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## TRANSPORT

Flights, tours and rail tickets can be booked online. Visit [www.lonelyplanet.com/travel\\_services](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/travel_services).

## AIR

South Korea used to have only two domestic carriers – **Korean Air** (☎ 1588 2001; [www.koreanair.com](http://www.koreanair.com)) and **Asiana Airlines** (☎ 1588 8000; [www.flyasiana.com](http://www.flyasiana.com)) – but recently low-cost regional airlines such as Jeju Air have appeared on the scene. Domestic flights are reasonably priced and run to most of the country's major cities as well as Jeju, Korea's southern holiday and honeymoon island. Fares charged by both major companies are virtually identical on domestic routes. Fares are cheaper from Monday to Thursday when you are also more likely to obtain a seat. Flights on public holidays are more expensive and are often booked out, so avoid travel on these days if possible. There are discounts for students and children. Foreigners should carry their passports for ID purposes on all domestic flights. The longest flight (Seoul to Jeju) takes just over an hour.

## Airlines

The following major airlines have offices in Seoul:

- Air Canada** (AC; ☎ 3788 0100)
- Air China** (CA; ☎ 774 6886)
- Air France** (AF; ☎ 3788 0440)
- Asiana Airlines** (OZ; ☎ 1588 8000)
- British Airways** (BA; ☎ 774 5511)
- Cathay Pacific Airways** (CX; ☎ 311 2800)
- Japan Airlines** (JL; ☎ 3788 5710)
- KLM Royal Dutch Airlines** (KL; ☎ 2011 5500)
- Korean Air** (KE; ☎ 1588 2001)
- Lufthansa Airlines** (LH; ☎ 3420 0400)
- Malaysia Airlines** (MH; ☎ 777 7761)
- Northwest Airlines** (NW; ☎ 732 1700)
- Singapore Airlines** (SQ; ☎ 755 1226)
- United Airlines** (UA; ☎ 778 4968)

## Airports

Virtually all international passengers arrive at Incheon International Airport, situated on an island in the West Sea that is linked to the mainland by a road bridge. Gimpo International Airport, despite its name, is the domestic airport and only has one international flight destination – to and from Haneda Airport in Tokyo.

### GIMPO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

The **domestic terminal** (Map pp198–9; ☎ 660 2114; <http://gimpo.airport.co.kr>; subway Line 5 to Gimpo International Airport, Exit 1) handles all Seoul's domestic flights except for a handful of flights to and from Busan and Jeju, which arrive and depart from Incheon. The 1st floor is for arrivals and has a **tourist information booth** (☎ 3707 9465; ☎ 9am–9pm) with free Internet. The 2nd floor is for checking in while the 3rd floor is for departures and has a pharmacy. The 4th floor has restaurants and duty-free shops. Shops, banks, lost luggage, luggage deposit and a medical centre are also available. Just outside the airport is the subway station (W1100 to City Hall) along with limousine buses (W2500 to W6000) and taxis that charge around W18,000 (regular taxi) or W30,000 (deluxe taxi) to City Hall, 18km away.

Gimpo also has a separate **international terminal** (subway Exit 2) but it only handles flights to Haneda (Tokyo) – currently 18 daily, which cost around W350,000 plus tax. Taking this route avoids the hassle of getting out to Incheon and Narita airports, which are a long distance from their respective capital cities. Inside the international terminal are banks and the **Sky City Mall** (☎ 6343 4000; ☎ 10am–9pm) where clothing, electronics goods and mobile phones all have a floor to themselves. Nearby is **CGVA cinema multiplex** (☎ 1544 1122; ☎ 11am–2am) and a food court.

### INCHEON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This spacious and splendid airport (Map p150; ☎ 032-1577 2600; [www.airport.co.kr](http://www.airport.co.kr)), 52km west of Seoul, opened in March 2001, and relegated Gimpo International Airport to handling mainly domestic flights.

Built on reclaimed land between two islands in the West Sea off Incheon city, at present no trains run to the airport, although that should change in 2007. Instead, fleets of buses and taxis go back and forth to all parts of Seoul and to other cities. Special airport buses run every 10 to 30 minutes from around 5.30am to 10pm and the trip to downtown Seoul takes around 90 minutes depending on traffic conditions. City limousine buses cost W7000 and run along a dozen routes, while KAL deluxe limousine 25-seat buses cost W12,000 and drop passengers off at 20 major hotels around Seoul. Buses also run every 10 minutes to Gimpo airport along a special airport road, which takes about 30 minutes and costs W4500 on the City limousine buses or W6000 on the KAL ones. If no airport bus travels to where you want to go, you can take a bus to a subway station and transfer. One option is to transfer to the subway at Gimpo airport but it requires a bit of a walk with your bags.

For up-to-date information on airport buses see [www.airport.or.kr](http://www.airport.or.kr). When catching a bus back to the airport, remember that the airport buses have their own special, signed stops and don't stop at ordinary bus stops. See p151 for buses around the airport island and to nearby beaches.

Regular taxis charge around W38,000 to downtown Seoul while a deluxe or jumbo taxi costs around W63,000, but the price can be more if traffic is jammed as meters run on a time basis when the taxis are not moving. A road toll (W6400) is added to the meter price. From midnight to 4am regular taxis charge 20% extra.

On the 1st floor (arrivals):

**Foreign currency exchanges** (☎ 6am–10pm)

**Global ATMs** There are around a dozen.

**Hotel Information Centre** (☎ 032-743 2570; [h-reservation@hanmail.net](mailto:h-reservation@hanmail.net); ☎ 9am–10pm) A private company that offers discounts on the rack rates at some midrange and top-end hotels.

**Incheon Tourist Information Centre** (☎ 032-743 0011; ☎ 7am–10pm)

**KTO Tourist Information Centre** (☎ 1330; ☎ 7am–10pm)

On the 2nd floor:

**Gate A** Has a handful of daily domestic flights to and from Busan and Jeju.

**Internet Café Lounge** (☎ 032-743 7427; 1hr W3000; ☎ 8am–7.30pm)

**Korean Air Lost & Found Office** (☎ 032-742 5193; Room 2145; ☎ 6.30am–9.30pm)

**KT Plaza** (☎ 032-752 1441; ☎ 7am–8pm) Offers 30 minutes free Internet access.

**KTF** (☎ 032-743 4072) Mobile phone.

**LG Telecom** (☎ 032-743 4019) Rent a mobile phone.

**Luggage Storage** (☎ 032-743 5804; Gate B; per item per day W3000–6000; ☎ 6am–10pm)

**Post Office** (☎ 032-740 2900; ☎ 9am–6pm Mon–Fri)

**SK** (☎ 032-743 4042) Mobile phone rental.

**Transit Tours** (☎ 032-741 3139; 2nd fl; 1st fl, Exit 2 & 12) Runs trips for transit passengers to a luxurious seawater spa, around the airport island Yeongjongdo, and further afield around Seoul and Incheon. Tours cost US\$30 to US\$50 and last two to five hours.

The 3rd floor is for departures and offers retail therapy in the many duty-free shops. Restaurants, fast-food outlets, cafés and bars charge reasonable prices. Banks in the shopping area beyond immigration control enable you to exchange any won before leaving the country. To obtain a tax refund on goods you bought at a shop that participates in one of the tax refund schemes (p121), you must show the goods and receipts to one of the customs officers behind the check-in counters. Also on this floor:

**Left-Luggage Storeroom** (large item per day W3000; ☎ 7am–9.30pm)

**Lost & Found Office** (☎ 741 3114; [find119@airport.or.kr](mailto:find119@airport.or.kr); ☎ 7am–10.30pm)

On the hard-to-find 4th floor:

**Café Royal** (American breakfast W12,000, continental breakfast W9300)

**Panorama** (meals W6000–18,000; ☎ 7am–9pm) Serves up breakfasts, *bulgogi* (barbecued beef slices and lettuce wrap) sets, fancy desserts and a view of the planes.

**Snack bar** (pumpkin porridge & ginseng tea W5000)

Down in the basement:

**Airport Sauna** (☎ 032-743 74000; W10,000–15,000; ☎ 24hr) This sauna has the usual hot and cold tubs, steam and sauna rooms along with showers, massages (W30,000–80,000), male hairdresser (W15,000), shoe shine (W3000) and a dormitory with *yo* (padded quilt that serves as a mattress on the floor). The women's sauna has just a sauna and a dormitory. Staying all night costs W15,000.

**Carib** (☎ 032-743 2550; meals around W8000; ☎ 6am–9.30pm) A quiet and relaxing food court option.

**Medical Centre** (☎ 032-743 3115, emergency ☎ 743 3119; 🕒 24hr) Run by Inha University, the centre has English-speaking staff who treat up to 200 people a day. A **dental clinic** (🕒 9am-5pm Mon-Fri) is part of the centre.

**Pool Hall** (☎ 032-743 74000; 10min W2500; 🕒 24hr) Pay at the sauna.

**Samil Pharmacy** (☎ 032-743 3399; 🕒 7.30am-8.30pm)

**Tous Les Jours** (☎ 032-743 7007; 🕒 6am-9pm) Has freshly baked items and ice creams.

**Vita Via** (☎ 032-743 7009; meals W4000-10,000; 🕒 7am-9pm) A clean and buzzing food court that includes conveyor belt sushi.

See p131 for details of accommodation inside and near the airport.

## KOREA CITY AIR TERMINAL

If you're booked on a Korean Air or Asiana flight, you can check-in your luggage at the **Korea City Air Terminal** (KCAT; Map pp214-15; ☎ 551 0077; www.kcat.co.kr; 🕒 7am-6.30pm; subway Line 2 to Samseong, COEX Exit) and catch a non-stop limousine bus (W12,000, 1½ hours, every 15 minutes) to Incheon International Airport or Gimpo airport (W6000). Asiana passengers can also use the KCAT at **Central City** (Map p211; ☎ 1544 5551; www.centralcityseoul.co.kr; subway Line 3 or 7 to Express Bus Terminal, Exit 7) where a similar system operates.

## BICYCLE

The only safe and enjoyable cycling is in Tutkseom Seoul Forest (p63), around the West Sea islands (p150), and along the cycleways along the Han River (p115). Bicycles cost W2000 an hour. ID is required, and padlocks or helmets are not supplied.

## BOAT

Regular ferries connect Incheon City, west of Seoul, with around a dozen port cities in China two or three times a week. Journey times vary from 12 to 24 hours. One-way fares start at W115,000 to most destinations but prices double for the more private and comfortable cabins. A through-ticket from Seoul to Beijing or Shanghai is available, which includes a ferry trip and train journeys in Korea and China – see www.korail.go.kr for details. To reach Incheon port (ferries leave from Yeonan Pier or International Terminal 2), take subway Line 1 to Incheon station (the end of the line) and then take a taxi (W4000).

Ferries to six Japanese cities leave from the southern city of Busan (one-way tickets cost W55,000 to W110,000). See www.korail.go.kr for a Seoul to Tokyo rail-and-ferry through ticket.

