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PLAYBOOK
How to find, vet and buy from Chinese EV charger, energy storage and power-technology manufacturers — without getting burned.
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SOURCING GUIDE · SHENZHEN

Shenzhen EV Sourcing Playbook

How to find, vet and buy from Chinese EV charger, energy storage and power-technology manufacturers — without getting burned.

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How to Use This Guide

This guide is built to be read once, start to finish, and then used as a working reference for every order after that. The eleven chapters follow the order an actual sourcing project runs in — starting with understanding the landscape, moving through vetting and negotiation, and ending with a 30-day plan that ties every earlier chapter together.

Seven working tools come with this guide: a supplier scorecard, an RFQ template, a quote comparison sheet, a factory visit checklist, a deposit-risk checklist, a certification checklist, and a set of outreach email templates. Each is referenced by name in the chapter it belongs to. Use the guide to understand *why* a step matters, and the tools to actually *do* the step on a real order.

A short glossary of recurring terms sits at the very back of this guide, after the bonus chapters, for quick reference.

Chapters 2, 3, 6, 7 and 10 include real examples from the author's own sourcing work in Shenzhen, marked clearly where they appear.

After Chapter 11, four bonus chapters cover the practical side of actually living in Shenzhen — visa and housing, daily life, the adjustment itself, and a quick-reference page of numbers and resources.

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Chapter 1: The EV and Energy Ecosystem

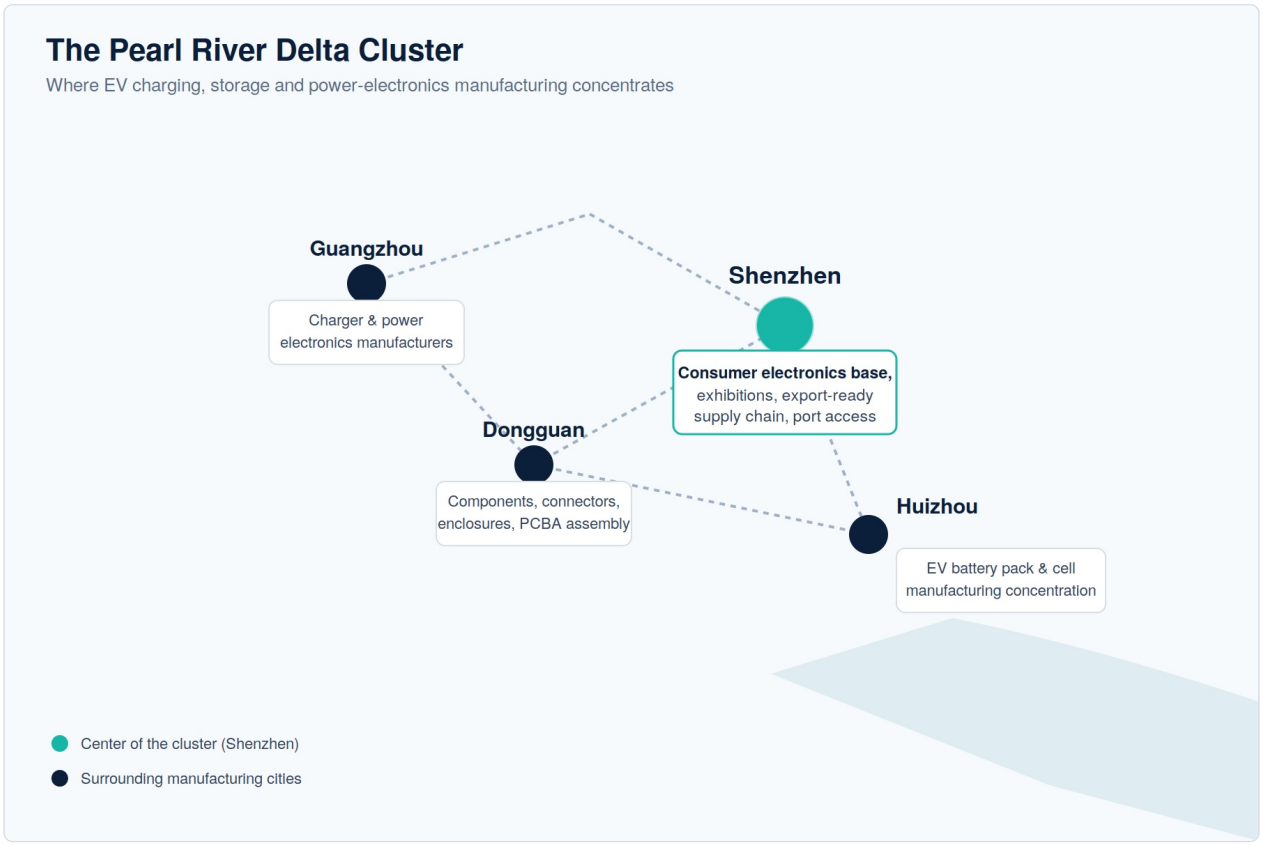


At a DC fast-charging site with integrated energy storage units, Shenzhen.

