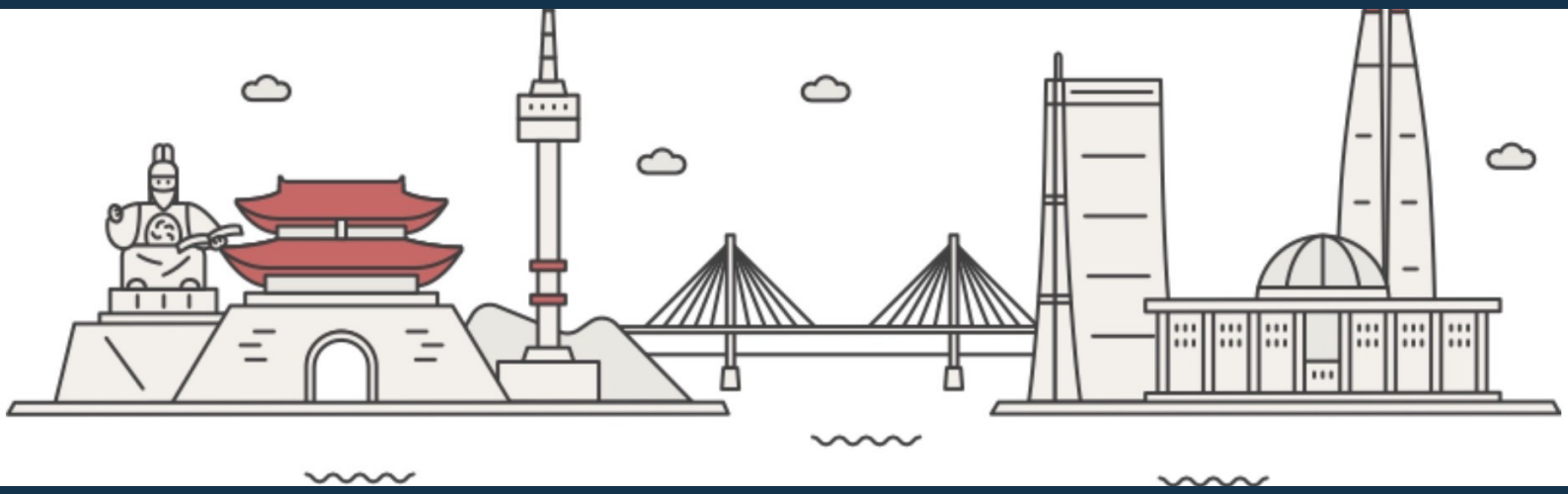

Settle.

SEOUL

The Complete Digital Guidebook

All 45 articles + Study in Seoul · 10 November 2026

Arrival, everyday life, Korean, study, work and exploring Seoul.

Includes the complete E-2 guide and all four after-contract paths.

A new collection, separate from the original 2027 magazine.

Individual source and review dates remain with each article.

www.settleseoul.com/downloads

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Guidance is not legal, immigration or medical advice. Confirm current requirements.

1345 Immigration · 1350 Labour · Corrections: support@settleseoul.com

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Guidance is not legal, immigration or medical advice. Confirm current requirements.

1345 Immigration · 1350 Labour · Corrections: support@settleseoul.com



Settle. Seoul

STUDY & CAREERS

Study in Seoul.

Whether you're coming for a degree, exchange semester or language course, settling in takes more than finding a classroom. Start with the practical essentials, understand the rules around student work, and plan the next step before graduation arrives.

Online guide · Reviewed 22 October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/study-in-seoul

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Make your student years in Seoul work for you.
2. Before you arrive
3. Settle into student life
4. Work while studying
5. After graduation
6. The student guides worth bookmarking.
7. Three checks before you say yes to a job.
8. Graduation is a milestone. Your next step deserves a plan.
9. Not sure where to start?

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

The essentials

- Practical English-language information with links to official Korean sources. Immigration rules depend on your individual status; always check before applying or working.

STUDY IN SEOUL

Make your student years in Seoul work for you.

Whether you're coming for a degree, exchange semester or language course, settling in takes more than finding a classroom. Start with the practical essentials, understand the rules around student work, and plan the next step before graduation arrives.

Start here

- Practical English-language information with links to official Korean sources. Immigration rules depend on your individual status; always check before applying or working.

Explore the student guides →

Jobs

Browse student jobs →

CHOOSE YOUR STAGE · 01

Before you arrive

Understand your admission and visa route, make a realistic budget, compare accommodation and prepare the documents you'll actually need.

Studying in Seoul

Studying in Seoul →

Before You Arrive in Seoul

Before You Arrive in Seoul →

Visa guide

Visa guide →

Arrival checklist

Arrival checklist →

CHOOSE YOUR STAGE · 02

Settle into student life

Get your address, phone, bank account, transport and healthcare organised. Learn the Korean phrases that make ordinary tasks easier.

Housing

Housing →

Banking

Banking →

Phones and identity

Phones and identity →

Healthcare

Healthcare →

Learning Korean

Learning Korean →

Study cafés

Study cafés →

Transport

Transport →

CHOOSE YOUR STAGE · 03

Work while studying

Find opportunities that fit around classes and understand when part-time employment needs advance permission. A job listing is not confirmation that you may legally accept it.

Part-time Work That Fits Around a Degree

Part-time Work That Fits Around a Degree →

Student Jobs board

Student Jobs board →

Applying for jobs

Applying for jobs →

CHOOSE YOUR STAGE · 04

After graduation

Explore eligible professional employment, the D-10 job-seeking route, internships and the documents that can help you move from study to your next step.

After Graduation in Korea

After Graduation in Korea →

D-10: three-year limit and eligibility

D-10: three-year limit and eligibility →

Korea's International Student Boom: What Happens After Graduation?

Korea's International Student Boom: What Happens After Graduation? →

Graduate jobs board

Graduate jobs board →

Other English-speaking Jobs board

Other English-speaking Jobs board →

FEATURED READS

The student guides worth bookmarking.

Start with the question you actually have today. You can always return to the bigger checklist later.

Six Ways to Be a Student in Seoul

- Different students arrive with different funding, courses and responsibilities. Find the advice that matches your situation.

Read online →

Part-time Work That Fits Around a Degree

- Understand permission, hours and the practical questions to ask before accepting work.

Read online →

After Graduation in Korea

- A complete pathway from your final semester to a job search or qualifying employment status.

Read online →

Korea's International Student Boom: What Happens After Graduation?

- Why student numbers tell only part of the story — and what universities, employers and graduates can do next.

Read online →

BEFORE WORKING

Three checks before you say yes to a job.

1. **Check 1** — Does my current visa or residence status permit this activity?
2. **Check 2** — Do the role, employer, contract and working hours fit the rules?
3. **Check 3** — What permission or change of status must be approved before I begin?

Student work

Read the student work guide →

Jobs

Check the jobs boards →

TRANSITION SPOTLIGHT

Graduation is a milestone. Your next step deserves a plan.

If you hope to stay in Korea, begin with your permitted stay date and the work you want to do. Some graduates may qualify to seek professional employment under D-10; others may be able to change directly to a qualifying work-related status. Both need careful checks. Our After Graduation guide turns the process into a practical sequence without promising an outcome.

Plan your next step after graduation →

OFFICIAL SUPPORT

Not sure where to start?

Your university's international office should be a first point of contact for course-specific advice. For immigration decisions, check HiKorea or call 1345. Settle Seoul brings practical explanations and the official routes together in one place.

Guides

Browse all guides →

Official resources

View official resources →

SOURCES

Sources & verification · Study in Seoul

Reviewed 22 October 2026.