## BUS Local

It is easier and usually quicker to travel around Seoul by subway, but the city has a comprehensive and reasonably priced bus system (☎ 414 5005; www.bus.go.kr) that operates from 5.30am to midnight, although buses run on a few routes until 2am. Some bus stops have some bus route maps in English. Most buses have their major destinations written in English on the outside and they usually have a taped announcement of the names of each stop in English, but hardly any bus drivers understand English. What were they all doing during their English lessons at school?

Long-distance express red buses to the outer suburbs cost W1400, while green buses that link subways within a district and blue buses to outer suburbs cost W800, and yellow short-haul buses that circle small districts are W500. The bus number indicates which district or districts the bus travels around or between – thus blue bus No 261 starts in zone 2, and goes to zone 6 via Line 1. Pay with a T-money prepaid card (the card costs W1500 and can be bought, charged and recharged at any subway station ticket office) and tickets cost W100 less and transfers are free, or at least cheaper. Put your card to the screen as you exit as well as when you get on a bus.

## Long Distance

Reasonably priced long-distance buses speed to just about every small town in South Korea. Most major roads have a special bus lane that reduces delays due to heavy traffic. Buses are so frequent that it's not necessary to buy a ticket in advance, except perhaps on holidays and weekends. Superior-class buses have more leg room but cost 50% more than ordinary buses. Night-time buses that travel after 10pm have a 10% surcharge and are generally superior class. Buses go to far more places than the trains, but are not as comfortable or safe, so trains are the better option for travelling long distances to major cities.

The **Seoul Express Bus Terminal** (Map p211; www.kobus.co.kr; subway Line 3 or 7 to Express Bus Terminal, Exit 1 or 7) is in two separate buildings:

**Gyeongbu-Gumi-Yeongdong Terminal** (☎ 535 4151; subway Exit 1) Serves mainly the eastern region and has a tourist information centre (☎ 535 4151; 🕒 9am-5pm), a pharmacy, a post office and lots of shops and restaurants. Downstairs are bars, more restaurants and a sauna. On the nine floors above are countless stalls selling fabrics, bedding and clothes as well as flowers (3rd floor; 🕒 1am-1pm). Sample express/deluxe bus fares include Busan (W19,300/28,800), Gyeongju (W16,300/24,200), Sokcho (W13,900/20,500), Daegu (W13,600/20,100), Daejeon (W7600/11,200) and Gongju (W5800/6300).

**Honam Terminal** (☎ 6282 0600; subway Exit 7) This smart and new terminal serves the southwestern region. Sample express/deluxe fares include Mokpo (W16,400/24,400), Gwangju (W14,100/20,900) and Jeonju (W10,200/15,000). This terminal is linked to the popular Central City Mall (p127).

Other bus terminals:

**Dong Seoul Bus Terminal** (Map pp214-15; ☎ 455 3161; subway Line 2 to Gangbyeon, Exit 3) Serves the eastern part of the country and big cities elsewhere. Sample fares include Everland (W2200), Icheon (W3500), Chuncheon (W7000), Daejeon (W8300), Danyang (W11,700), Daegu (W13,700), Gyeongju (W19,000) and Busan (W19,400).

**Nambu Bus Terminal** (Map p211; ☎ 521 8550; subway Line 3 to Nambu Bus Terminal, Exit 5) Has services south of Seoul such as Daechon Beach (W8700).

**Sinchon Bus Terminal** (Map p210; ☎ 324 0611; subway Line 2 to Sinchon, Exit 7) Has services to Ganghwado, a historical island northwest of Seoul.

## CAR & MOTORCYCLE

First-timers in Seoul should avoid driving in Seoul due to the traffic jams, the impatience and recklessness of other drivers and the lack of street names, directional signs and parking. Public transport is cheap and convenient so few tourists get behind a steering wheel.

## Driving

Driving in Seoul is on the right, but is not recommended. If you do start driving, after one year you must apply for a Korean licence, which means taking an eye test, but otherwise it is a relatively straightforward process as long as you have a driving licence from your home country. However, if you are not

from a country such as the USA, Canada, UK, France or Germany, you will need a certificate from your embassy stating that you are licensed to drive in your home country.

## Hire

You must be over 21 years of age and have an International Driving Permit (not available in Korea) in order to rent a car. Prices start at W70,000 a day. A safer option is to rent both a car and a driver (3hr/10hr W75,000/142,000) – your hotel reception desk should be able to help and some top hotels have their own limousine service. The best place to hire a car is Incheon International Airport; see what Kumho-Hertz (www.kumhorent.com) or Avis (www.avis.co.kr) has to offer.

## SUBWAY

Seoul's subway system (www.subwayworld.co.kr, www.smrt.co.kr) is modern, comprehensive, fast, frequent, clean, safe and cheap, but try to avoid rush hours. The minimum fare is W900 (W800 with a T-money card), less than one American dollar, and that takes you up to 12km. The one-hour trip to Suwon city costs only W1100 while the 75-minute ride to Incheon city costs just W1400. Trains run every few minutes from 5.30am to around midnight. Subway stations connect everywhere with everything. In central Seoul the average time between stations is just over two minutes, so it takes around 25 minutes to go 10 stops.

The T-money card costs W1500 and can be bought from subway station ticket offices and kiosks, and convenience stores that display the T-money logo. Each person needs their own card and the cards can be charged anywhere that sells them. Using a card saves you W100 per trip and saves queuing for tickets. Just touch the card to the sensor when you enter and leave the subway system or bus. When you leave the city, money on the card up to W20,000 can be refunded at any subway ticket office.

Many subway stations have lifts or stair lifts for wheelchairs. Neighbourhood maps inside the stations help you to decide which of the many subway exits to take, although north can be in any position, which makes the maps confusing. The stations all have clean modern toilets, but you need to carry around your own toilet paper. Every station

is well signed in English and the whole system is very user-friendly. Most subway stations have storage lockers, although most of them are too small to take a full-size backpack. The lockers cost W1000 a day and are easy to use. Smoking is not permitted on trains or platforms.

Hawkers walk up and down the carriages selling W1000 mobile-phone holders, vegetable slicers, W3000 umbrellas and other bargains. The occasional handicapped or blind beggar shuffles down the aisle with a begging bowl and a cassette playing hymns.

If you leave something on a subway train, contact the relevant **Lost & Found Office** (☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat):

**Lines 1 & 2 City Hall station** (☎ 753 2408); **Guro station** (☎ 869 0089); **Seoul station** (☎ 755 7108)

**Lines 3 & 4 Chungmuro station** (☎ 2271 1170)

**Lines 5 & 8 Wangsimni station** (☎ 2298 6767)

**Lines 6 & 7 Taereung station** (☎ 949 6767)

**Bundang Line Suseo station** (☎ 2226 6881)

**Incheon Line Bupyeong Samgeori station** (☎ 032-451 3650)

## TAXI

Regular taxis are a good deal and are cheaper than the bus or subway for three people making a short trip. Regular taxis (*ilban*) cost W1900 for the first 2km and then W100 for every 144m or 41 seconds afterwards. A 20% surcharge is payable between midnight and 4am. Deluxe taxis (*mobeom*) are black with a yellow stripe and cost W4500 for the first 3km and then W200 for every 205m or 50 seconds, and don't have a late-night surcharge. There are plans to drop these fixed prices in 2006 and if this happens taxis will charge varying prices.

Few drivers can speak English, but some taxis have a free interpretation service – you speak on the phone in English to an interpreter who then talks to the taxi driver in Korean. Writing your destination down can help as most Koreans are better at understanding written rather than spoken English. Writing your destination in *hangeul* (Korean phonetic alphabet) would be even better (to help you every map key item in this guidebook has a *hangeul* translation). All taxis have meters, but on the Incheon airport route passengers must pay the road toll on top of the meter charge. Tipping is not a Korean custom and is not necessary.

## TRAIN

Seoul is the hub of an extensive domestic rail network operated by **Korean National Railroad** (☎ 1544 7788; www.korail.go.kr). The railway ticketing system is computerised and tickets can be bought up to one month in advance at many travel agents as well as at train stations. Booking ahead is advised. Foreigners can buy a 'KR pass' – see the website for details.

KTX (Korea Train Express) is a new bullet train service that at present extends from Seoul to Daegu but should reach Busan by 2008, which will reduce the journey time between Seoul and Busan from two hours 40 minutes to one hour 50 minutes. The next fastest and most luxurious type of train are *saemaoul* services, which also only stop in major towns. *Mugunghwa* trains are also comfortable and fast, but stop more often, while *tongil* trains are cheap, stop at every station and are an endangered species.

There are on-going talks about the re-opening of rail links between North and South Korea, but this depends on the agreement of the unpredictable North Korean government.

## PRACTICALITIES ACCOMMODATION

The Sleeping chapter listings (p130) are 50% midrange, with 20% top-end mixed in, and are followed by Cheap Sleeps, which are Seoul's best budget options and cost less than W50,000. Organised into neighbourhood sections, accommodation is listed in alphabetical order. Seoul has no special peak seasons, but bigger discounts are more likely during mid-summer and mid-winter.

## Booking Services

Always check if discounted prices include the 21% service and tax. Some hotels claim that the best rates are obtainable from their own websites, but other websites that offer discounted prices and special deals include these three:

[www.khrc.com](http://www.khrc.com) Check out the special deals.

[www.koreahotels.net](http://www.koreahotels.net) Has the widest range of hotels.

[www.townmax.com](http://www.townmax.com) Always worth checking.

## BUSINESS HOURS

For most government and private offices, business hours are from 9am to 6pm Monday to Friday. Government offices usually close an hour earlier from November to February.

Banking hours are from 9.30am to 4pm Monday to Friday.

Post offices are open from 9am to 6pm Monday to Friday from March to October, and 9am to 5pm November to February.

Department stores traditionally open from 10.30am to 7.30pm daily with one day off a week. Nowadays some open every day and a few open until late evening. New high-rise shopping malls tend to stay open until 10pm and a few, for example in Dongdaemun (p122), are open all night.

Small shops open from 10am to around 9pm but some stay open until midnight, and many convenience stores are open 24 hours.

Restaurants usually open from 11am or noon until 9pm or 10pm seven days a week.

Cinemas are traditionally open from 11am with the last show ending at 11pm, but nowadays some continue later and even all night, like at COEX (p102).

As business hours vary, they are listed in every review in this guide.

Seoul offers plenty for night owls as some saunas, markets, malls, convenience stores, cinemas, Internet cafés and restaurants open all night, while many bars and nightclubs stay open until dawn, particularly on Friday or Saturday night. Clubbing, watching movies, napping in a sauna or shopping until 5.30am means you can catch an early subway train home and save on the taxi fare.

## CHILDREN

See p45 for ways of keeping children happy. If you're in Seoul with the darlings on 5 May, Children's Day, take advantage of the many special events for children. The National Museum of Korea (p62) and the National Folk Museum (p50) have fun, hands-on children's sections, and the War Memorial & Museum (p63) has outdoor warplanes and tanks that make for a popular playground.

