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# Ship Leasing Market - Global Industry Size, Share, Trends, Opportunity, and Forecast, Segmented By Lease Type (Financial Lease, Full-Service Lease), By Type (Real-Time Lease, Periodic Tenancy, Bareboat Charter, Other Types), By Application (Container Ships, Bulk Carriers), By Region & Competition, 2021-2031F

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## Abstracts

The Global Ship Leasing Market is projected to experience substantial growth, expanding from a valuation of USD 15.78 Billion in 2025 to USD 31.28 Billion by 2031, representing a CAGR of 12.08%. This industry revolves around the chartering of vessels by shipowners to operators for defined periods, a mechanism that allows lessees to access fleet capacity without incurring the heavy capital costs associated with direct ownership. The sector is fundamentally propelled by the capital-intensive demands of maritime trade, which require balance sheet flexibility, and the increasing necessity for modern vessels that meet strict environmental standards; these structural factors encourage operators to embrace asset-light business models, creating a consistent foundation for leasing demand that endures beyond temporary market fluctuations.

Despite this positive outlook, the market contends with significant challenges stemming from supply-demand imbalances, particularly where aggressive fleet expansion threatens to depress charter rates. BIMCO projects that in 2025, the global supply of container ships will increase by 6.2%, a pace that risks exceeding trade growth and causing market saturation. This oversupply introduces volatility for lessors, compelling them to manage asset acquisition and lease terms with precision to preserve profitability while navigating fluctuating utilization levels.

## Market Driver

The growth of international seaborne trade volumes serves as a primary catalyst for the global ship leasing market, necessitating rapid fleet augmentation to handle increasing cargo throughput. As global supply chains stabilize and emerging markets continue to industrialize, the intensifying demand for containerized goods, dry bulk commodities, and energy resources forces operators to quickly secure additional tonnage without depleting their cash reserves. Leasing arrangements offer the necessary agility, enabling shipping lines to scale operations in response to trade flows while mitigating the risks of long-term asset ownership; this relationship is highlighted by UNCTAD's 'Review of Maritime Transport 2024' from October 2024, which noted a 2.4% increase in international maritime trade volume in 2023, indicating a recovering demand trajectory that supports the leasing sector.

Concurrently, the withdrawal of traditional banking sectors from ship finance has transformed the capital landscape, accelerating the shift toward sale and leaseback agreements. European commercial banks, historically the dominant lenders, have reduced their exposure due to stricter capital requirements and risk aversion, creating a liquidity gap that leasing companies have filled. This transition allows shipowners to unlock equity in their vessels and refinance debt, establishing leasing as a critical liquidity management tool; according to Marine Link in July 2024, the top 40 global banks held a ship finance portfolio of USD 284.3 billion at the end of 2023, reflecting a constrained lending environment. Furthermore, the push to modernize fleets amplifies this need for capital, as DNV?s 'Maritime Forecast to 2050' (September 2024) indicates that roughly 93% of the global fleet remains reliant on fossil fuels, underscoring the immense investment required for the green transition.

## Market Challenge

The imbalance between supply and demand, fueled specifically by aggressive fleet expansion, acts as a significant restraint on the Global Ship Leasing Market's growth. When new vessel deliveries exceed the demand for maritime trade, the market suffers from a saturation of available tonnage, creating a buyer?s market that shifts leverage to operators and drives down charter rates. Consequently, lessors encounter revenue volatility and compressed profit margins, as they are forced to compete in a crowded environment to secure employment for their assets; this inability to command premium rates due to excess inventory directly impacts the return on investment for shipowners and restricts capital availability for future expansion.

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This influx of capacity is evidenced by recent fleet development statistics, such as data from BIMCO in May 2024, which projected the global container ship fleet to grow by 9.3% for the year due to record levels of new deliveries. Such a substantial increase in supply, without a corresponding rise in cargo volume, exacerbates competition among lessors. As a result, leasing companies are often compelled to accept reduced rates or shorter lease durations to maintain utilization, a dynamic that hinders the overall financial stability and growth potential of the sector.

**Market Trends**

The increasing dominance of Chinese financial leasing institutions is fundamentally reshaping the sector's capital structure, effectively filling the liquidity void created by divesting Western banks. These institutions have emerged as primary lenders, favoring finance lease structures that provide shipowners with essential balance sheet flexibility, marking a significant geographical pivot as Chinese lessors aggressively expand via competitive sale-and-leaseback transactions. According to Freight + Fortune in May 2025, Chinese lessors held approximately USD 100 billion in shipping assets, representing over 15% of the global ship finance market; this massive injection of capital has become critical for sustaining fleet renewal efforts amidst tightening credit conditions in traditional European banking hubs.

Simultaneously, there is a surge in financing demand for dual-fuel and low-carbon vessels, driven by stringent decarbonization mandates. Lessors are prioritizing 'green' tonnage to mitigate asset depreciation risks associated with conventional ships, understanding that future regulatory compliance will determine residual values. This trend is fostering a two-tier market where energy-efficient vessels secure premium lease rates and favorable terms; DNV reported in January 2025 that orders for alternative-fuelled vessels rose by 38% in 2024 compared to the previous year, highlighting a decisive capital shift that compels leasing companies to integrate sustainability metrics into their strategies to ensure long-term profitability.

**Key Market Players**

A.P. Moller - Maersk A/S

Global Ship Lease, Inc.

Hamburg Commercial Bank AG

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First Ship Lease Trust

Galbraiths Ltd.

ICBC Co., Ltd.

Minsheng Financial Leasing Co., Ltd.

CMB Financial Leasing CO., LTD.

Bothra Group

MUFG Bank, Ltd

**Report Scope**

In this report, the Global Ship Leasing Market has been segmented into the following categories, in addition to the industry trends which have also been detailed below:

- Ship Leasing Market, By Lease Type
  - Financial Lease
  - Full-Service Lease
- Ship Leasing Market, By Type
  - Real-Time Lease
  - Periodic Tenancy
  - Bareboat Charter
  - Other Types
- Ship Leasing Market, By Application

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Container Ships

Bulk Carriers

Ship Leasing Market, By Region

North America

United States

Canada

Mexico

Europe

France

United Kingdom

Italy

Germany

Spain

Asia Pacific

China

India

Japan

Australia

South Korea

South America

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- Brazil
- Argentina
- Colombia

Middle East & Africa

- South Africa
- Saudi Arabia
- UAE

**Competitive Landscape**

Company Profiles: Detailed analysis of the major companies present in the Global Ship Leasing Market.

**Available Customizations:**

Global Ship Leasing Market report with the given market data, TechSci Research offers customizations according to a company's specific needs. The following customization options are available for the report:

**Company Information**

- Detailed analysis and profiling of additional market players (up to five).

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