- [3] Ministry of Justice · Job Seeker (D-10) Visa Scheme Improvements · 2 December 2025
  https://www.immigration.go.kr/bbs/moj/189/601114/artclView.do
- [4] Study in Korea · Employment system (older D-10 duration summary; verify individually)
  https://www.studyinkorea.go.kr/ko/work/aboutForeignerEmploymentSystem.do
- [4] Study in Korea · Residence and stay
  https://www.studyinkorea.go.kr/ko/life/residenceAndStayInfo.do
- [5] Study in Korea · Finding employment
  https://www.studyinkorea.go.kr/ko/work/aboutKoreaEmployment.do
- [6] HiKorea · Verify your own status and permissions · 1345
  https://www.hikorea.go.kr
- [6] Korea Visa Portal
  https://www.visa.go.kr



Settle. Seoul

START HERE · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Before you arrive in Seoul.

A calm pre-departure checklist: what to settle before you board so your first 48 hours in Seoul are about arriving, not scrambling.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed 15 October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/before-you-arrive-in-seoul

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Visa and your document folder
2. Where you will stay, and how you get there
3. Phone, money and apps
4. Health, packing and contacts
5. Sources & verification

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Confirm your visa or entry permission and carry the originals of every document your school, employer or immigration office asked for.
- Know exactly where you are sleeping on night one and how you will get there from the airport.
- Have a working phone plan, at least two ways to pay, and the key apps installed before you land.

Official routes: Your first 48 hours · Visas · Forms & documents.

4–8 WEEKS BEFORE

Visa and your document folder

Requirements differ by visa, nationality and sponsor. Follow the instructions from your consulate, university or employer — this list is a prompt, not a rulebook.

Confirm

- Visa issued or entry permission confirmed (check Visa Portal for your status).
- Passport valid well beyond your intended stay, with blank pages.
- Whether you need K-ETA or an e-Arrival Card for your nationality and visa type.

Pack in one folder

- Originals plus copies of degree, apostilles, criminal-record check or admission letter — whatever your sponsor requested.
- Contract or certificate of admission, and passport photos (3.5 × 4.5 cm).
- Proof of accommodation address, insurance and any medical records.

Back up

- Scan everything to secure cloud storage you can open offline.
- Share copies with someone you trust at home.

After landing
Residence-card (ARC) registration, health checks and immigration appointments come later — see the Visas guide and Health checks article.

2–4 WEEKS BEFORE

Where you will stay, and how you get there

A confirmed first address makes almost everything else easier — phone registration, deliveries and paperwork all ask for one.

Accommodation

- Confirm the booking, check-in time and the address in Korean as well as English.
- Save the address as a screenshot and in Naver Map or Kakao Map.
- If you arrive late, confirm self check-in or a late arrival arrangement.

Airport to door

- Choose AREX, airport limousine bus or taxi in advance and note the last departure times.
- Check whether your school or employer arranges pickup.
- Budget for a taxi if you land late with heavy luggage.

1–2 WEEKS BEFORE

Phone, money and apps

Sort connectivity and payment before you fly so you can call, navigate and pay from the moment you land.

Phone

- Check your phone is unlocked and supports eSIM if you plan to use one.
- Buy a short-term eSIM or arrange airport SIM pickup to bridge the gap until you can open a local plan.

Money

- Tell your bank you are travelling and check foreign-transaction fees.
- Carry two cards from different networks plus some won or cash to exchange.
- Plan a first-month budget: deposit, transport, food and setup purchases.

Install before you fly

- Naver Map or Kakao Map, Papago, KakaoTalk.
- Kakao T for taxis; your airline and accommodation apps.
- Some apps need a Korean number to finish signing up — install now, register later.

THE FINAL WEEK

Health, packing and contacts

Final checks for medicine, luggage and the numbers you may need in your first days.

1. **Check** — Re-open your document folder and confirm nothing is missing.
2. **Charge** — Phone, power bank (carry-on only) and offline maps downloaded.
3. **Carry on** — Keep passport, documents, medication and one change of clothes in your hand luggage.
4. **Land** — Then open Your first 48 hours for transport cards, a SIM, money and your first days.

Health

- Bring prescriptions in original packaging with a doctor's letter; check Korea Customs rules for restricted medicines.
- Arrange travel insurance to cover the gap before national health insurance applies.
- Note your vaccination records and allergies in English.

Pack vs buy

- Pack: medicines, any specific toiletries, clothing for the season, a plug adapter (Type C/F, 220V).
- Buy in Seoul: bedding, kitchen basics, cleaning supplies — see Shopping & setting up home.

Contacts to save

- Your embassy, school or employer contact, accommodation host.
- 1345 Immigration Contact Centre, 120 Dasan call centre, 112 police, 119 fire/ambulance.

> **Next step**
> Everything after you land is in Your first 48 hours — this guide stops at the arrivals hall.

SOURCES

Sources & verification · Before you arrive in Seoul

Reviewed 15 October 2026. Check the official links before relying on dates, fees or rules.

- Visa Portal (Ministry of Justice, official)
  https://www.visa.go.kr/
- HiKorea immigration services (official)
  https://www.hikorea.go.kr/
- Korea e-Arrival Card (official)
  https://www.e-arrivalcard.go.kr/
- Incheon Airport: transport to Seoul (official)
  https://www.airport.kr/ap/en/tpt/pblcTpt.do
- Korea Customs Service: traveller guidance (official)
  https://www.customs.go.kr/english/main.do

Settle Seoul article PDF. Editorial guidance, not legal, immigration or medical advice — confirm requirements with the responsible office (1345 Immigration Contact Center, HiKorea). Photographs credited by name are by the photographer named. Corrections: support@settleseoul.com · Read online · www.settleseoul.com/downloads



Settle. Seoul

START HERE · PRACTICAL GUIDE

Your first 48 hours.

You do not need to solve Seoul in one day. Prioritise safety, connectivity, money, transport, and a reliable document trail.

Online guide · Reviewed October 2026 (digital edition revised 3 October 2026) · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/your-first-48-hours

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. A calm arrival sequence
2. Build the foundations
3. Your arrival checklist
4. — Visas
5. — Housing
6. — Banking
7. — Phones
8. — Documents

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Secure a working phone and a way to pay for transport.
- Confirm where you are staying and keep proof of the address.
- Create one folder for every official document and receipt.

> Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 9, 10, 11, 12. Official routes: Seoul Foreign Portal · Seoul emergency contacts · Seoul public transportation · Seoul Foreign Resident Center.

START HERE

A calm arrival sequence

Complete these in order where possible. A temporary workaround is fine until your residence card and local identity systems are active.

At the airport

- Connect to Wi-Fi and share your arrival plan.
- Keep passport, entry documents, address, and employer or host contact together.
- Choose an airport route that ends close to your actual accommodation.

On the first evening

- Confirm the building entrance code and exact unit address.
- Buy or charge a transport card if you have not already done so.
- Locate the nearest convenience store, pharmacy, and 24-hour help route.

On day one

- Arrange a Korean phone number or suitable temporary SIM.
- Ask your employer, school, or host which registration steps they support.
- Photograph meter readings and the condition of your accommodation.

During the first week

- Book any required immigration visit early.
- Prepare banking and residence-card documents.
- Check health-insurance status and payroll deductions once employment begins.

> **Do this first**
> Write your complete Seoul address in a format you can show a taxi driver, emergency service, bank, clinic, and immigration officer.

FIRST-WEEK CHECKLIST

Build the foundations

These tasks unlock many of the systems that make everyday life easier.

1. **Confirm your address** — Keep the signed lease, accommodation confirmation, or other accepted proof available.
2. **Get connected** — Choose a phone plan that matches your visa timeline, device, and need for identity verification.
3. **Start your document file** — Store passport copies, contracts, receipts, booking confirmations, and official messages.
4. **Map essential journeys** — Test the route to work, immigration, your bank, and the nearest clinic before deadlines.
5. **Book immigration** — Check whether your task requires a reservation, online filing, or in-person visit.