Children are welcome in restaurants but families usually eat out in their own neighbourhood rather than in central Seoul. High chairs are not common. Koreans are family-oriented but in the past family out-

ings together have not been common, although this is changing with the younger generation of parents and the introduction of a five-day week.

For general advice about taking children abroad, check out a copy of Lonely Planet's *Travel with Children*.

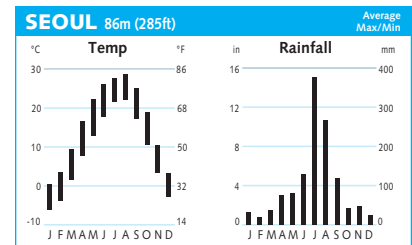
## Babysitting

A few top hotels and residences, such as Fraser Suites and Lotte World Hotel, provide babysitting services, but that's about it. See the classifieds in *K Scene* magazine for Filipinas who offer babysitting, nannying and housekeeping services. Otherwise try **H&S** (☎ 720 0870; www.hnskorea.com) who can supply babysitters (W10,000 an hour).

## CLIMATE

Seoul has four very distinct seasons – and people never tire of telling you. Weather-wise, the best time of year to visit is autumn, from September to November, when the weather is usually sunny, and in October Seoul's surrounding hillsides are ablaze with autumn colours. Spring, from April to early June, is another beautiful season, with warm temperatures and cherry blossoms in late April.

Winter is dry but often bitterly cold, with average temperatures in Seoul hovering around zero from December to February, when you appreciate the *ondol* (underfloor heating). But white snow on the temple roofs is very picturesque and it's a good time to visit if you enjoy skiing, skateboarding or ice-skating. Try to avoid summer as late June to late July is the wet season when Seoul receives 60% of its annual rainfall. Some weeks in August are unpleasantly hot and humid although most places have air-con these days, which makes it more bearable. See p8 for the best time to visit Seoul in terms of festivals and events.





## COURSES

### Buddhist Temple Stays

Some Korean temples, usually located in remote and picturesque mountain areas, offer visitors the chance to participate in a number of activities with the monks. A typical overnight temple stay includes sharing a four-bowl meal of rice, soup, vegetables and water with the monks. No talk is allowed and not even a scrap of food should be wasted – Buddhist monks and nuns still follow strict rules. A guided tour of the temple buildings is followed by half an hour of *Seon* (Zen) meditation. Everyone sits cross-legged and a monk tells participants to concentrate and use their minds to focus completely on their breathing.

Another experience is the tea ceremony when a monk prepares green tea, which must be served at exactly the right temperature and should be drunk in three sips. Tea calms the mind and body, and if Korean monks have a disagreement they try and settle it over a cup of green tea. Helping to clean the grounds and a hike in the nearby mountains are other likely activities. View [www.templestaykorea.net](http://www.templestaykorea.net) for details of temple stays or visit the information office at Jogyesa (p53).

### Cooking

The best way to learn Korean cooking is to do a homestay with someone willing to teach you. Otherwise a few cooking classes are conducted in English.

**Food & Culture Academy** (Map p210; ☎ 362 6704; [www.fnckorea.com](http://www.fnckorea.com); 3rd fl, Hanuisol A Bldg, Seongsanno; 1½hr courses W25,000-80,000; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Sat; subway Line 2 to Ewha Womans University, Exit 2) This friendly and relaxed school, a 15-minute walk from the subway, is outside the back gate of Ewha Womans University. Learn how to make *kimchi*, *dasik* (biscuits), *pajeon* (green-onion pancake), *bulgogi*, special *tteokbokki* (rice cakes in a sweet and spicy sauce), *mandu* (filled dumplings) and *gujeolpan* (eight snacks and wraps). You can also try on *hanbok* (traditional Korean clothing). Reservations are necessary.

**Han's Institute of Culinary Arts** (Map p205; ☎ 742 3567; [www.hancooking.co.kr](http://www.hancooking.co.kr); courses W60,000-150,000; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri; subway Line 3 to Anguk, Exit 4) Various two-hour classes are offered in English. You get to eat or take away what you cook and the price includes a cookery book.

**Institute of Traditional Korean Food** (Map pp202-3; ☎ 741 6521; [www.kfr.or.kr](http://www.kfr.or.kr); above Jilsiru tteok café; 3hr courses W70,000) The Institute's owner, Mrs Yoon, runs courses on making Korean rice cakes.

### Korean Language

Plenty of Seoulites will teach you Korean in return for you teaching them English – check the classifieds in *K Scene* magazine, or view [www.englishspectrum.com](http://www.englishspectrum.com) and click on 'language exchanges'. *Survival Korean* by Stephen Revere (W21,000) includes a book and two cassette tapes.

**Korean Foundation Cultural Center** (Map pp206-7; ☎ 3789 5600; [www.kfcenter.or.kr](http://www.kfcenter.or.kr); ☎ 10.30am-6pm Mon-Sat; subway Lines 1 & 2 to City Hall, Exit 9) Click on 'Communication' on the website for details of free Korean language classes on three evenings a week. The cultural centre has a library and exhibition spaces.

**YBM Sisa** (Map p205; ☎ 2278 0509; [sisakli@ybsisa.co.kr](mailto:sisakli@ybsisa.co.kr); office ☎ 6am-7pm Mon-Sat; subway Line 1 or 5 to Jongno 3-ga, Exit 15) Various classes are available at this large institute overlooking Tapgol Park. A month of weekday lessons (two hours daily) costs W199,000 or a month of three-hour Saturday lessons costs W90,000.

**Yonsei University** (Map p210; ☎ 2123 3465; [www.yskli.com](http://www.yskli.com)) The university runs highly recommended part- and full-time Korean language and culture classes for serious students. Five-week summer courses cost US\$1340.

### Meditation

A mind-expanding number of meditation techniques are taught and practised at **Meditation Arui Seon** (Map p205; ☎ 722 6653; off Insadong 3-gil; ☎ 11am-10pm Tue-Sun; subway Line 3 to Anguk, Exit 6), a *hanok* (traditional Korean house) meditation and breathing centre. Meditate walking around the mini stone path in the green courtyard, walking on different energy level stones, listening to music or inspirational words on headphones, looking at a picture in a room hung with crystals, or even inside a plastic container. Drinks are W5000, but *Seon* teas are W10,000. Courses in English cost W20,000 for two hours, but every weekend the centre runs a free two-hour introduction course (phone ahead to make a booking).

### Traditional Culture

In the grounds of Gyeongbokgung, the **National Folk Museum** (Map p50; ☎ 734 1341; [www.nfm.go.kr](http://www.nfm.go.kr)) runs practical courses that teach foreigners about the tea ceremony and how to make fans, pottery, paper boxes and, of course, *kimchi*. The courses are free and numbers for each course are limited to 50 participants.

## CUSTOMS

Visitors must declare all plants, fresh fruit, vegetables, dairy products and meat that they bring into South Korea. If you have more than US\$10,000 in cash and travellers cheques, this should be declared and you will have to fill in a form. Gifts worth more than US\$400 should also be declared. Leaving the country, the duty-free allowance is 1L of liquor, 200 cigarettes and 59ml (2 ounces) of perfume. Log on to [www.customs.go.kr](http://www.customs.go.kr) if you need further information. Antiques of national importance are not allowed to be exported, so if you want to buy a very expensive genuine antique, check first with the **Cultural Properties Appraisal Office** (☎ 662 0106).

## DISABLED TRAVELLERS

In the past, Seoul has not been geared up to cater for disabled people, as disabled Koreans tended to stay at home or in their neighbourhood, and there were few disabled foreign tourists. But this is changing slowly, and the subway stations in particular are making an effort to become more disabled-friendly. Many stations now have stair-lifts and elevators, and new toilets for the disabled have been built. Tourist attractions, especially government-run ones, offer generous discounts or even free entry for disabled people and a helper. A useful brochure is the *Accessible Seoul* map, available from tourist information offices. More information is available at [www.easypass.or.kr](http://www.easypass.or.kr).

## DISCOUNT CARDS

Government-run tourist attractions generally offer discounts to senior citizens over 65, but you will need a passport or some other ID. Other organisations generally restrict discounts to local residents but it is always worth asking.

## ELECTRICITY

South Korea is on the 220V standard at 60Hz and uses two round pins with no earth.

## EMBASSIES

### Diplomatic Missions in Seoul

**Australia** (Map pp202-3; ☎ 2003 0100; [www.australia.or.kr](http://www.australia.or.kr); 11th fl, Kyobo Bldg, Jongno 1-ga, Jongno-gu)

**Canada** (Map pp206-7; ☎ 3455 6000; [www.korea.gc.ca](http://www.korea.gc.ca); 10th fl, Kolon Bldg, 45 Mugyo-dong, Jung-gu)

**China** (Map pp202-3; ☎ 738 1193; [www.chinaemb.or.kr](http://www.chinaemb.or.kr); 9th fl, Kyobo Bldg, Jongno 1-ga, Jongno-gu)

**France** (Map pp200-1; ☎ 3149 4300; [ambassade.france.or.kr](http://ambassade.france.or.kr); 30 Hap-dong, Seodaemun-gu)

**Germany** (Map pp198-9; ☎ 748 4114; [www.gembassy.or.kr](http://www.gembassy.or.kr); 308-5 Dongbinggo-dong, Yongsan-gu)

**Ireland** (Map pp206-7; ☎ 774 6455; [www.irelandhouse-korea.com](http://www.irelandhouse-korea.com); 15th fl, Daehan Fire & Marine Insurance Bldg, 51-1 Namchang-dong, Jung-gu)

**Japan** (Map pp202-3; ☎ 2170 5200; [www.kr.emb-japan.go.jp](http://www.kr.emb-japan.go.jp); 18-11 Junghak-dong, Jongno-gu)

**Netherlands** (Map pp202-3; ☎ 737 9514; [www.nlem.bassy.or.kr](http://www.nlem.bassy.or.kr); 14th fl, Kyobo Bldg, Jongno 1-ga, Jongno-gu)

**New Zealand** (Map pp202-3; ☎ 730 7794; [www.nz.embassy.or.kr](http://www.nz.embassy.or.kr); 18th fl, Kyobo Bldg, Jongno 1-ga, Jongno-gu)

**Philippines** (Map p209; ☎ 577 6147; 34-44 Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu)

**Russia** (Map pp206-7; ☎ 752 0630; [www.russian-embassy.org](http://www.russian-embassy.org); 34-16 Jeong-dong, Jung-gu)

**Singapore** (Map pp206-7; ☎ 744 2464; [www.mfa.gov.sg/seoul](http://www.mfa.gov.sg/seoul); 19th fl, Samsung Taepyeongno Bldg, 310 Taepyeongno 2-ga, Jung-gu)

**Taiwan** (Map pp202-3; ☎ 399 2767; Visa Office, 6th fl, Gwanghwamun Bldg, Jongno-gu)

**UK** (Map pp206-7; ☎ 3210 5500; [www.britishembassy.or.kr](http://www.britishembassy.or.kr); 4 Jeong-dong, Jung-gu)

**USA** (Map pp202-3; ☎ 397 4114; <http://usembassy.state.gov/seoul>; 32 Sejongno, Jongno-gu; ☎ 9am-11.30pm, 1.30-3.30pm, closed Wed, Sat, Sun, Korean & American holidays)

## EMERGENCY

Note that English-speaking staff may not be available. If this is the case ring ☎ 1330 (24 hour information and help line).

