Ownership Checklist for Stocks

US stocks via DRS in your own name, Swiss registered shares into the share register · belongs to Chapters 14 and 15 · Date: ____________

Goal: the share in your name, the custody chain as short as possible. In **street name** (pooled custody) the share register does not show your name but that of a depository company. You are the beneficial owner with a claim against your broker, who hangs in a chain of several links. If one link breaks (Lehman 2008, MF Global 2011), your holdings are stuck in the wind-down, in the worst case as a mere claim. With **DRS** (USA) or in the **share register** (Switzerland) your name stands directly with the company's registrar: your broker does not hold the shares, cannot lend or pledge them, and its bankruptcy does not touch them. What neither changes: if the company goes under, registered shares are just as worthless as custodied ones. This sheet names principles, not click paths, because broker menus get renamed.

A · US STOCKS VIA DRS (CHAPTER 14)

Phase	Item	OK	Note
Prepare	**Choose your core positions:** only long-term quality from Chapter 12, no savings plan, no trading stock. DRS is a parking space, not a trading venue.		
	Broker with DRS transfer. German standard brokers mostly do not offer it, or only at fantasy prices. Shares must be settled (one business day after purchase).		Broker code: ______
	Name and address exactly identical at broker and transfer agent, spelled as in your ID down to the umlaut. Any deviation creates a second account at the registrar.		
	Note the company's transfer agent. The corporation appoints it, not you. One account and portal per agent: three agents mean three logins.		Agent: ______
	Small dollar balance for the transfer fee (a few dollars) in the broker account, a whole number of shares for the transfer.		
Transfer	**Request in the broker portal:** position transfer, outgoing, method DRS, destination the issuer's transfer agent. Enter an existing transfer agent account number, otherwise leave the field blank and the agent opens an account from the broker's master data. Sign electronically. Usually takes a few business days, holding costs nothing afterwards.		Date: ______
Check	**Registrar's confirmation (DRS Advice)** received, number of shares correct. Activate the account in the transfer agent's portal, secure the access, add it to the holdings list from Chapter 11.		
	Switch the dividend route right away: without bank details the dollar cheque arrives by post, and German banks cash it only for a fee. Enter bank details in the portal, choose electronic payment where the company offers it, test with a small dividend.		
	Complete the W-8BEN in the portal (with your German tax ID): 15 instead of 30 percent US withholding tax. Valid until the end of the third calendar year after signing, set a calendar reminder.		Valid until: ______
	Tax on your own: no custodian bank withholds the flat-rate withholding tax (Abgeltungsteuer). File the dividend statements and declare them yourself (Chapter 18).		
	Estate prepared: transfer agent accounts in the estate documentation (Chapter 11), a note on the Transfer Certificate (Form 5173) and the Medallion Signature Guarantee. Details in the closer look in Chapter 14.		

B · REGISTERING SWISS REGISTERED SHARES (CHAPTER 15)

Phase	Item	OK	Note
Understand	**Dispo share:** bought and nothing done means economically yours, but not in the share register. The dividend comes via the broker, the voting right rests, no invitation to the general meeting, no dividend in kind. Entry never happens automatically.		
	Check the class of stock before buying: registered share, not participation or dividend-right certificate (examples: Schindler has both, Roche is traded as a participation certificate without a register). Registered shares with transfer restrictions are normally no hurdle for private investors.		
Apply	**Swiss custodian bank or Swiss broker,** account deliberately opened via the Swiss domain (Chapter 16). EU neobrokers with omnibus custody mostly cannot map the personal entry.		Broker code: ______
	Sign the entry request with power of attorney once and file it. It covers past and future purchases, but does not replace the trigger in each individual case.		Date: ______
	After every purchase trigger the entry yourself in the register area of your account. The bank reports you to the company's share register. Free of charge, entered after a few days, the share remains tradable in the account.		
Check	**Verify completion:** confirmation from the company or register status in the account. The everyday proof: the invitation to the general meeting with voting card comes directly from the company. Before every general meeting mind the record date for entry.		
	Nominee entry is something else: there the trustee stands in the share register, not you, and some companies cap nominee voting rights (Sika: three percent). Only the entry in your own name counts here.		
	Access details and holdings into the holdings list from Chapter 11. Reclaim Swiss withholding tax on dividends under the treaty (Chapters 16 and 18).		

C · MY POSITIONS

Company	Country	Custody today	Target	Done on
		Street name · DRS · Register · Dispo		
		Street name · DRS · Register · Dispo		
		Street name · DRS · Register · Dispo		
		Street name · DRS · Register · Dispo		

⚠ **Name mismatch.** One letter of difference between broker and transfer agent, and you have two accounts at the registrar. Check beforehand, do not merge afterwards. ⚠ **Fractional shares.** Only whole shares are transferred, remainders stay with the broker or are sold in a full transfer. ⚠ **W-8BEN expired.** Then 30 instead of 15 percent US withholding tax. ⚠ **Account transfer without acquisition data.** Foreign brokers are not part of the German data exchange between custodian banks. Before every transfer, save all purchase statements and the transfer-out record, otherwise the substitute assessment basis can apply on a transfer back to a German bank: a flat 30 percent of the sale proceeds counted as gain (Chapter 16).

No account numbers, registration numbers or login details on this sheet, codes are enough, such as "TA1" for the first transfer agent account. No investment, tax or legal advice, a tax adviser checks the individual case.