6. **Prepare banking proof** — Bring identification plus evidence of the account purpose, such as an employment contract.
7. **Check payroll setup** — Confirm salary date, account deadline, deductions, and who handles insurance registration.
8. **Join one useful network** — Choose a resident centre, professional group, or local community that can answer practical questions.

> **Keep evidence**
> When a requirement is unclear, record the office, date, channel, and answer you received. Procedures can vary in practice.

TICK AS YOU GO

Your arrival checklist.

The same 19 items as www.settleseoul.com/start#checklist, grouped by step, with official government links.

BEFORE YOU FLY → FIRST 90 DAYS

Visas

- ☐ Visa issued or entry permission confirmed for your nationality and purpose.
- ☐ Checked whether you need K-ETA or an e-Arrival Card.
- ☐ Residence card (ARC) appointment booked on HiKorea within your deadline.
- ☐ Health check booked if your visa or employer requires one.

Visa Portal (Ministry of Justice) →

HiKorea immigration services →

K-ETA →

Korea e-Arrival Card →

BEFORE YOU FLY → FIRST MONTH

Housing

- ☐ First-night address confirmed, saved in Korean and in Naver or Kakao Map.
- ☐ Airport-to-door route planned, including last train or bus times.
- ☐ Lease and deposit terms understood before you sign or pay.
- ☐ Address reported once you move in (usually as part of ARC or a change of address).

Incheon Airport: transport to Seoul →

Government24 (address reporting) →

FIRST WEEKS

Banking

- ☐ Two cards from different networks plus some cash for the first days.
- ☐ Korean bank account opened (usually after your ARC).
- ☐ Chosen a way to send money home and compared fees.

Financial Supervisory Service (English) →

BEFORE YOU FLY → FIRST WEEK

Phones

- ☐ Phone unlocked; eSIM or airport SIM arranged for arrival.
- ☐ Naver Map or Kakao Map, Papago, KakaoTalk and Kakao T installed.
- ☐ Local phone plan in your name once you have an ARC.
- ☐ Transport card bought and topped up.

Seoul Metro →

PACK BEFORE YOU FLY

Documents

- ☐ Passport plus originals your sponsor asked for (degree, apostilles, record check or admission letter).
- ☐ Passport photos (3.5 × 4.5 cm) for ARC and other applications.
- ☐ Everything scanned to storage you can open offline, and shared with someone you trust.
- ☐ First 30 Days checklist and Korean address card printed.

Korea Customs Service: traveller guidance →

Visa Portal (Ministry of Justice) →

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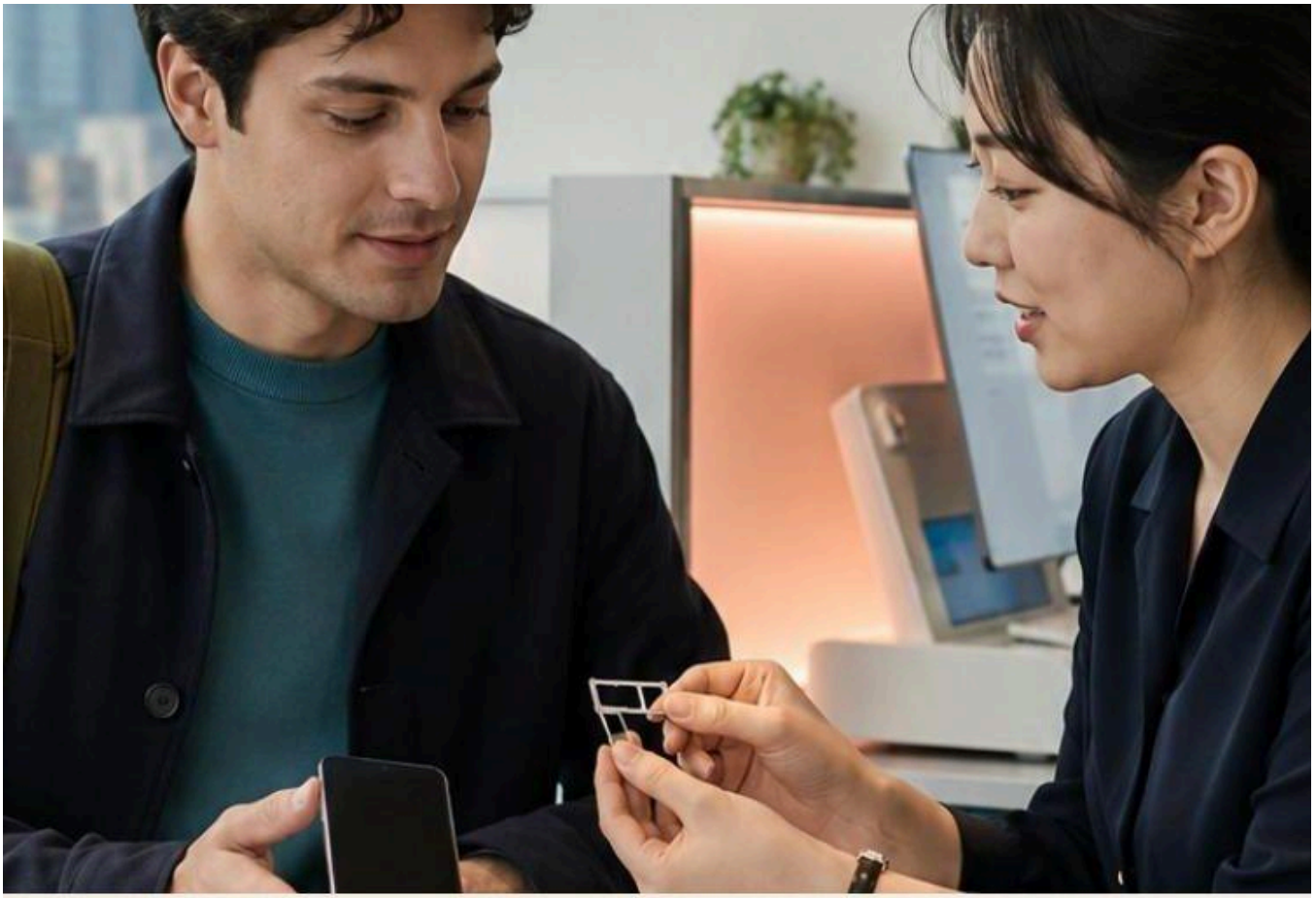

Settle. Seoul

PHONE & IDENTITY · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Your phone becomes part of your identity.

In Korea, a phone number is more than connectivity. Once properly linked to your identity, it can unlock banking, delivery, reservations, and online services.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/your-phone-is-your-identity

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. From landing to a number in your own name
2. Three kinds of plan, three different jobs
3. Set up verification with patience
4. Why the verified number matters
5. When it still will not verify

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Choose a plan that can remain active beyond the first month.
- Ask how the subscriber name will match your residence record.
- Do not assume every prepaid or tourist SIM supports local verification.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 13, 14.

Official routes: Easy to Find Practical Law · Seoul banking guide · Seoul Foreign Portal.

THE THREE STAGES

From landing to a number in your own name

Most newcomers move through three phone set-ups. Knowing which stage you are in explains why some apps work and others refuse you.

1. **Before you fly** — Check your handset is unlocked and supports Korean bands and eSIM. Arrange a data eSIM or airport SIM so maps and messages work on landing.
2. **Arrival to ARC (first weeks)** — Use a passport-registered prepaid line. Expect data, calls and texts to work, but many identity checks (본인인증, bonin injeung) may fail.
3. **After your residence card** — Move to a plan registered to your ARC, or update the existing line with your ARC number. Ask whether you can keep the same 010 number.
4. **Activate verification** — Once the line is in your name, set up PASS or the carrier's identity service, then banking, delivery and government apps.

