: Signs of sourcing strain

Your business likely has some strengths, but there are also clear areas where the sourcing process may be too informal, inconsistent, or reactive.

This is often the stage where businesses benefit from more structured support before recurring issues become harder to control.

Typical next steps may include:

- Buying from China Consulting
- China Purchase Contracts
- Supplier Verification
- China Quality Inspection Services

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## **0–24: High sourcing risk / reactive model**

Your sourcing process is likely carrying significant avoidable risk.

This does not necessarily mean the business is failing, but it usually means supplier control, communication, contracts, quality planning, or follow-through are weaker than they need to be.

At this stage, stronger external support is usually worth considering before the sourcing process becomes more expensive, more fragile, or more management-heavy.

Typical next steps may include:

- Buying from China Consulting
- Silver Monthly China Consulting
- Gold Monthly China Consulting
- China Sourcing Health Check review call



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## Typical Warning Signs to Take Seriously

If several of the following are true, your sourcing process may need attention:

- you rely heavily on informal supplier promises
- quality issues are often discovered too late
- pricing changes create disruption
- product requirements are not fully documented
- too much sourcing knowledge sits in one person's head
- management spends too much time chasing problems
- supplier communication is inconsistent
- you are not sure which part of the sourcing process is actually weakest

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### What to Do Next

If this health check has highlighted weaknesses in your sourcing process, the next step is not necessarily a major overhaul.

Often, the most sensible next step is a short review to identify:

- where the real weaknesses are
- what kind of support is needed
- whether you need lighter consulting, monthly support, or a specific operational service

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**TCI China support routes may include:**

- **Buying from China Consulting**
- **Silver Monthly China Consulting**
- **Gold Monthly China Consulting**
- **Supplier Verification**
- **China Purchase Contracts**
- **China Quality Inspection Services**

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**Request a China Sourcing Review**

Email: [aidan@tcichina.org](mailto:aidan@tcichina.org) or call

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