**Ambulance** (☎ 119)

**Fire Brigade** (☎ 119)

**Medical Help Line** (☎ 1339; English-speaking))

**Police** (☎ 112)

## GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

Korea has never passed any laws that overtly discriminate against homosexuals. But this should not be taken as a sign of tolerance or acceptance. Korean law does not mention homosexuality because it is considered so bizarre and unnatural that the topic is taboo. Only one celebrity, TV actor Hong Seok-chun, has admitted to being gay and no-one

has followed his example. Some older Koreans insist that there are no gays in Korea. Attitudes are changing, especially among young people, but virtually all Korean gays and lesbians keep their sexual orientation a secret from their family, work colleagues and friends. The few gay and lesbian clubs, bars and saunas (p111) in Seoul keep a low profile but are more open than they used to be. Gay and lesbian travellers who publicise the fact can expect some hostile reactions. View [www.utopia-asia.com](http://www.utopia-asia.com) for up-to-date information on gay and lesbian issues and listings of gay bars and events in Seoul.

## HEALTH

South Korea is a relatively well-developed country and the quality of medical care in Seoul is high. It is still, however, worth taking some basic health precautions.

At the time of writing there have been no human cases of 'bird flu' in Korea. In late 2005 there were concerns raised about imported Chinese *kimchi* (pickled vegetables). The nation's food regulator found parasite eggs in some imported *kimchi*, and other samples were found to contain five times as much lead as the Korean product. Earlier in the year it was revealed that some *mandu* (dumplings) manufacturers were using rotten radishes as stuffing for mass-produced *mandu*. The government has since increased penalties for those found to be adulterating foodstuffs, so hopefully this will be a practice of the past.

If you take regular medication make sure it is packed in clearly labelled, original containers. A letter from your physician outlining your medical condition and a list of your medications (using generic names) is useful. In Korea you need a doctor's prescription to buy medication and it may be difficult to find the exact medication you use at home – take extra in case of loss or theft.

No matter how fit and healthy you are it is unwise to travel without health insurance. Ensure you declare any pre-existing conditions. If your insurance company doesn't cover you for medical expenses abroad, look at getting extra cover – check Lonely Planet's subwwway ([www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com)) for more information.

## Recommended Vaccinations

Travellers are advised to seek medical advice about vaccinations. Specialised travel-

medicine clinics are your best source of information. Most vaccines don't produce immunity until at least two weeks after they're given, so visit a doctor four to eight weeks before departure. Travellers should particularly consider immunisation against hepatitis A.

## Diseases

### HEPATITIS A

A problem throughout the country, this food- and water-borne virus infects the liver, causing jaundice (yellow skin and eyes), nausea and lethargy. There is no specific treatment for hepatitis A, you just need to allow time for the liver to heal. All travellers to Korea should be vaccinated against hepatitis A.

### HEPATITIS B

The only sexually transmitted disease that can be prevented by vaccination, hepatitis B is spread by body fluids, including sexual contact. Up to 10% of the population are carriers of hepatitis B, and usually are unaware of this. The long-term consequences can include liver cancer and cirrhosis.

### HIV

HIV is also spread by body fluids. Avoid unsafe sex, sharing needles, invasive cosmetic procedures such as tattooing, and needles that have not been sterilised in a medical setting.

### INFLUENZA

Influenza (flu) symptoms include high fever, muscle aches, runny nose, cough and sore throat. It can be very severe in people over the age of 65 or in those with underlying medical conditions such as heart disease or diabetes – vaccination is recommended for these individuals. There is no specific treatment, just rest and paracetamol.

### STDs

Sexually transmitted diseases are common throughout the world and the most common include herpes, warts, syphilis, gonorrhoea and chlamydia. People carrying these diseases often have no signs of infection. Condoms will prevent gonorrhoea and chlamydia but not warts or herpes. If after a sexual encounter you develop any rash, lumps, discharge or pain when passing urine seek immediate medical attention. If you have been sexually active during your travels have an STD check on your return home.

## HEALTH ADVISORIES

It's a good idea to consult your government's travel-health website before departure, if one is available:

**Australia** ([www.smarttraveller.gov.au](http://www.smarttraveller.gov.au))

**Canada** ([www.travelhealth.gc.ca](http://www.travelhealth.gc.ca))

**New Zealand** ([www.mfat.govt.nz/travel](http://www.mfat.govt.nz/travel))

**South Africa** ([www.dfa.gov.za/travelling](http://www.dfa.gov.za/travelling))

**UK** ([www.doh.gov.uk/traveladvice](http://www.doh.gov.uk/traveladvice))

**USA** ([www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel))

## TRAVELLER'S DIARRHOEA

Eating in restaurants is the biggest risk for contracting traveller's diarrhoea. Eat only freshly cooked food and avoid shellfish and food that has been sitting around in buffets. Peel all fruit, cook vegetables, and eat in busy restaurants with a high turnover of customers. Avoid tap water – bottled or boiled water is safer to drink.

In most cases, traveller's diarrhoea is caused by a bacteria (there are numerous potential culprits), and therefore responds promptly to treatment with antibiotics.

The treatment consists of staying well-hydrated, using rehydration solutions such as Gastrolyte. Antibiotics such as Norfloxacin, Ciprofloxacin or Azithromycin will kill the bacteria quickly.

Loperamide is just a 'stopper' and doesn't get to the cause of the problem. Don't take it if you have a fever, or blood in your stools. Seek medical attention quickly if you do not respond to an appropriate antibiotic.

## Environmental Hazards

### AIR POLLUTION

Air pollution, particularly vehicle pollution, is an increasing problem in Seoul. If you have severe respiratory problems speak with your doctor before travelling to any heavily polluted urban centres. This pollution also causes minor respiratory problems such as sinusitis, dry throat and irritated eyes.

### PARASITES

The most common parasite in Korea is Clonorchis. Infection occurs after eating infected freshwater fish – these may be raw, pickled, smoked or dried. Fortunately raw freshwater fish are rarely served in Seoul restaurants, so it is easy to avoid.

Light infections usually cause no symptoms, however heavy infections can cause liver problems. In some areas along rivers where raw river fish are commonly eaten, up to 20% of the local population are infected.

## Online Resources

There is a wealth of travel health advice on the Internet. For further information, Lonely Planet ([www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com)) is a good place to start. The **World Health Organization** (WHO; [www.who.int/ith](http://www.who.int/ith)) publishes a superb book called *International Travel & Health*, which is revised annually and is available online at no cost. The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC; [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)) website also has good general information.

## HOLIDAYS

### Public Holidays

Nine Korean public holidays are set according to the solar calendar and three according to the lunar calendar, meaning that they fall on different days each year. See p8 for Seoul's festivals and annual events. The government is threatening to abolish Arbour Day, Children's Day and Memorial Day as public holidays due to the recent reduction of the working week from six to five days.

**New Year's Day** 1 January

**Lunar New Year** 17-19 February 2007, 6-8 February 2008, 25-27 January 2009, 13-15 February 2010

**Independence Movement Day** 1 March

**Arbour Day** 5 April

**Children's Day** 5 May

**Buddha's Birthday** 24 May 2007, 12 May 2008, 2 May 2009, 21 May 2010

**Memorial Day** 6 June

**Constitution Day** 17 July

**Liberation Day** 15 August

**National Foundation Day** 3 October

**Chuseok (Thanksgiving)** 5-7 October 2006, 24-26 September 2007, 13-15 September 2008, 2-4 October 2009, 21-23 September 2010

**Christmas Day** 25 December

## INTERNET ACCESS

Internet cafés can be found on every street of Seoul – just look for the 'PC 방' signs. The Internet rooms charge around W1200 per hour and are usually full of teenagers

playing Starcraft or some other game. Addiction to these games is a major social problem. The PC rooms all have fast broadband connections and keyboards feature English and *hangeul*. Some are open 24 hours, but they don't usually offer much refreshment beyond instant noodles, biscuits and soft drinks so game addicts have an unhealthy diet. Some are full of cigarette smoke, but these days more and more smokers go outside.

Places that offer free Internet include most post offices, Seoul Help Centre for Foreigners at City Hall, Seoul Selection Bookshop, Incheon International Airport, Megaweb and McDonald's at the COEX Mall, and tourist information bureaux at KTO, Itaewon subway station, Insadong and Gimpo airport. Guesthouses offer free Internet access to their guests, and although budget motels don't usually have Internet access, all the hotels offer Internet-enabled computers or broadband access that you can plug into.

If you are working and living in Seoul, many Internet Service Providers (ISPs) can offer an English-language home page and continuous broadband access for around W35,000 a month.

## LEGAL MATTERS

Most legal problems involving foreigners concern visa violations or illegal drugs. In the case of visa transgressions, the penalty is normally a fine and possible expulsion from the country. As for using or selling narcotics, think twice: you could spend years researching the living conditions in a South Korean prison. The age of consent for sex is 18 (unless you're married to each other), anyone under 20 is not allowed to buy alcohol or cigarettes, and to hire a car you must be at least 21 years old.

## MAPS

The Korean Tourism Organisation (KTO) and Seoul Metropolitan Government publish numerous free brochures and maps of Seoul. They only show major roads but are fine for most purposes. **Chungang Atlas** (Map p205; ☎ 730 9191; ☎ 9am-6.30pm Mon-Sat, 9am-5.30pm Sun; subway Line 1 to Jonggak, Exit 2) has racks of detailed maps of Seoul in *hangeul*, but nothing very useful in English. There are no detailed, up-to-date and accurate maps in English and probably not in *hangeul* either.

## MEDICAL SERVICES

Seoul is a healthy city with standards of sanitation and medical care that are equal to those of other developed countries. Doctors are overworked but surgeons are particularly skilled. There are two health systems – one is Western-style and the other is based on traditional Asian principles and makes use of herbal remedies and acupuncture. Gyeongdong market (p122) is the place to go for traditional remedies.

It is customary for a relative or friend to stay with a patient who is in hospital, staying overnight in the case of a serious illness, to help with the nursing work. Nurses concentrate on the medicine and monitoring aspects, while relatives handle the small talk and wield the bedpans. Doctors have a heavier caseload than in the US and are not used to offering patients options or giving long explanations (even if their English is up to it). Hospitals normally require cash upfront and then you have to claim the money back from your insurance company.

**Daewon Dental Clinic** (Map p209; Itaewonno; ☎ 794 0551; fax 794 0512; ☎ 10am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat; subway Line 6 to Itaewon, Exit 4) Kind and gentle Dr Park can take care of your dental problems – a check-up is W15,000, while a crown or front tooth root canal are both around W350,000.