> **Keep one number**
> Banks, employers and apps store your phone number. Changing it later means updating every account, so choose a line you can keep.

CHOOSING A PLAN

Three kinds of plan, three different jobs

Compare the type of plan before comparing prices. The cheapest arrival option is not always the one that can grow with you.

Tourist data eSIM / SIM

- Quick to buy before departure or at the airport.
- Often data-only or a temporary number.
- Usually cannot be converted to your ARC or used for 본인인증.

Foreigner-friendly prepaid (알뜰폰 MVNO)

- Budget operators reselling major networks, often with English sign-up.
- Can usually start on a passport and update to an ARC later — ask first.
- Check which network, data speed after the allowance, and top-up method.

Major carrier postpaid (SKT, KT, LG U+)

- Widest shop network and handset deals.
- Generally needs an ARC and a Korean bank account or card.
- Read contract length, device instalments and early-termination fees.

Ask before you pay
“Can this line be re-registered to my residence card, keep the same number and pass mobile identity verification?” A clear yes matters more than a small monthly saving.

PHONE & DIGITAL IDENTITY

Set up verification with patience

The exact workflow depends on your phone company, visa record, bank, app, and the spelling of your name.

Before choosing a plan

- Check handset compatibility and whether the device is unlocked.
- Ask whether the plan supports identity verification for registered foreign residents.
- Confirm contract length, early termination rules, and required payment method.

Name matching matters

- Use the same identity details held by immigration.
- Small differences in spacing or ordering can interrupt automated checks.
- Ask the provider to show how your name is stored if verification repeatedly fails.

PASS and similar services

- These services can provide mobile identity checks where supported.
- Eligibility and onboarding can vary by carrier and residence record.
- Use the carrier's current guidance rather than an old online tutorial.

If verification fails

- Re-check the phone subscriber name and residence-card details.
- Try the service's foreign-resident support route.
- Keep a second way to pay or book while the issue is corrected.

Common snag
Do not repeatedly alter spellings across services. First identify which record is authoritative, then align the others to it.

WHAT IT UNLOCKS

Why the verified number matters

A line in your own name is the key many everyday services ask for. Set them up in this order once verification works.

Money

- Mobile banking and transfer limits.
- Simple payment apps such as Kakao Pay or Naver Pay.
- Card registration for online shopping.

Everyday life

- Delivery and shopping apps (Coupang, Baemin).
- Restaurant, clinic and taxi bookings.
- Membership sign-ups at gyms and study cafés.

Official services

- Government and insurance portals that accept mobile verification.
- Customs PCCC registration for overseas orders.
- Employer and university systems.

Useful Korean
본인인증 (bonin injeung) — identity verification · 명의 (myeong-ui) — the name an account is registered in · 번호이동 (beonho idong) — keeping your number when you switch provider.

TROUBLESHOOTING

When it still will not verify

Work from the record that is hardest to change — usually your residence card — outward.

1. **Compare three records** — Write down your name exactly as it appears on the ARC, the carrier account and the failing app. Look for order, spaces and middle names.
2. **Fix the carrier record first** — Ask the shop or support line to update the subscriber name and ARC number so they match immigration's record.
3. **Retry with the correct option** — Select the foreigner (외국인, oegugin) option where offered, and enter your ARC number rather than a passport number.
4. **Use a fallback** — Many services offer card, email or in-branch verification. Keep cash or a foreign card for the gap.

Lost phone?
Report it to your carrier straight away and lock the SIM; the number protects your banking and identity apps.

Settle Seoul article PDF. Editorial guidance, not legal, immigration or medical advice — confirm requirements with the responsible office (1345 Immigration Contact Center, HiKorea). Photographs credited by name are by the photographer named. Corrections: support@settleseoul.com · Read online · www.settleseoul.com/downloads



Settle. Seoul

HOUSING · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

The apartment is only half the decision.

Deposit risk, contract terms, building management, commute, noise, utilities, and proof of address all deserve as much attention as the room itself.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/the-apartment-is-only-half-the-decision

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Understand the three numbers
2. Check the property, the person, and the promise
3. Protect the deposit deliberately
4. Make moving day evidence-friendly
5. Reading a Seoul rental listing
6. Two reports to put in your diary

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Understand the payment structure before viewing.
- Check the owner, property, and contract before transferring money.
- Photograph condition, meters, keys, and included items on day one.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.

Official routes: Seoul housing guide · Easy to Find Practical Law · Government24 place-of-stay report · 120 Dasan Call Center.

HOUSING

Understand the three numbers

Most Seoul rental conversations become clearer once you separate the deposit, monthly rent, and building-management charge.

Jeonse

- A large lump-sum deposit is provided instead of normal monthly rent.
- The deposit is intended to be returned at the end of the lease.
- The size of the financial exposure makes independent checks essential.

Wolse

- A deposit is combined with monthly rent.
- A higher deposit may sometimes be exchanged for lower monthly rent.
- Confirm which costs sit outside the advertised rent.

Gwanlibi

- A management charge may cover shared services or selected utilities.
- Ask for the typical monthly amount and exactly what it includes.
- Heating, electricity, gas, water, internet, and parking may be separate.

The contract payment

- A portion of the deposit is commonly paid when the contract is signed.
- Do not transfer money simply to hold a viewing.
- Use a clear written receipt and verify who is entitled to receive the payment.

Do this first
Set a total monthly housing budget that includes rent, management, utilities, internet, transport, and the cost of tying up a deposit.

BEFORE SIGNING

Check the property, the person, and the promise

A beautiful room does not compensate for a weak contract or an unsafe deposit.

1. **Confirm the owner** — Check the current property record and the identity of the contracting party.
2. **Use a licensed agent** — Verify the office and keep the brokerage information and receipt.
3. **Read every special clause** — Add verbal promises to the contract in clear written language.
4. **Check existing claims** — Ask a qualified adviser to explain mortgages, priority claims, and deposit exposure.
5. **Define every payment** — State deposit, rent, management, utilities, brokerage fee, and payment dates.
6. **Inspect the building** — Check mould, water pressure, heating, ventilation, noise, locks, windows, and appliances.
7. **Confirm registration use** — Make sure the address and contract can support the residence paperwork you need.

8. **Plan the exit** — Understand notice, early termination, restoration, renewal, and deposit-return steps.

> **High-stakes**
> For a large deposit, obtain independent legal or specialist review before signing or transferring funds.

BEFORE SIGNING

Protect the deposit deliberately

Deposit safety depends on facts that cannot be judged from a listing photo or an agent's reassurance.

Independent checks

- Obtain the relevant property record and verify ownership.
- Understand secured debt and other claims against the property.
- Ask whether deposit-return insurance or another protection route is available to you.

After signing

- Complete any residence-date, fixed-date, or registration steps advised for your lease.
- Keep the original contract and proof of every transfer.
- Do not delay reporting your new address.

During the lease

- Document important repair requests in writing.
- Keep records of rent and management payments.
- Monitor any notice concerning ownership, auction, redevelopment, or building access.

Before leaving

- Agree the inspection and key-return process.
- Settle documented utilities and management charges.
- Do not surrender leverage or possession without understanding the deposit-return position.

> **Never rely on**
> 'Everyone does it this way.' The safe route depends on the property record, your contract, the deposit, and the protections you actually complete.

MOVING & UTILITIES

Make moving day evidence-friendly

A simple visual and written record makes later disputes about condition, contents, and utilities far easier to resolve.

Before the truck arrives

- Confirm lift use, parking access, and building protection rules.
- Check whether the moving company includes packing, disposal, disassembly, and insurance.
- Reserve bulky-waste disposal through the correct district route.

Create the condition record

- Film each room before placing furniture.
- Photograph damage, mould, fixtures, appliances, and included items.
- Capture electricity, gas, and water readings where applicable.