Before you can vet a supplier, it helps to know what you're actually looking at. "EV and energy manufacturing in China" isn't one industry — it's a cluster of related ones, concentrated in specific regions, with different players doing different parts of the work. Knowing the shape of this ecosystem is what lets you tell a specialist from a generalist, and a factory from a reseller, before you've asked a single question.

The center of gravity: the Pearl River Delta

Most of what this guide is concerned with — EV chargers, battery packs, energy storage systems, power electronics — clusters in Guangdong province, specifically the Pearl River Delta: Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Dongguan, Huizhou and the cities around them. This isn't an accident of geography. The region built its manufacturing base on consumer electronics, and battery, power and charging hardware draws on exactly the supply chain that industry already established — component sourcing, PCBA assembly, casing and enclosure production, and a dense web of subcontractors who can turn a design into hardware quickly.



Guangdong is one of China’s largest lithium battery export bases, with materials suppliers, cell factories, battery management system companies, and pack assemblers concentrated in the same region — plus direct port access through Shenzhen and Guangzhou, which matters once you get to the shipping chapter later in this guide. Huizhou, just east of Shenzhen, has become a particular concentration point for EV battery manufacturing specifically, built on the same electronics manufacturing base.

This concentration is genuinely useful to you as a buyer. It means a factory visit to Shenzhen can realistically cover suppliers across chargers, storage and power electronics without much travel, and it means suppliers here are usually plugged into an export-ready supply chain rather than one built only for the domestic market.

Who makes what

Charger manufacturers. Ranges from large, well-known brands building complete AC and DC charging stations, down to smaller manufacturers producing chargers under their own brand or as white-label / OEM product for overseas buyers. This tier is where most first-time buyers in this guide will be sourcing from — not the largest global brands, but the mid-size manufacturers who can produce at the volumes and price points a smaller buyer actually needs.

Battery and energy storage. At the top of this tier sit the world’s largest battery makers, headquartered in this same region, but the buyer relevant to most readers of this guide is further down the chain — mid-tier cell makers, pack assemblers, and battery management system specialists who supply components or finished packs into other people’s products. This is also the segment where energy storage systems have become a major growth area, sometimes now attracting more competitive activity than EV batteries themselves.

Power electronics and modules. Inverters, converters, battery management systems and the electronics that sit between a battery and a charger or a grid connection. This tier tends to be more component-

focused and less consumer-facing, which means less brand recognition to lean on — making the verification steps in this guide more important here, not less.

Components, cables and connectors. Below the finished-product tier sits a dense layer of specialist suppliers — connectors, cables, enclosures, thermal management components — who supply the manufacturers above. You may end up buying from this tier directly if you're doing your own assembly, or indirectly through whichever finished-product supplier you choose.

Standards and connector types, in plain terms

You'll encounter a handful of terms constantly once you start sourcing:

- **AC vs DC charging.** AC charging is slower and uses the vehicle's onboard converter; DC (fast) charging converts power before it reaches the vehicle, enabling much faster charging but requiring more complex, more expensive hardware.
- **Connector standards.** CCS (Combined Charging System) is the dominant DC standard in Europe and many other markets (as CCS2). North America has moved to NACS, now standardised as SAE J3400, although many existing public sites there still use CCS1. CHAdeMO is a Japanese-originated standard, and GB/T is the Chinese domestic standard. A charger built for the Chinese domestic market may use GB/T connectors — not what you need if you're importing for a CCS market, so confirm the exact connector standard against your target market, not just "international" or "export" as a general claim.
- **OCPP (Open Charge Point Protocol).** The communication standard that lets a charger talk to a back-office management system. Increasingly a baseline expectation rather than a premium feature, especially for networked or public charging infrastructure.

Why this matters before you talk to a single supplier

Two practical takeaways carry through the rest of this guide:

Ask where in this chain a supplier actually sits. A "manufacturer" who is really a components supplier repackaging finished product, or a trading company sourcing from several of the smaller factories in this ecosystem, isn't necessarily a bad choice — but you should know which one you're talking to, which is exactly what Chapter 2 gives you the tools to check.

Match your target market's standard, not the easiest thing to buy. The Pearl River Delta's manufacturing base is deep enough that you can usually find a supplier building to your exact connector standard, protocol requirements and certification needs — but only if you ask for it specifically. The most common early mistake isn't picking a bad supplier; it's picking a good supplier building the wrong standard for where you're actually selling.

This chapter reflects the general shape of the industry at time of writing. Company names, market positions and production capacity change quickly in this sector — treat this as orientation to the landscape, not a current directory of specific suppliers.