**International Clinic** (Severance Hospital; Map p210; ☎ 2228 5800, 24hr emergency only 012-263 6556; www.severance.or.kr; Seongsanno; consultation W55,000; ☎ 8.30am-12.30pm & 1.30-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-12.30pm Sat; subway Line 2 to Sinchon, Exit 3) A 700m walk from the subway, the impressive clinic has five English-speaking doctors led by jovial and experienced Dr Linton who speaks English and Korean. The hospital is ultra modern, a cross between a luxury hotel and a department store with water features, artworks, an impressive lobby, a food court and shops.

**International Clinic** (Map p209; ☎ 790 0857; www.internationalclinic.co.kr; Hannam Bldg, Itaewonno; ☎ 9am-noon & 2-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon & 2-3pm Sat; subway Line 6 to Itaewon, Exit 2) Consultations cost W30,000 to W50,000, but a house call costs a whole lot more. Psychiatric services are also available.

## MONEY

The South Korean unit of currency is the won (W), with W10, W50, W100 and W500 coins. Notes come in denominations of W1000, W5000 and W10,000. The highest value note is worth only US\$10 at the current exchange rate, so you will probably have to carry around a thick wad of notes.

The Bank of Korea wants to introduce a W100,000 note, but so far the government has vetoed it. Recently the won has been strengthening against the US dollar and most other currencies, and this trend is expected to continue, given South Korea's balance of payments surplus. See the Quick Reference guide inside the front cover for the exchange rate at the time of printing or view www.keb.co.kr for the up-to-date exchange rate. See p18 to get an idea of costs in Seoul. It is easy enough for foreign residents in Seoul to open a bank account at one of the big banks – just find a clerk who can speak some English and have your passport and alien registration card with you.

## ATMs

Automated teller machines (ATMs) in Seoul are a little strange but more and more accept foreign cards. If you have a foreign credit card, you need to find an ATM with a 'Global' sign or the logo of your credit card company. A few Global ATMs have all their instructions in Korean, so you may need help the first time you use one, but most have some English instructions. ATMs can be found outside banks and post offices, and inside deluxe hotels, subway stations, airports, convenience stores and department stores.

ATMs often operate from 9am to 11pm, but some are 24 hours. Restrictions on the amount you can withdraw vary. It can be as low as W100,000 or W300,000 per day, but most have a W700,000 limit. Outside banking hours you may be charged a higher commission. Convenient Global ATMs in Itaewon include:

**Itaewon subway station** (Map p209; subway Line 6 to Itaewon) Inside the subway station.

**Korea Exchange Bank** (KEB; Map p209; Itaewonno; subway Line 6 to Itaewon, Exit 1)

## Changing Money

You can use US dollars on American military bases, including the United Service Organizations (USO), at Panmunjeom on the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) tour, at duty-free shops, and in some tourist shops in Itaewon, but otherwise you will need Korean won. Duty-free shops also accept Japanese yen and some other foreign currencies.

Many banks in Seoul offer a foreign-exchange service and there are licensed moneychangers, particularly in Itaewon,

that keep longer hours than the banks and provide a faster service but may only exchange cash. As with any shops and hotels that offer to exchange money, compare their rates and commissions with the banks first.

US dollars are easiest to exchange but banks accept any major currency. If you have trouble exchanging a particular currency, try the Korea Exchange Bank (KEB). Traveller's cheques usually have a slightly better exchange rate than cash. Don't forget to reconvert any surplus won into another currency before you leave the country, as exchanging won outside Korea can be a problem. If you need to reconvert more than US\$2000 of won at Incheon airport, you must show receipts for the money.

**Citibank** (Map p205; ☎ 731 8100; Hwaenam-gil; ☎ 9.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri; subway Line 1 to Jonggak, Exit 3) Has a global ATM and exchanges foreign currency.

**Hana Bank** (Map p213; ☎ 3143 1111; Yanghwaro; ☎ 9.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri; subway Line 2 to Hongik University, Exit 5) Exchanges foreign currency.

**Korea Exchange Bank** (KEB; Map p209; ☎ 792 3911; Itaewonno; ☎ 9.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri; subway Line 6 to Itaewon, Exit 1) Has a global ATM and exchanges foreign currency.

**Shinhan Bank** (Map pp202-3; ☎ 774 5800; ☎ 9.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri; subway Line 1 to Jonggak, Exit 5) Has a Global ATM, can exchange money and is next door to the KTO tourist information centre.

## Credit Cards

More and more upmarket hotels, shops and restaurants accept foreign credit cards, but plenty of places including budget accommodation, market stalls and restaurants require hard cash. Cash payment is still surprisingly common in Seoul so always have a stash of W10,000 notes handy as it will almost certainly be needed.

## NEWSPAPERS & MAGAZINES

Korea has two locally published English-language newspapers: the *Korea Times* (W700; http://times.hankooki.com) and *Korea Herald* (W700; www.koreaherald.co.kr). Both are published Monday to Saturday, and like Tweedledum and Tweedledee, it's difficult to tell them apart as both fill most of their pages with news agency reports and local business and political news. But the Friday *Korea Times* and the Saturday *Korea Herald* have a weekend section with 'What's On' listings



and articles on Seoul restaurants, shows and movies. The websites are useful – the *Times* has a ‘jobs for foreigners’ section with new postings every day, while the *Herald* website has accommodation classifieds.

**Chosun Ilbo** (<http://english.chosun.com>) and **Donga Ilbo** (<http://english.donga.com>) are for news junkies with web access. Neither has printed editions in English but maintain websites in English.

**JoongAng Daily** (<http://joongangdaily.joins.com>) is an eight-page insert in the *International Herald Tribune* (W1300). The website has useful ‘event calendar’ and ‘J-style and weekend’ sections.

**K Scene** is a free biweekly magazine for expats with a youthful vibe, lots of classifieds plus reviews and a calendar of events that is plugged into Seoul’s clubbing scene.

**Korea Now** is published biweekly by the Korean Information Service and covers current affairs and the arts. Read the current issue online at <http://kn.koreaherald.co.kr>.

**Koreana** ([www.koreana.or.kr](http://www.koreana.or.kr)) is a quarterly scholarly magazine on all things Korean that can be read online.

**Seoul** is a free monthly magazine that is always worth reading and has what’s-on information, interviews, reviews and articles on cultural topics.

**Seoul Scope** is a free monthly arts, events and entertainment magazine in English and *hangeul*.

## PHARMACIES

Seoul has two medical systems – Western and Asian, but virtually all pharmacies stock at least some Western medicines. Pharmacists sometimes know some English but it may help them if you write down your symptoms or the medicine you want on a piece of paper as they can usually understand English better if it enters through the eyes rather than the ears. If you have a language problem and a mobile phone dial ☎ 02 1330, explain what you want in English, and ask the interpreter to explain in Korean to the pharmacist.

Pharmacists in Itaewon can communicate in English, and a doctor’s clinic for foreigners is situated on the main street (Map p209). Some brand-name medications, special sunscreens, deodorants, dental floss and specialised health products may be difficult to obtain in Seoul, so stock up on them before you arrive. Condoms can be bought in any convenience store.

**MediPharm** (Map p210; ☎ 336 0011; ☎ 9am–11pm; subway Line 2 to Sinchon, Exit 8)

**Sudo Pharmacy** (Map p205; ☎ 732 3336; Insadong-gil; ☎ 8.30am–9.20pm Mon–Sat, noon–7pm Sun; subway Line 3 to Anguk, Exit 6)

## POST

Post offices ([www.koreapost.go.kr](http://www.koreapost.go.kr)) have a red/orange sign. Most offer free Internet. Domestic postal rates start at W190 for a regular-sized letter, W270 for express. Postcards (W350) and aérograms (W400) cost the same to any country, but international letter and parcel rates vary according to the destination. Airmail letters (10g) cost W580 for Zone 3, which includes North America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. Also for Zone 3 a 2kg parcel costs W28,000 by airmail or W12,000 by surface mail. The heaviest parcel you can post (20kg) costs W94,000 by airmail, W48,000 by surface mail.

**Anguk Post Office** (Map p205; ☎ 735 2005; ☎ 9am–6pm Mon–Fri; subway Line 3 to Anguk, Exit 1) Has free Internet.

**Central Post Office** (Map pp206–7) Is being rebuilt but should reopen in 2007.

**Gwanghwamun Post Office** (Map pp202–3; ☎ 3703 9011; ☎ 9am–8pm Mon–Fri, 9am–6pm Sat & Sun; subway Line 5 to Gwanghwamun, Exit 5) This downtown post office has extended hours compared to regular post offices as well as free Internet and even a free blood pressure test machine.

## RADIO

Radio Gugak is a digital, government-funded station that broadcasts to the Seoul area for 22 hours a day (off-air from 3am to 5am). It broadcasts traditional Korean music on 99.1FM. You can also listen by accessing [www.gugakfm.co.kr](http://www.gugakfm.co.kr) and clicking on ‘Replay Broadcasting’ and then ‘Gugak Player’. AFN provides radio broadcasts for American troops on 1530AM (country music, news and sport) and 102.7FM (rock music and news).

## SAFETY

Seoul is a relatively safe city, except when it comes to traffic. Drivers tend to be impatient with *kimchi*-hot tempers, and most of them, including bus drivers, routinely go through red lights, so don’t be the first or last person to cross over any pedestrian crossing. Vehicles never stop at pedestrian crossings that are not protected by traffic lights so it’s better not to use them. Crossing any road except at traffic lights is not a sensible idea, and jaywalking is illegal. Also keep two eyes out for motorcyclists who routinely speed along pavements and across pedestrian crossings. A high proportion of road deaths (38%) are pedestrians, so take extra care when walking round Seoul.

Drunks in Seoul are better behaved than elsewhere so walking around at 3am shouldn’t pose a problem. The swaying packs of late-night revellers usually pose more of a threat to themselves than to other people. Of course there is always an exception, so arguing with a drunk should be avoided.

Visitors are often surprised to see police in full riot gear, carrying large shields and long batons, streaming out of blue police buses that have their windows covered in protective wire. Student, trade-union, anti-American, environmental and other protests do still occasionally turn violent, although this is much less common than it used to be. Needless to say, it is wise to keep well out of the way of any confrontations that may occur.

## TELEPHONE

Despite the popularity of mobile phones, there are still plenty of public telephones in Seoul, especially at subway stations. Some public phones accept only W10, W50 and W100 coins and are used for local calls. Other phones accept phone cards and can be used for local or long-distance calls. Phones that can make international calls have a sign to that effect. The cost of a local call is W70 for three minutes, while calls to mobile phones cost W300 a minute.

When using local-call phones, you may find that the phone has been left off the hook. The reason is that the phones do not give change for partially used coins and the local custom is to let someone else use your unused credit. There is a 30% discount on long-distance local and international calls made between 9pm and 8am Monday to Saturday, and all day on Sunday and public holidays.