Connect services

- Confirm which utilities are individual and which are building-managed.
- Arrange gas safety or activation appointments when required.
- Keep account numbers and payment routes with the lease documents.

Update your address

- Complete the required immigration report within the current deadline.
- Update your employer, bank, insurer, delivery accounts, and other essential services.
- Redirect or monitor mail from the previous address.

Practical tip
Keep one box accessible with bedding, chargers, medicine, toiletries, documents, cleaning supplies, and a change of clothes.

WORKED EXAMPLE

Reading a Seoul rental listing

Fictional listing and amounts for learning only: these are not market estimates, a property offer or a guarantee of eligibility.

1,000 / 70 · management 8

- In this example the units are KRW 10,000.
- 1,000 means a KRW 10,000,000 deposit; 70 means KRW 700,000 monthly rent.
- Management 8 means KRW 80,000. Ask exactly what is included.

What reaches your budget

- The recurring total is KRW 780,000 a month plus excluded utilities, internet or parking.
- Deposit, brokerage and moving costs sit outside that monthly total.
- Check ownership, claims and deposit-protection routes before transferring money.

Do not mistake an example for an offer
These invented amounts illustrate how to read a listing, not what a Seoul apartment should cost.

HOUSING / REPORTING

Two reports to put in your diary

A lease report and an immigration address report serve different purposes. These are the digital edition's rules; confirm your own case with the responsible authority.

Housing lease report

- The PDF says qualifying Seoul leases must be reported within 30 days of signing if the deposit exceeds KRW 60 million OR monthly rent exceeds KRW 300,000.
- New and renewed contracts are covered; renewals with unchanged amounts are excluded.
- Use the property's community service centre or official real-estate transaction system. One party may file with the contract attached; the edition says that route also grants a fixed date.

Change of residence

- Registered foreign residents generally must report a new place of stay within 15 days of moving.
- Confirm accepted accommodation documents and the route with HiKorea or 1345.
- Lease reporting does not replace every deposit-protection step: confirm possession, residence reporting, fixed date and guarantee eligibility.

Keep the evidence

Save the contract, transfer receipts, both filing acknowledgements and any deposit-guarantee documents. Ask for help before a deadline passes.

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Settle. Seoul

HEALTHCARE · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Know where to start before you feel unwell.

A neighbourhood clinic is often the practical first stop. Larger hospitals are valuable, but they can involve referrals, higher patient costs, and more complex navigation.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/know-where-to-start-before-you-feel-unwell

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Understand how you entered the system
2. Choose the right level of care
3. Your first clinic visit
4. Show this at reception
5. Your visa health check is a different appointment

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Check health-insurance status and contribution notices.
- Save one nearby clinic, pharmacy, and emergency route.
- Carry a short medication and allergy record.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 32, 33, 34, 35, 36.

Official routes: NHIS guidance for foreigners · NHIS insurance benefits · NHIS Seoul Center for Foreign Residents · Seoul emergency contacts.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Understand how you entered the system

Foreign employees at an insured workplace are generally enrolled through employment. Other registered residents may enter as self-employed insured after the applicable residence period.

Employee insured

- The employer normally reports eligibility for covered employees.
- Contributions are linked to salary and shared according to current rules.
- Check the start date and deduction rather than assuming registration is complete.

Self-employed insured

- Many eligible foreign and overseas-Korean residents become mandatorily insured after six months in Korea.
- Status, residence history, household information, and exceptions can affect the result.
- NHIS sends contribution notices and manages changes directly.

What insurance covers

- NHIS benefits include insured diagnosis, tests, treatment, surgery, hospitalisation, and health checks.
- Patients still pay co-payments and non-covered charges.
- The amount varies by service and level of medical institution.

Where to ask

- NHIS operates a Seoul Center for Foreign Residents at Sindorim.
- Bring identity and supporting records to any required consultation.
- Use official NHIS language support for contribution or eligibility disputes.

Check your record
If your employer says you are enrolled, confirm that the NHIS eligibility date and deductions match the actual employment start.

USING HEALTHCARE

Choose the right level of care

Starting at the appropriate clinic can save time and money while helping you reach specialist care when it is genuinely needed.

Neighbourhood clinic

- Often the best first stop for common symptoms, prescriptions, and routine care.
- Search by specialty: internal medicine, ENT, dermatology, orthopaedics, paediatrics, or women's health.
- Call ahead if English support is important.

Hospital

- Useful for specialist testing, procedures, or problems beyond a local clinic.
- Large hospitals may require a referral for the most appropriate insured route.
- International clinics can support booking and interpretation but may charge additional fees.

Search hospital international centres →

Emergency

- Call 119 for ambulance, fire, or rescue.
- Give the address and immediate danger first.
- Take identification, medication information, and a contact person if possible.

Before treatment

- Ask whether the service is covered by NHIS.
- Request an estimate for non-covered tests, materials, or rooms.
- Keep the itemised receipt and prescription details.

> **Not a diagnosis**
> This guide helps you navigate services. A qualified clinician must assess symptoms and treatment decisions.

WALKTHROUGH

Your first clinic visit

Prepare a short symptom, medication and allergy record before visiting. Confirm English support and appointment arrangements directly with the clinic.

1. **Prepare** — Keep identification, insurance information, symptoms and their duration together.
2. **At reception** — Explain why you are visiting and ask early whether English support is possible.
3. **During the consultation** — Describe symptoms, medicines and allergies clearly. Ask what you should do next and when to return.
4. **Before leaving** — Confirm the prescription, payment, itemised receipt and any follow-up instructions.

> **Not a diagnosis**
> This guide helps you find and use services. A qualified clinician must assess your symptoms and treatment.

WORDS TO PREPARE

Show this at reception

Fill in the blanks before you leave home, then read the Korean aloud or show it on your phone. Hangul comes first, then romanisation, then English.

Checking in

- 진료 받으러 왔어요 · Jillyo badeureo wasseoyo — I'm here to see a doctor.
- 건강보험 있어요 · Geongang boheom isseoyo — I have health insurance.
- 외국인등록증 / 여권 여기 있어요 · Oegugin deungnokjeung / yeogwon yeogi isseoyo — Here is my residence card / passport.
- 영어 가능한 선생님 계세요? · Yeongeo ganeunghan seonsaengnim gyeseyo? — Is there a doctor who speaks English?

Find a Seoul clinic with English support →

Symptom and timing

- ___일 전부터 아파요 · ___-il jeonbuteo apayo — It has hurt for ___ days.
- ___ 증상이 있어요 · ___ jeungsang-i isseoyo — I have ___ symptoms.
- 점점 심해져요 · Jeomjeom simhaejyeoyo — It is getting worse.
- 여기가 아파요 · Yeogiga apayo — It hurts here (point).

Medicines and allergies

- 복용 중인 약이 있어요: ___ · Bogyong jung-in yagi isseoyo — I am taking: ___.
- ___ 알레르기가 있어요 · ___ allereugiga isseoyo — I am allergic to ___.
- 임신 중이에요 · Imsin jung-ieyo — I am pregnant.
- 처방전 주세요 · Cheobangjeon juseyo — A prescription, please.

Common symptoms

- 열이 나요 · Yeori nayo — I have a fever.
- 목이 아파요 · Mogi apayo — My throat hurts.
- 기침이 나요 · Gichimi nayo — I have a cough.
- 배가 아파요 · Baega apayo — My stomach hurts.
- 머리가 아파요 · Meoriga apayo — I have a headache.
- 어지러워요 · Eojireowoyo — I feel dizzy.

> **Keep it short**
> One line each for symptom, timing, medicines and allergies is easier for busy reception staff than a long explanation. In an emergency, call 119 instead.

E-2 TEACHERS

Your visa health check is a different appointment

For many teachers, the first Korean clinic visit is the employment medical examination, not an illness. It has its own rules, so book it separately from ordinary care.

