

# British Colonial Trade Regulations, 1651-1764



Boston Harbor in the 18th century

Act/Regulation	Date	Significance/Features
Navigation Act	1651	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required all crews to be at least 1/2 English in nationality</li> <li>• Most goods must be carried on English or colonial ships</li> <li>• Goal: eliminate Dutch competition from colonial trading routes</li> </ul>
Navigation Act	1660	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required <b>all</b> colonial trade to be on English ships</li> <li>• Master and 3/4 of crew must be English</li> <li>• Long list of "enumerated goods" developed, including tobacco, sugar, rice, that could only be shipped to England or an English colony</li> </ul>
Staple Act	1663	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required goods bound for the colonies shipped from Africa, Asia, or Europe to first be landed in England before shipping to America.</li> </ul>
Plantation Duty Act	1673	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required colonial ship captains to guarantee that they would deliver enumerated goods to England or suffer financial penalties.</li> <li>• Colonial arm of English customs</li> </ul>

		offices established
Navigation Act	1696	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further tightened earlier Navigation Acts</li> <li>• Created system of admiralty courts to enforce trade regulations and punish smugglers</li> <li>• Customs officials given power to issue writs of assistance to board ships and search for smuggled goods</li> </ul>
Woolens Act	1699	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To prevent competition with English producers, prohibited colonial export of woolen cloth.</li> </ul>
Hat Act	1732	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prohibited export of colonial-produced hats.</li> </ul>
Molasses Act	1733	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All non-English imported molasses taxed heavily to encourage importation of British West Indian molasses.</li> </ul>
American Revenue Act (Sugar Act)	1764	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lord Grenville institutes new policies to generate revenue by combining new duties on imported goods with strict collection provisions. Tax on French West Indies molasses was actually lowered, but enforcement attempted to end bribes and smuggling.</li> </ul>

Based on *American Journey* by Goldfied, et al., in addition to other sources.

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