**Gyeonggi-do code** (☎ 031) This province surrounds Seoul.

**Incheon city and airport code** (☎ 032)

**International access codes** KT (☎ 001), Dacom (☎ 002) and Onse (☎ 008).

**Seoul code** (☎ 02) Do not dial the zero if calling from outside Korea.

**South Korea country code** (☎ 82)

**Toll-Free code** (☎ 080)

## Fax

To send a fax, ask at your hotel or guesthouse. If they can’t help, try the nearest Internet room, photocopy shop or hotel with a business centre. **Insadong Tourist Information**

**Centre** (Map p205; ☎ 734 0222; Insadonggil; ☎ 10am–10pm; subway Line 3 to Anguk, Exit 6) has a fax (W1000 per sheet) and copier (W100 per sheet).

## Mobile Phones

The bad news is that Korea uses the CDMA network system, which few other countries use, so you may need to hire a mobile phone while you’re in Seoul unless someone comes up with a clever chip that allows your phone to use the CDMA network. Mobile phone hire is available from three companies, KTF (☎ 032-743 4072), SK (☎ 032-743 4042) and LG Telecom (☎ 032-743 4019). They compete with each other and so may offer different services or prices.

The best place to rent a mobile phone is at Incheon International Airport as soon as you arrive. Currently the rental fee is W3000 a day, incoming calls are free and outgoing domestic calls cost around W600 a minute, while calls to the US, for example, cost around W900 a minute. Check if the price includes 10% VAT. A few luxury hotels provide their guests with a mobile phone in which case you won’t need to hire one.

## Phonecards

Telephone cards usually give you a 10% bonus and can be bought at convenience stores and many small shops. There are two types of cards so if your card does not fit in one type of phone, try a different-looking one. A few phones accept credit cards.

But for phoning abroad a much better deal is offered by the dozens of call-back cards that can be bought in Itaewon, the Filipino Sunday market (p124) or outside the main Immigration office (Map pp198–9). The cards that give the best deal are always changing and some are sold at a discount on their face value. At present W10,000 buys four or five hours of talk to the US or the UK.

## TELEVISION

There are five Korean-language TV networks: KBS1, KBS2, MBC, SBS and EBS. They often show American films that are dubbed into Korean, but many TVs have a button you can press to hear the original English version. EBS is an education channel.

AFN Korea ([www.afnkorea.net](http://www.afnkorea.net)) is an English-language TV station run by the US military, which broadcasts American shows, sport and action films.



Arirang (www.arirangtv.com) is a government-funded TV station that broadcasts documentary, interview and educational programmes in both Korean and English, and sometimes runs BBC World News. It is only available on cable and satellite channels.

Seoul has over 50 cable channels, which include CNN, film, documentary, home shopping, golf, music video, cartoon, *baduk* (go) and Buddhist programmes. Satellite TV is also available. Most accommodation offers cable or satellite channels.

## TIME

South Korea has one time zone, Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus nine hours. When it's noon in Seoul it is 7pm the previous day in San Francisco, 10pm the previous day in New York, 3am in London and 1pm in Sydney. Korea does not have daylight saving.

## TIPPING

Tipping is not necessary in Seoul, although a compulsory 10% service charge is added to the bill at some midrange and all top-end hotels and restaurants. Taxi drivers may surprise visitors by insisting on giving change.

## TOILETS

A big effort has gone into improving standards so that Seoul now has plenty of clean, modern and well-signed public toilets. Virtually all toilets are free of charge, some are decorated with flowers and artwork, and the cleaning staff generally do an excellent job. Toilet paper is usually outside the cubicles by the washbasins, so don't forget to grab some before entering the cubicle. As always, it's wise to carry a stash of toilet tissue around with you in case a toilet has run out.

Restaurants, cafés and bars all have toilets, and many buildings have toilets off the stairways that are available. All major tourist attractions, parks, subway, train and bus stations have public toilet facilities. The small district of Insadong has no less than eight public toilets dotted around the area. Even when you go hiking in the mountains you will find plenty of toilets although they are rudimentary. Asian-style squat toilets are losing their battle with European-style sit-down ones, but there are still some around. Face the hooded end when you squat down.

Toilets in Korea always use international symbols rather than *hangeul*.

## TOURIST INFORMATION

KTO Tourist Information Centre is the best one with knowledgeable staff, free Internet and the best range of brochures and maps.

**City Hall Tourist Information Centre** (Map pp206–7; ☎ 731 6671; 🕒 9am–6pm; subway Line 1 or 2 to City Hall, Exit 4) One hour free Internet access plus free booklets (including one on Seoul bus routes) are available here.

**Deoksugung Tourist Information Booth** (Map pp206–7; ☎ 753 5505; 🕒 9am–6pm; subway Line 1 or 2 to City Hall, Exit 2)

**Dongdaemun Market Tourist Information Centre** (Map p122; ☎ 2236 9135; 🕒 10am–6pm; subway Line 2, 4 or 5 to Dongdaemun Stadium, Exit 1)

**Goodwill Guides** (www.goodwillguide.com) This organisation provides volunteer guides for foreign tourists. You only pay for their expenses such as transportation, admission tickets and food. Apply at least two weeks in advance.

**Gyeongbokgung Tourist Information Centre** (Map pp202–3; ☎ 720 7465; 🕒 9am–6pm; subway Line 3 to Gyeongbokgung, Exit 5)

**Insadong Tourist Information Centre & Souvenir Shop** (Map p205; ☎ 734 0222; Insadonggil; 🕒 10am–10pm; subway Line 3 to Anguk, Exit 6) A useful centre manned by volunteers that has free Internet, a global ATM, and a fax (W1000 per sheet) and copier (W100 per sheet).

**Itaewon Subway Tourist Information Centre** (Map p209; ☎ 3785 2514; 🕒 9am–10pm) Has free Internet, but may close earlier in winter.

**KTO Tourist Complaints Centre** (☎ 735 0101; fax 777 0102; tourcom@mail.KTO.or.kr; PO Box 1879, Seoul 110-618) If you have problems with a particular hotel, guesthouse, restaurant, shop or taxi, contact this centre.

**KTO Tourist Information Centre** (Map pp202–3; ☎ 729 9497; http://english.tour2korea.com; 🕒 9am–8pm; subway Line 1 to Jonggak, Exit 5) The best source of tourist information and advice in Seoul is here along with free Internet and superior handicraft souvenirs. For the addresses of KTO's overseas offices in 12 countries log onto their website.

**Lotte World Tourist Information Centre** (Map pp214–15; ☎ 2143 7005; 🕒 9.30am–10pm; subway Line 2 or 8 to Jamsil, Exit 3) On the arrival concourse.

**Myeong-dong Tourist Information Centre** (Map pp206–7; ☎ 757 0088; 🕒 9am–6pm; subway Line 2 to Euljiro 1-ga, Exit 8)

**Namdaemun Market Tourist Information Centre** (Map p123; ☎ 752 1913; 🕒 9am–6pm; Subway line 4 to Hoehyeon, Exit 5)

**North Insadong Tourist Information Centre** (Map p205; ☎ 731 1621; cnr Insadong-gil & Yulgongno; 🕒 10am–6pm; subway Line 3 to Anguk, Exit 6)

**Seoul Help Centre for Foreigners** (Map pp206–7; ☎ 731 6800; http://shc.seoul.go.kr; 2nd flr, City Hall; 🕒 9am–6pm

Mon–Fri, 9am–1pm Sat; subway Line 1 or 2 to City Hall, Exit 4) Offers free Internet and a reference library of current newspapers, magazines and a few books. Information and help for foreigners in Seoul can be accessed here – everything from starting a business to medical advice and job vacancies.

**Seoul Tourist Information Centre** (Map pp202–3; ☎ 735 8688; Sejongno; 🕒 9am–10pm; subway Line 1 or 2 to City Hall, Exit 3)

**Seoul Train Station Tourist Information Centre** (Map pp206–7; ☎ 2392 1324; 🕒 9am–9pm; subway Line 1 or 4 to Seoul Station, Exit 1)

## TRAVEL AGENCIES

**Apple Tours** (Map pp200–1; ☎ 793 3478; fax 798 0698; USO Bldg; 🕒 10am–6pm Mon–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat; subway Line 4 & 6 to Samgakji, Exit 11) This travel agency has English-speaking staff and specialises in short package tours to Thailand, Indo-China, China, Malaysia and Australia.

**KISES** (Map p205; ☎ 733 9494; fax 732 9568; 5th fl, YMCA Bldg, Jongno; 🕒 9am–6pm Mon–Fri, 9am–3pm Sat; subway Line 1 to Jonggak, Exit 8) The STA Travel agent in Seoul, it is next door to Top Travel and convenient for comparing prices.

**Shoestring Travel** (Map p213; ☎ 333 4151; off Wausangil; 🕒 9am–6pm Mon–Fri, 9am–2.30pm Sat; subway Line 2 to Hongik University, Exit 6) This youth-oriented travel agent in Hongik has snazzy new offices, English-speaking staff and an awesome collection of Lonely Planet guidebooks for sale.

**Top Travel Service** (Map p205; ☎ 720 8056; fax 722 0329; 5th fl, YMCA Bldg, Jongno; 🕒 8am–7pm Mon–Fri; subway Line 1 to Jonggak, Exit 8) Usually has the cheapest flights but it can be difficult to find a competent English speaker.

## VISAS

With a confirmed onward ticket, visitors from nearly all West European countries, New Zealand, Australia and around 30 other countries receive 90-day permits on arrival. Visitors from the USA and a handful of countries receive 30-day permits, while 60-day permits are granted to citizens of Italy and Portugal, and lucky Canadians receive a six-month permit.

About 30 countries – including the Russian Federation, China, India and Nigeria – do not qualify for visa exemptions. Citizens from these countries must apply for a tourist visa, which allows a stay of 90 days.

You can't extend your stay beyond 90 days except in cases such as a medical emergency; if you overstay the fine starts at W100,000. View www.mofat.go.kr to find out more.

The conveniently located **Seoul Immigration Office** (Map pp206–7; ☎ 2171 2248; City Hall

Bldg; 🕒 9am–6pm Mon–Fri; subway Line 1 or 2 to City Hall, Exit 5) can deal with re-entry permits and investment visas, but other matters have to be dealt with at the **Seoul Immigration Head Office** (Map pp198–9; ☎ 2650 6212; 🕒 9am–6pm Mon–Fri; subway Line 5 to Omokgyo, Exit 7) way out in Mok-dong. This office is always busy so take some reading matter. To reach it, carry straight on from the subway exit and walk along the road until it ends, where you'll see a white-tiled building on your left with a big blue sign in English. It's a 10 minute walk (700m).

One problem is that applicants must leave the country to pick up their work visa. Most applicants fly to Fukuoka in Japan where you can usually pick up the visa the day after you submit it. Check that you have all the paperwork and take enough funds for your stay. You can also apply for a one-year work visa before entering Korea but it can take a few weeks to process. Note that the visa authorities will want to see originals or notarised copies (not simply photocopies) of your educational qualifications, as some applicants have tried to use fake degree certificates.