Use the right clinic

- E-2 certificates must come from a Ministry of Justice-designated medical institution.
- Check the current designated list on HiKorea before travelling.
- Confirm the clinic still offers the examination you need.

Designated clinic list (HiKorea, Korean) →

Name the right exam

- 원어민 교사 채용신체검사 · woneomin gyosa chaeyong sinche geomsa — native-speaking teacher employment medical examination.
- It includes 마약검사 · mayak geomsa — drug screening.
- 건강검진 · geongang geomjin is a general health screening and may not meet E-2 requirements.

Before you go

- Ask your employer for the required tests in writing.
- Bring your passport, photographs and the fee; you usually do not need to wait for your residence card.
- Fasting for at least eight hours is commonly requested — follow the clinic's instructions and don't stop prescribed medication yourself.

Cost and results

- Recruiter guidance gives an indicative ₩70,000–₩130,000; prices vary.
- Results typically take about three days to a week.
- If a sealed envelope is required, leave it unopened and ask for a personal copy.

Full health-check guide →

Print the card
The Clinic Health-Check Card in Forms & Documents shows reception the exact Korean exam name, with spaces for your passport number, tests and deadline.

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Settle. Seoul

LEARNING KOREAN · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Learn the phrases that remove friction.

Romanisation is only a bridge. Listen to native audio and confirm Hangul spelling before relying on a phrase in a high-stakes situation.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/learn-the-phrases-that-remove-friction

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Eight phrases for everyday Seoul
2. Read the letters before you memorise phrases
3. Phrases for the places you go every week
4. Choose a course you can sustain

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Choose one repeated context and practise the same small language set there.
- Pick a course you can actually attend around work and family.
- Aim first for introductions, numbers, dates, addresses, and transport.

> Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 63, 64, 51.

> Official routes: Korean classes for foreign residents · Free Korean-language education · Seoul Foreign Portal · Talk To Me In Korean (talktomeinkorean.com).

LEARNING KOREAN

Eight phrases for everyday Seoul

Start with the language that keeps ordinary moments moving.

1. **안녕하세요 · Annyeonghaseyo** — Hello. A polite default greeting for shops, offices, colleagues, and neighbours.
2. **주세요 · Juseyo** — Please give me… Combine with pointing or the item name.
3. **얼마예요? · Eolmayeyo?** — How much is it? Useful in markets and small shops.
4. **어디예요? · Eodiyeyo?** — Where is it? Add the place or show the address.
5. **영어 돼요? · Yeongeo dwaeyo?** — Is English possible? Ask early and politely.
6. **다시 말해 주세요 · Dasi malhae juseyo** — Please say it again. Slow the conversation before guessing.
7. **잘 모르겠어요 · Jal moreugesseoyo** — I am not sure / I do not understand well.
8. **도와주세요 · Dowajuseyo** — Please help me. In danger, call the relevant emergency number too.

> **Best method**
> Choose one repeated context — coffee, taxi, work, market, or building management — and practise the same small language set there.

LEARN HANGUL

Read the letters before you memorise phrases

Hangul has 24 basic letters that stack into syllable blocks: 한 = ㅎ h + ㅏ a + ㄴ n. Most learners can sound out simple words within a few short sessions, which makes station names, menus and shop signs readable and lets you check a phrase's real spelling instead of trusting romanisation.

Session 1: vowels

- Learn ㅏ a · ㅓ eo · ㅗ o · ㅜ u · ㅡ eu · ㅣ i.
- Vertical vowels sit to the right of a consonant (가), horizontal ones underneath (고).

Session 2: consonants

- Learn ㄱ g · ㄴ n · ㄷ d · ㄹ r/l · ㅁ m · ㅂ b · ㅅ s · ㅇ (silent / ng) · ㅈ j · ㅎ h.
- ㅇ is silent at the start of a block: 아 is just a.

Session 3: read real signs

- Sound out 서울 Seo-ul, 출구 chul-gu (exit), 화장실 hwa-jang-sil (toilet).
- Then read your own station's name on the platform sign.

Keep going

- The full vowel and consonant chart, combined vowels and a printable bookmark are in our companion guide, A little Korean goes a long way.
- Pair reading with native audio: letters change sound at the end of a syllable.

Why it matters
Romanisation varies from sign to sign and app to app. Hangul does not — once you can read it, every phrase in this guide can be checked against the Korean.

EVERYDAY SITUATIONS

Phrases for the places you go every week

Each phrase shows Hangul first, then romanisation, then meaning. Listen to native audio before relying on any of them.

Convenience store & supermarket

- 봉투 필요하세요? · Bongtu piryohaseyo? — Do you need a bag? (you'll hear this)
- 봉투 주세요 · Bongtu juseyo — A bag, please
- 카드로 할게요 · Kadeuro halgeyo — I'll pay by card
- 영수증 버려 주세요 · Yeongsujeung beoryeo juseyo — Please throw the receipt away

Taxi & transport

- (place) 가 주세요 · (place) ga juseyo — To (place), please
- 여기서 내려 주세요 · Yeogiseo naeryeo juseyo — Please let me off here
- 이 버스 (place) 가요? · I beoseu (place) gayo? — Does this bus go to (place)?
- 몇 번 출구예요? · Myeot beon chulguyeyo? — Which exit number is it?

Café & restaurant

- 포장해 주세요 · Pojanghae juseyo — To take away, please
- 여기서 먹을게요 · Yeogiseo meogeulgeyo — I'll eat here
- 물 좀 주세요 · Mul jom juseyo — Some water, please
- 덜 맵게 해 주세요 · Deol maepge hae juseyo — Less spicy, please

Building, clinic & office

- 택배 왔어요 · Taekbae wasseoyo — A parcel has arrived (you'll hear this)
- 예약했어요 · Yeyakhaesseoyo — I have a reservation / appointment
- 외국인등록증 있어요 · Oegugin deungnokjeung isseoyo — I have an ARC
- 천천히 말씀해 주세요 · Cheoncheonhi malsseumhae juseyo — Please speak slowly

Polite by default
Ending a request with 주세요 (juseyo) or a sentence with 요 (yo) keeps you polite with strangers. Save casual speech for friends who use it with you first.

LEARNING KOREAN

Choose a course you can sustain

The fastest course is not useful if work, commuting, or family life makes regular attendance impossible.

Foreign-resident centres

- Seoul operates practical Korean classes through resident-support centres.
- Courses can range from beginner and daily life to TOPIK preparation.
- Locations, schedules, eligibility, and registration change by term.

University institutes

- Structured intensive programmes with a clear progression.
- Useful for study-focused learners able to commit significant time.
- Compare tuition, schedule, visa implications, and assessment style.

Online public resources

- Online King Sejong and other public platforms support flexible study.
- Combine lessons with real listening and speaking.
- Track a small number of useful patterns rather than collecting apps.

Language exchange

- Agree the time split and learning goal before meeting.
- Choose a public venue and protect personal information.
- A friendly conversation partner is not automatically a trained teacher.

A useful target
Aim first to handle introductions, numbers, dates, addresses, transport, shopping, appointments, and one recurring work conversation.

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Settle. Seoul

WEEKENDS · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Explore Seoul by theme, not checklist.

A small, coherent day usually creates a stronger sense of place than racing between famous sites.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/explore-seoul-by-theme

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Four ways to spend a Seoul Saturday
2. The city wall and a quiet tea afternoon
3. Mangwon Market and a Hangang sunset
4. Inwangsan's granite ridge
5. Mullae's metal workshops and art studios
6. Pick the trip that fits the day

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Choose one anchor activity, one meal, and one open-ended walk.
- Check weather, air quality, and last transport before leaving.
- Save the Korean destination and return stop.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 73, 74.

Official routes: Seoul public transportation · Seoul Safety Nuri · Seoul Foreign Portal.

WEEKENDS

Four ways to spend a Seoul Saturday

Pick a theme and let the day stay small enough to enjoy.

Old Seoul

- Palace or city-wall section.
- One traditional neighbourhood or market.
- A museum, tea house, or quiet walk that adds context.

River Seoul

- Choose one Hangang park and arrive by public transport.
- Walk, cycle, picnic, or watch the evening change.
- Check weather, air quality, bike availability, and last transport.

Mountain Seoul

- Select a route that matches fitness, weather, daylight, and footwear.
- Carry water, charged phone, and an offline route.
- Start early and turn back before conditions become unsafe.

Neighbourhood Seoul

- Choose one station and walk without chasing a ranked list.
- Combine a market, bookshop, cafe, park, or gallery.
- Spend locally and respect residential streets.

Better weekend
Choose one anchor activity, one meal, and one open-ended walk. Leave enough time to discover something unplanned.

ITINERARY · OLD SEOUL

The city wall and a quiet tea afternoon

Joseon-era Seoul on foot, without the tour-bus crowds. Allow about half a day at an easy pace.

1. **Anchor · Naksan wall walk** — Start at Hyehwa Station (혜화역, Line 4) and follow the Seoul City Wall (한양도성) over Naksan (낙산) down to Heunginjimun (흥인지문) near Dongdaemun. The path is paved, with views back across the old city.
2. **Meal · Tea and something small** — Take the subway west to Anguk (안국역) or Gyeongbokgung (경복궁역) and pick a traditional tea house (전통찻집) in Bukchon or Seochon. Order a seasonal tea and a plate of rice cakes (떡).
3. **Open walk · Seochon alleys** — Wander west of Gyeongbokgung through Seochon (서촌): small bookshops, stationers and the lanes towards Tongin Market (통인시장). Bukchon homes are residential; keep voices low.

Check first
Bukchon's Red Zone restricts visitors from 17:00 to 10:00. Palaces close one day a week, so check before you go.

Hanok stays and traditional neighbourhoods →

ITINERARY · RIVER SEOUL

Mangwon Market and a Hangang sunset

A local riverside evening that costs little and needs almost no planning. Arrive mid-afternoon.

1. **Meal · Graze through Mangwon Market** — From Mangwon Station (망원역, Line 6) walk to Mangwon Market (망원시장) for street food: noodles, fried chicken pieces (닭강정) or hotteok (호떡). Many stalls are cash-friendly.
2. **Anchor · Mangwon Hangang Park** — Walk about 15 minutes to Mangwon Hangang Park (망원한강공원), or rent a Seoul public bike, Ddareungi (따릉이), and ride along the river as the bridges light up.
3. **Open walk · Mangwon-ro cafés** — On the way back, drift along the side streets of Mangwon-dong and Yeonnam-dong for a small café or design shop.

> **Check first**
> Look at the air-quality forecast and the last train home. Take your rubbish with you; park bins fill up fast on warm evenings.

Coffee in Korea · find a café for the walk home →

ITINERARY · MOUNTAIN SEOUL

Inwangsan's granite ridge

A real summit reachable by subway, with the fortress wall alongside. Inwangsan is 338 m; allow two to three hours up and down.

1. **Anchor · Climb Inwangsan** — Start from Dongnimmun Station (독립문역, Line 3) and follow the signs for Inwangsan (인왕산) along the city wall. The upper section has steep stone steps; wear shoes with grip.
2. **Meal · A trailhead lunch** — Back near Muak-dong or Sajik-dong, look for a simple Korean restaurant serving soft tofu stew (순두부찌개) or acorn jelly (도토리묵), classic after-hike food.
3. **Open walk · Over to Buam-dong** — If your legs have more in them, descend towards Buam-dong (부암동) for a quieter café with valley views, then a bus back into town.

> **Check first**
> Carry water and a charged phone, start early, and turn back in heat, rain, ice or failing light. In an emergency, call 119.

Hiking in Seoul · choose your mountain day →

ITINERARY · NEIGHBOURHOOD SEOUL

Mullae's metal workshops and art studios

Industrial Seoul and its creative scene side by side. Best on a weekday afternoon or Saturday, when both are active.

1. **Anchor · Mullae Art Village** — From Mullae Station (문래역, Line 2) walk into Mullae Creative Village (문래창작촌), where working metal shops share alleys with small galleries and studios. Workshops are workplaces; ask before photographing people.
2. **Meal · Lunch in a converted workshop** — Many of the lanes now hold small restaurants, bakeries and bars in former factory buildings. Pick one that looks busy with locals.
3. **Open walk · Dorimcheon stream** — Finish with a slow walk along Dorimcheon (도림천) or through Mullae Park, then continue to Yeongdeungpo if you want shopping.

Check first
Many workshops close on Sundays, so the area feels very different. Watch for delivery vehicles in the narrow lanes.

Settling-in guide →

DAY TRIPS

Pick the trip that fits the day

Weather, reservation rules, travel time, and the final local connection matter more than the distance on a map.

Suwon · Hwaseong Fortress (수원 화성)

- Line 1 or a faster Mugunghwa/ITX train to Suwon Station, then a local bus or taxi to Paldalmun (팔달문).
- Walk part of the 5.7 km UNESCO fortress wall and visit Hwaseong Haenggung palace.
- Allow a full day; finish at the market streets near Paldalmun.

Incheon · Open Port & Chinatown

- Line 1 to Incheon Station (인천역), the end of the line.
- Chinatown, the Open Port (개항장) streets of 1880s-era buildings, and Jajangmyeon Museum.
- Walk or take a short bus to Wolmido for sea air.

Nature

- Bukhansan National Park and city-edge mountains.
- Riverside and wetland routes.
- Seasonal parks, gardens, and arboretums.

Coast and islands

- Ganghwa Island (강화도): intercity bus from Sinchon; dolmen sites, fortresses and a slow coastal day.
- Ferry-linked islands depend on weather and tides; check sailings the morning you go.
- Seafood, beaches and walking routes; bring cash for small island shops.

Plan well

- Official opening and reservation rules.
- Last return connection.
- Weather, clothing, payment, and meal options.
- Accessibility and language support.

Do not strand the day
Check the last bus, train, or ferry before departure, then save the Korean destination and return stop.

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Settle. Seoul

SAFETY · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

The numbers worth saving.

A simple response plan is easier to use under stress. Save your Korean address, a trusted contact and the right help route before you need them.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/the-numbers-worth-saving

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Location first. Then the problem.
2. Separate emergencies from everyday questions

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- 112 for police; 119 for ambulance, fire or rescue.
- Give your location before explaining the problem.
- Keep your address and a trusted contact available offline.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 6, 7, 8.

Official routes: Seoul Safety Nuri · Korea Meteorological Administration · AirKorea · 120 Dasan · Danuri.

EMERGENCY HELP

Location first. Then the problem.

In immediate danger, use emergency services rather than a routine information line.

1. **Give the location** — Read the Korean address, building name or nearby landmark. Say which floor or entrance responders should use.
2. **Explain the immediate problem** — Say what happened, whether anyone is injured and whether danger is still present.
3. **Ask for English support** — Stay on the line and follow the operator's instructions. Ask someone nearby to help explain the location if needed.

KEEP THESE CLOSE

Separate emergencies from everyday questions

Language support and opening hours vary. Confirm arrangements when using a routine helpline.

Police and rescue

- 112: police, crime and immediate danger.
- 119: medical emergencies, fire and rescue.

Immigration and city services

- 1345: status, registration, applications and reporting.
- 02-120: Seoul city information. Press 9 for the language menu; the PDF lists foreign-language support on weekdays, 09:00–18:00 excluding holidays.

Travel and family support

- 1330: tourism information and interpretation, not an emergency substitute.
- 1577-1366: Danuri support for multicultural families and migrant women.