You don't need to leave Korea to renew a work visa as long as you carry on working for the same employer. But the catch is that if you change employers you must apply for a new visa and pick it up from outside Korea.

If you don't want to forfeit your work or study visa, you must apply at your local immigration office for a re-entry permit before making any trips outside South Korea. The fee is W30,000 for a single re-entry or W50,000 for a multiple re-entry permit.

If you are working or studying in Korea on a long-term visa, it is necessary to apply for an alien registration card within 90 days of arrival. This costs W10,000 and is done at your local immigration office.

For up-to-date visa information, visit the Lonely Planet website (www.lonelyplanet.com) and follow the links.

## WOMEN TRAVELLERS

Seoul is a relatively safe city for women (as well as men), but the usual precautions should be taken. Many women walk alone late at night but it's probably not a sensible idea in any big city.

Confucianism ruled Korea for six centuries and still lingers into the 21st century despite all the modernisation and Westernisation that has occurred over the past hundred years. In

the Joseon era, Korea was a male-dominated society and women were expected to obey first their father, then their husband, and if widowed, their eldest son. Upon marriage, daughters left their birth family, and most if not all of the parents' wealth was inherited by the eldest son. Women visitors should therefore expect some interesting discussions with older people who may still have a somewhat Confucian view of a woman's role.

Tampons and condoms are readily available but it would be best to bring other forms of contraception with you.

For expat women the **Seoul International Women's Association** ([www.siwapage.com](http://www.siwapage.com)) is a very active group that has been running for 50 years and organises coffee mornings, weekly outings and even a choir. Membership is ₩50,000 a year.

## WORK

Seoul is a popular place for English teachers to work, and since Koreans have an insatiable appetite for studying English finding a teaching job shouldn't be too hard. A university degree in any subject is sufficient as long as English is your native language. However it's a good idea to obtain some kind of English teaching certificate before you arrive as this increases your options if not your salary. Some foreigners who go to Seoul to teach bitch about everything and probably should have stayed at home. Take an honest look at yourself before cutting loose and don't go if you struggle to maintain a positive attitude or are unwilling to adapt to a different culture.

Teachers can expect to teach 30 hours per week and earn around ₩1.9 million a month (income tax is around 5%), with a furnished apartment, medical insurance, return flights, paid holiday (10 days) and completion bonus all part of a one-year package.

Most English teachers work in a *hagwon* (private language school) but others work in government schools or universities. Private tutoring, company classes and even teaching via the telephone are also possible. Teaching in a *hagwon* usually involves evening and weekend work.

Some *hagwon* owners don't keep the promises made in the employment contract, so check out your embassy in Seoul's website and the websites below before committing yourself. Ask for the email address of a teacher who works for your prospective employer if you have any concerns. Remember

that if you change employers, you will need to go through the hassle of obtaining a new work visa, which requires you to leave the country. Most make the visa run to Fukuoka or Osaka in Japan, but take sufficient funds as Japan is mega expensive and you cannot always rely on picking up a visa the next day.

The *Korea Times* website ([times.hankooki.com](http://times.hankooki.com)) has job vacancies, but most English teaching jobs are on specialist websites:

**www.englishspectrum.com** Stacks of stuff for expats in Seoul including job vacancies, classifieds, discussion forums and links to blogs.

**www.escafé.com** A wonderful site run by the one and only Dave Sperling has new English teaching vacancies posted daily, lively discussion forums about life in Seoul and masses of help to make you a better teacher.

**www.eslhub.com** This Seoul site has job and accommodation classifieds and great links.

**www.koreajoblink.com** Registration is necessary but it's free.

**www.kotesol.org** Run by a group of English teachers who organise conferences, it has useful links for teachers.

**www.worknplay.co.kr** Jobs and other stuff.

## Doing Business

**Seoul Help Centre for Foreigners** (Map pp206–7; ☎ 731 6800; <http://shc.seoul.go.kr>; City Hall; 🕒 9am–6pm Mon–Fri, 9am–1pm Sat; subway Line 1 or 2 to City Hall, Exit 4) has brochures and advice about doing business in Seoul and a reference library of newspapers, magazines and books. Across the corridor is an immigration office (p173) that can help with business visas. Information and links are also available at [www.investkorea.org](http://www.investkorea.org). Some countries have their own chambers of commerce in Seoul that can provide invaluable contacts and networking opportunities.

## Volunteering

**Seoul Orphanages** ([www.yheesun.com](http://www.yheesun.com)) Seoul families are reluctant to adopt children, so volunteer English teachers are always needed to teach and have some fun with the many children who live in orphanages.

**Willing Workers on Organic Farms** (WWOOF; ☎ 723 4458; [www.wwoofkorea.com](http://www.wwoofkorea.com); KPO Box 1516, Seoul 110-601) A good way to experience rural life outside Seoul, the programme involves 40 farms and market gardens where volunteers work for four to five hours per day in return for board and food. Most hosts speak some English. The minimum stay is a few days and the maximum is by mutual agreement between volunteers and their hosts. Joining costs ₩15,000 and you receive a list of participating farms.

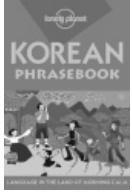
# Language ■

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# Language

It's true – anyone can speak another language. Don't worry if you haven't studied languages before or that you studied a language at school for years and can't remember any of it. It doesn't even matter if you failed English grammar. After all, that's never affected your ability to speak English! And this is the key to picking up a language in another country. You just need to start speaking.



Learn a few key phrases before you go. Write them on pieces of paper and stick them on the fridge, by the bed or even on the computer – anywhere that you'll see them often.

You'll find that locals appreciate travellers trying their language, no matter how muddled you may think you sound. So don't just stand there, say something! If you want to learn more Korean than we've included here, pick up a copy of Lonely Planet's comprehensive but user-friendly *Korean Phrasebook*.

## Writing System

Chinese characters (*hanja*) are usually restricted to use in maps and occasionally in newspapers and written names. For the most part Korean is written in *hangeul*, the alphabet developed under King Sejong's reign in the 15th century. Many users of the Korean language argue that the Korean script is one of the most scientific and consistent alphabets used today.

*Hangeul* consists of only 24 characters and isn't that difficult to learn. However, the formation of words using *hangeul* is very different from the way that Western alphabets are used to form words. The emphasis is on the formation of a syllable so that it resembles a Chinese character. Thus the first syllable of the word 'hangeul' (한) is formed by an 'h' (ㅎ) in the top left corner, an 'a' (ㅏ) in the top right corner and an 'n' (ㄴ) at the bottom, with this whole syllabic grouping forming a syllabic 'box'. These syllabic 'boxes' are strung together to form words.

## Romanisation

In July 2000, the Korean government adopted a new method of Romanising the Korean language (known as NAKL). The new system has been energetically promoted throughout the government and tourist bureaus, but it will take a long time for everyone to fall into line. Local governments were given until 2005 to change all the road signs around the country, and the

central government has actively encouraged the adoption of the new system overseas.

## SOCIAL Polite Korean

Korea's pervasive social hierarchy means that varying degrees of politeness are codified into the grammar. Young Koreans tend to use the very polite forms a lot less than the older generation, but it's always best to use the polite form if you're unsure. The phrases included in this section employ polite forms.

## Meeting People

Hello.  
**annyeong hasimnikka** (polite)  
 안녕 하십니까  
**annyeong haseyo** (informal)  
 안녕 하세요  
 Goodbye.  
**annyeong-hi gyeseyo** (to person staying)  
 안녕히 계세요  
**annyeong-hi gaseyo** (to person leaving)  
 안녕히 가세요  
 May I ask your name?  
**ireumeul yeojjwo bwado doelkkayo?**  
 이름을 여쭙봐도 될까요?  
 My name is ...  
**je ireumeun ... imnida**  
 제 이름은...입니다  
 Where are you from?  
**codiseo oseosseoyo?**  
 어디서 오셨어요?

I'm from ...  
**jeoneun ... eseo wasseumnida**  
 저는...에서 왔습니다  
 I'd like to introduce you to ...  
**(ibun) ... imnida**  
 (이분은)...입니다

Yes.  
**ye/ne** 예/네  
 No.  
**aniyo** 아니요  
 Please.  
**juseyo** 주세요  
 Thank you.  
**gamsa hamnida** 감사 합니다  
 That's fine/You're welcome.  
**gwaenchan seumnida** 괜찮습니다  
 Excuse me.  
**sillye hamnida** 실례 합니다  
 Sorry (forgive me).  
**mian hamnida** 미안 합니다  
 How are you?  
**annyeong haseyo?** 안녕 하세요?  
 I'm fine, thanks.  
**ne, jo-ayo** 네 좋아요

## Going Out

Is anything interesting on ...?  
**... jaemi itneun-geo isseoyo?**  
 ...재미 있는 거 있어요?  
 locally  
**i-jiyeoge** 이 지역에  
 this weekend  
**ibon jumare** 이번 주말에  
 today  
**oneul** 오늘  
 tonight  
**oneul bame** 오늘 밤에  
 Where are the ...?  
**... eodi isseoyo?**  
 ...어디 있어요?  
 clubs  
**keulleop** 클럽  
 places to eat  
**eumsik jeom** 음식점  
 pubs  
**hopeu jip** 호프집

Is there a local entertainment guide in English?  
**yeong-eoro doen jiyek yeohaeng gaideu isseoyo?**  
 영어로 된 지역 여행 가이드 있어요?

## PRACTICAL Accommodation

I'm looking for a ...  
**... reul/eul chatgo isseoyo**  
 ...를/을 찾고 있어요  
 guesthouse  
**yeogwan/minbak jip** 여관/민박집  
 hotel  
**hotel** 호텔  
 youth hostel  
**yuseu hoseutel** 유스호스텔

Do you have any rooms available?  
**bang isseoyo?** 방 있어요?

I'd like (a) ...  
**... ro/euro juseyo**  
 ...로/으로 주세요  
 bed  
**chimdae** 침대  
 single bed  
**singgeul chimdae** 싱글 침대  
 double bed  
**deobeul chimdae** 더블 침대  
 twin beds  
**chimdae dugae** 침대 두개  
 to share a room  
**gachi sseuneun bang** 같이 쓰는 방  
 Western-style room  
**chimdae bang** 침대 방  
 a room with sleeping mats  
**ondol bang juseyo** 온돌 방 주세요  
 room with a bathroom  
**yoksil itneun bang juseyo** 욕실있는 방 주세요

How much is it ...?  
**... e colma eyo?**  
 ...에 얼마예요?  
 per night  
**harutbam** 하룻밤  
 per person  
**han saram** 한사람

## Directions

Where is ...?  
**... i/ga eodi isseoyo?**  
 ...이/가 어디 있어요?  
 Go straight ahead.  
**ttokbaro gaseyo**  
 똑바로 가세요  
 Turn left.  
**oen-jjogeuro gaseyo**  
 왼쪽으로 가세요

Turn right.  
 oreun-jjogeuro gaseyo  
 오른쪽으로 가세요  
 at the next corner  
 da-eum motung-i e-seo  
 다음 모퉁이에서  
 at the traffic lights  
 sinhodeung eseo  
 신호등에서

### Language Difficulties

Do you speak English?  
 yeong-eo haseyo?  
 영어 하세요?  
 What does ... mean?  
 ... ga/i museun teusieyo?  
 ...가/이 무슨 뜻 이에요?  
 I don't understand.  
 jal moreuget-neun deyo  
 잘 모르겠는데요  
 Please write it down.  
 jeogeo jusillaeyo  
 적어 주실래요  
 Can you show me (on the map)?  
 boyeo jusillaeyo?  
 보여 주실래요?

### Numbers

Korean has two counting systems. One is of Chinese origin, with Korean pronunciation, and the other is a native Korean system – the latter only goes up to 99 and is used for counting objects, expressing your age and for the hours when telling the time. They're always written in *hangeul* or digits (never in Chinese characters). Sino-Korean numbers are used to express minutes when telling the time, as well as dates, months, kilometres, money, floors of buildings. Numbers above 99 may be written in *Hangul*, in digits or in Chinese characters. Either Chinese or Korean numbers can be used to count days.

	Sino-Korean		Korean	
1	il	일	hana	하나
2	i	이	dul	둘
3	sam	삼	set	셋
4	sa	사	net	넷
5	o	오	daseot	다섯
6	yuk	육	yeoseot	여섯
7	chil	칠	ilgop	일곱
8	pal	팔	yeodeol	여덟
9	gu	구	ahop	아홉
10	sip	십	yeol	열

11	sibil	십일
12	sibi	십이
13	sipsam	십삼
14	sipsa	십사
15	sibo	십오
16	simnyuk	십육
17	sipchil	십칠
18	sippal	십팔
19	sipgu	십구
20	isip	이십
21	isibil	이십일
22	isibi	이십이
30	samsip	삼십
40	sasip	사십
50	osip	오십
60	yuksip	육십
70	chilsip	칠십
80	palsip	팔십
90	gusip	구십
100	baek	백
1000	cheon	천

### Question Words

Who? (as subject)  
 nugu? 누구?  
 What? (as subject)  
 mu-eot? 무엇?  
 When?  
 eonje? 언제?  
 Where?  
 eodi? 어디?  
 How?  
 eotteoke? 어떻게?

### Banking

I want to change ...  
 ... reul/eul bakku ryeogo haneun deyo  
 ...를/을 바꾸려고 하는데요  
 money  
 don 돈  
 travellers cheques  
 yeohaengja supyo 여행자 수표

Where's the nearest ...?  
 jeil gakkau ... i/ga eodi isseoyo?  
 제일 가까운...이/가 어디있어요  
 automatic teller machine/ATM  
 hyeon-geup jigeupgi  
 현금지급기  
 foreign exchange office  
 oe-hwan georaeso  
 외환 거래소

### Post

I'm looking for the post office.  
 uchegug-eul chatgo isseoyo  
 우체국을 찾고 있어요

I want to send a ...  
 ... bonaego sipeundeyo  
 ...보내고 싶은데요  
 fax  
 paekseu 팩스  
 parcel 소포  
 sopo  
 postcard 엽서  
 yeopseo

I want to buy ...  
 ... sago sipeundeyo  
 ...사고 싶은데요  
 an aerogram 항공우편  
 hanggongupeun  
 an envelope 편지 봉투  
 peonji bongtu  
 a stamp 우표  
 upyo

### Phones & Mobiles

I want to buy a phone card.  
 jeonhwa kadeu-reul sago sipeoyo  
 전화 카드를 사고 싶어요

I want to make ...  
 ... hago sipeoyo ...  
 ...하고 싶어요  
 a call (to ...)  
 jeonhwareul ...  
 전화를...  
 reverse-charge/collect call  
 sushinja budameuro/collectcall eul  
 수신자 부담으로/콜렉트 콜을

Where can I find a/an ...?  
 ... eodiseo salsu isseoyo  
 ... 어디서 살 수 있어요?

I'd like a/an ...  
 ...juseyo  
 ...주세요  
 adaptor plug  
 eodaepseo  
 어댑터  
 charger for my phone  
 haendeupon chungjeon-gi  
 핸드폰 충전기  
 mobile (cell) phone for hire  
 imdae haendeupon  
 임대핸드폰

prepaid mobile/cell phone  
 seonbul yogeum haendeupon  
 선불 요금 핸드폰

### Internet

Where's the local Internet café?  
 cheil gakka-un pissi bang eodi-eyo?  
 제일 가까운 PC방 어디예요?

I'd like to ...  
 ... haryeogo haneun deyo  
 ...하려고 하는데요  
 check my email 이 메일 확인  
 imeil hwagin  
 get online 인터넷을  
 into-neseul

### Days

Monday	woryoil	월요일
Tuesday	hwayoil	화요일
Wednesday	suyoil	수요일
Thursday	mogyoil	목요일
Friday	geumyoil	금요일
Saturday	toyoil	토요일
Sunday	iryoil	일요일

### Transport

What time does the ... leave/arrive?  
 ... i/ga (eonje tteonayo/eonje dochak-haeyo)?  
 ...이/가 언제 떠나요/언제 도착해요?  
 airport bus  
 gonghang beoseu 공항버스  
 boat (ferry)  
 yeogaek seon 여객선  
 bus  
 beoseu 버스  
 (city) bus  
 (sinae) beoseu ( 시내)버스  
 train  
 gicha 기차

I want to go to ...  
 ... e gago sipseumnida  
 ...에 가고 싶습니다

the first  
 cheot 첫  
 the last  
 maji mak 마지막  
 bus station  
 beoseu jeongnyu jang 버스정류장  
 subway station  
 jihacheol yeok 지하철역

ticket vending machine	
pyo japan-gi	표 자판기
timetable	
sigan pyo	시간표
train station	
gicha yeok	기차역

## FOOD

breakfast	
achim	아침
lunch	
jeomsim	점심
dinner	
jeonyeok	저녁
snack	
seunack	스낵
eat	
meogeoyo	먹어
drink	
masheoyo	마셔요

Can you recommend a ...  
... chucheon hae jusillaeyo?  
... 추천 해주실래요?

bar/pub	
hopeu jip	호프 집
café	
kkape/keopi-shop	카페/커피숍
restaurant	
sikdang	식당

Will a service charge be added to the bill?  
seobiseu ryodo pohami doenayo?  
서비스료도 포함이 되나요?

For more detailed information on food and dining out, see p27 and p85.

## HEALTH

Where's the nearest ...?	
gajang gakka-un ... eodi isseoyo?	
가장 가까운... 어디있어요?	
chemist	
yakguk	약국
night chemist	
seumulle sigan yeong-eop haneun yakguk	
24시간 영업하는 약국	
dentist	
chikwa	치과

doctor	
uisanim	의사님
hospital	
byeong-won	병원

I'm ill.  
jeon apayo  
저 아파요  
I need a doctor (who speaks English).  
(yeong-eo haneun) uisaga piryo haeyo  
(영어하는) 의사가 필요해요

I'm allergic to ...  
... allereugiga isseoyo  
... 알레르기가있어요  
antibiotics  
hangsaengje  
항생제  
nuts  
ttang kkong  
땅콩

## Symptoms

I have (a) ...  
jeon ...  
전...  
diarrhoea  
seolsa-reul haeyo  
설사를 해요  
fever  
yeori nayo  
열이 나요  
headache  
dutong-i isseoyo  
두통이 있어요  
pain  
tongjeung-i isseoyo  
통증이 있어요

## EMERGENCIES

Help!  
saram sallyeo!  
사람살려!  
I'm lost.  
gireul ireosseoyo  
길을 잃었어요  
Go away!  
jeori ga!  
저리가!

Call ...!  
... bulle juseyo!  
... 불러 주세요!  
a doctor  
uisa  
의사  
the police  
gyeongcha  
경찰  
an ambulance  
gugeupcha  
구급차

## GLOSSARY

ajumma – a married or older woman; a term of respect for a woman who runs a hotel, restaurant or other business  
anju – snacks eaten when drinking alcohol  
bang – room; PC bang are Internet rooms and DVD bang are rooms where DVDs are shown  
bong – peak  
buk – north  
bukbu – northern area  
buncheong – pottery decorated with simple folk designs  
changgeuk – Korean opera  
Chuseok – thanksgiving  
DMZ – the Demilitarized Zone that runs along the 38th parallel of the Korean peninsula, separating North and South  
-do – province  
do – island  
-dong – ward  
dong – east  
dongbu – eastern area  
-eup – town  
-ga – section of a long street  
gang – river  
geobukseon – 'turtle ships'; iron-clad warships  
gibun – harmonious feelings; face  
gil – small street  
-gu – urban district  
-gun – county  
gung – palace  
gugak – traditional Korean music  
gut – shamanist ceremony  
gwageo – Joseon civil-service examination  
hae – sea  
haesuyokjang – beach  
hagwon – private schools where students study after school or work; foreigners are often employed here to teach English  
hallyu – Korean Wave  
hanbok – traditional Korean clothing  
hangeul – Korean phonetic alphabet  
hanja – Chinese-style writing system  
hanji – traditional Korean handmade paper  
hanok – traditional Korean one-storey wooden house with a tiled roof  
ho – lake  
hof – bar or pub  
insam – ginseng  
jaebeol – huge family-run corporate conglomerate  
jeon – hall of a temple  
jeong – pavilion

KTO – Korea Tourism Organisation  
minbak – a private home with rooms for rent  
mobeom – deluxe taxi  
mudang – shaman, usually female  
mugunghwa – limited express train  
mun – gate  
-myeon – township  
nam – south  
nambu – southern area  
neung – tomb  
no – large street, boulevard  
noraebang – karaoke room  
oncheon – hot-spring bath  
ondol – underfloor heating  
pansori – traditional Korean opera  
pungsu – Korean geomancy  
pyeong – a unit of measurement equal to 3.3 sq m  
ramie – cloth made from pounded bark  
-ri – village  
reung – tomb  
ro – large street, boulevard  
ROK – Republic of Korea (South Korea)  
ru – pavilion  
sa – temple  
saemaeul – luxury express train  
samullori – traditional farmer's dance  
san – mountain  
sandaenori – a type of mask dance  
sanjang – mountain hut  
sanseong – mountain fortress  
seo – west  
seobu – western area  
Seon – a version of Zen Buddhism native to Korea  
seowon – Confucian academies  
si – city  
sicheong – city hall  
sinae – local, as in local bus terminal  
ssireum – Korean-style wrestling  
taegyeon – the original form of taekwondo  
taekwondo – Korean martial arts  
tang – a bathhouse that usually includes a sauna  
tap – pagoda  
tongil – slow local train  
USO – United Service Organizations, which provides leisure services for US troops and civilians  
yangban – aristocrat  
yeogwan – small family-run hotel, usually with a private bathroom  
yo – padded quilt that serves as a futon or mattress for sleeping on the floor



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