Before an outdoor day

- Seoul Safety Nuri: local warnings and shelter information.
- Korea Meteorological Administration: destination weather and severe-weather forecasts.
- AirKorea: air quality at the location you plan to visit.

A small backup plan
Carry a charged phone, a payment backup and your Korean address. Respect closure signs and official instructions.

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Settle. Seoul

RESIDENCE & VISAS · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

A booking is not a filing.

Keep separate evidence of your appointment, submitted application and final decision. A reservation alone does not extend your permitted stay.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/a-booking-is-not-a-filing

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Prepare the application, not just the appointment
2. When the route is unclear
3. Do not confuse an address update with a report

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Start with the status and expiry date in your own record.
- Match permission to the actual work or study activity.
- Keep the acknowledgement of every accepted submission.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 17, 18, 19, 20.

Official routes: HiKorea — hikorea.go.kr · Korea Immigration Service · 1345 immigration guidance.

RESIDENCE & VISAS

Prepare the application, not just the appointment

The PDF describes common routes, not a status-specific document list. Confirm your own requirements with HiKorea or 1345.

First registration

- For most arrivals staying over 90 days, the guide describes registration within 90 days of entry; exceptions apply.
- Ask for your status-specific document list early enough to obtain missing evidence.

Before expiry

- The guide says extensions can normally be filed from four months before expiry.
- Eligible online applications have an earlier deadline: the day before expiry. Confirm service hours and current rules.

Your application file

- Prepare the current form, passport, residence card when issued and accepted address evidence.
- Add documents for your exact status and task; keep receipts and requests for further evidence.

Work and travel

- Check whether a new activity requires permission or reporting before starting.
- If an application is pending, ask the handling office how departure affects the application and re-entry.

HIKOREA & REPORTING

When the route is unclear

Choose the service and office responsible for your actual task. An unavailable appointment is not permission to miss a filing deadline.

At the appointment

- Bring required originals, copies, forms and fees, and confirm the accepted payment method.
- Keep the appointment confirmation and proof of address.

Call with a clear question

- Have your status, expiry date, address and intended change ready for 1345.
- Ask what must be filed, by when, and what evidence proves acceptance.

Protective-facility route
The PDF records a 4 September 2026 announcement allowing eligible victims of violence, abuse or trafficking in protective facilities to apply through that facility's immigration jurisdiction. Ask the facility or 1345 about eligibility.

RECORD CHANGES

Do not confuse an address update with a report

Different changes have different deadlines and evidence requirements.

Place of stay

- Registered foreign residents generally have 15 days to report a change of place of stay.
- Confirm accepted accommodation evidence, especially if your name is not on the lease.

Workplace and identity

- Your status determines whether workplace changes require permission, a report or neither.
- Passport, name, nationality, school or organisation changes may also need reporting.

Keep the distinction
A lease report or a bank-address update does not automatically complete an immigration change-of-place-of-stay report.

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Settle. Seoul

IMMIGRATION · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

From visa to residence card, step by step.

The full immigration journey for a newcomer — using the E-2 teaching visa as the worked example — from the documents you gather at home to the residence card, appointments, renewals and changing status.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/immigration-from-visa-to-residence-card

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Build the E-2 document file at home
2. Register and get your residence card
3. How to handle an immigration visit
4. Report changes and renew on time
5. Moving to a different status

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Register within 90 days of entry if you stay longer than 90 days.
- A booking is not a filing: keep proof of every accepted application.
- Never start a new job, workplace or activity before the immigration route is clear.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 17, 18, 19, 20, 27, 52.

Official routes: HiKorea — hikorea.go.kr · Korea Immigration Service — immigration.go.kr · 1345 immigration contact centre · Korean consulate in your home country.

STAGE 1 · BEFORE YOU FLY

Build the E-2 document file at home

Editorial overview of the common E-2 (foreign language instructor) route. Requirements change and vary by nationality, consulate and employer — your employer and the Korean consulate give the binding list.

Documents commonly requested

- Valid passport with blank pages and passport photos.
- Degree certificate, usually apostilled or consular-legalised, plus sealed transcripts where asked.
- A national-level criminal record check, apostilled and recent — these take weeks, so order early.
- Signed employment contract and a self-health statement where your employer requests one.

How the visa is issued

- Your employer usually applies in Korea for a Visa Issuance Number or Certificate of Confirmation of Visa Issuance.
- You then apply through a Korean consulate or the e-visa route, sometimes with an interview.
- Keep scans of everything you send and every version of the offer and contract.

Check before signing
Match the visa to the actual duties, employer and workplace. The guide advises asking 1345 about any permission or report needed before starting or changing workplaces.

STAGE 2 · FIRST WEEKS

Register and get your residence card

Most arrivals staying over 90 days must register for a residence card (still widely called the ARC) within 90 days of entry. Exceptions apply.

1. **Get a fixed address first** — You need accepted proof of your place of stay — a lease, or a housing confirmation from your employer if your name is not on the lease.
2. **Book through HiKorea** — Reserve a visit at the immigration office responsible for your address. Slots in Seoul can fill weeks ahead, so book as soon as you know your address.
3. **Assemble the file** — Integrated application form, passport, a recent passport photo, proof of address, the fee and any status-specific documents. E-2 holders may be asked for employer documents and health-check results.
4. **Attend and keep the receipt** — Arrive early with originals and copies, and confirm the accepted payment method. Keep the receipt — it shows your application was accepted.
5. **Collect or receive the card** — The card typically takes a few weeks. Until then, your passport and receipt are your proof. Many banking and phone services wait for the card.

STAGE 3 · APPOINTMENTS

How to handle an immigration visit

Keep separate evidence of the appointment, the submitted application and the final decision. A reservation alone does not extend your stay.

Before you go

- Select the correct service and the office for your actual task.
- Check the status-specific document list, maintenance notices and the current fee.
- Write down your status, expiry date, address and question in one sentence.

On the day

- Bring the current form, originals, copies and fees; take a number and wait to be called.
- If asked for more documents, note exactly what, by when, and how to submit.
- Leave with a receipt or acknowledgement, not just a verbal answer.

No slot near your deadline?

- Ask the responsible office about filing — do not assume a walk-in exception.
- Use e-application only when your status and service are eligible; the guide notes online filing must be done by the day before expiry.
- Call 1345 (multilingual) with your details ready.

STAGE 4 · LIVING ON YOUR STATUS

Report changes and renew on time

Different changes have different deadlines. Address changes are a particularly common source of avoidable penalties.

Moving home

- Registered foreign residents generally have 15 days to report a change of place of stay.
- A lease report (p. 27) is separate and does not complete the immigration report.

Workplace changes

- E-2 instructors have specific workplace-reporting obligations.
- Do not begin an additional role, private lessons or a second workplace until the route is clear.

Extensions

- The guide says extensions can normally be filed from four months before expiry.
- File early enough to obtain anything missing; keep the acceptance evidence.

STAGE 5 · CHANGING VISA

Moving to a different status

Changing status — for example from E-2 to another work visa, a job-seeking status, a study status, or a family-based status after marriage — is a separate application with its own eligibility and documents.

Plan the switch

- Confirm eligibility for the new status before resigning, accepting a role or letting your current status lapse.
- Ask whether the change can be filed inside Korea or requires a new visa from abroad.
- Time it within your permitted stay; a pending application does not automatically authorise new work.

Ask this

- "For my current status and expiry date, what must I file, by when, and what evidence confirms that you accepted it?"
- If an application is pending, ask what leaving Korea would do to it and to your re-entry position.

Get it in writing
This page is editorial guidance, not legal advice. For complex cases — a gap between jobs, a refused application or a dispute with an employer — contact 1345, Korea Legal Aid or a qualified immigration specialist before a deadline passes.

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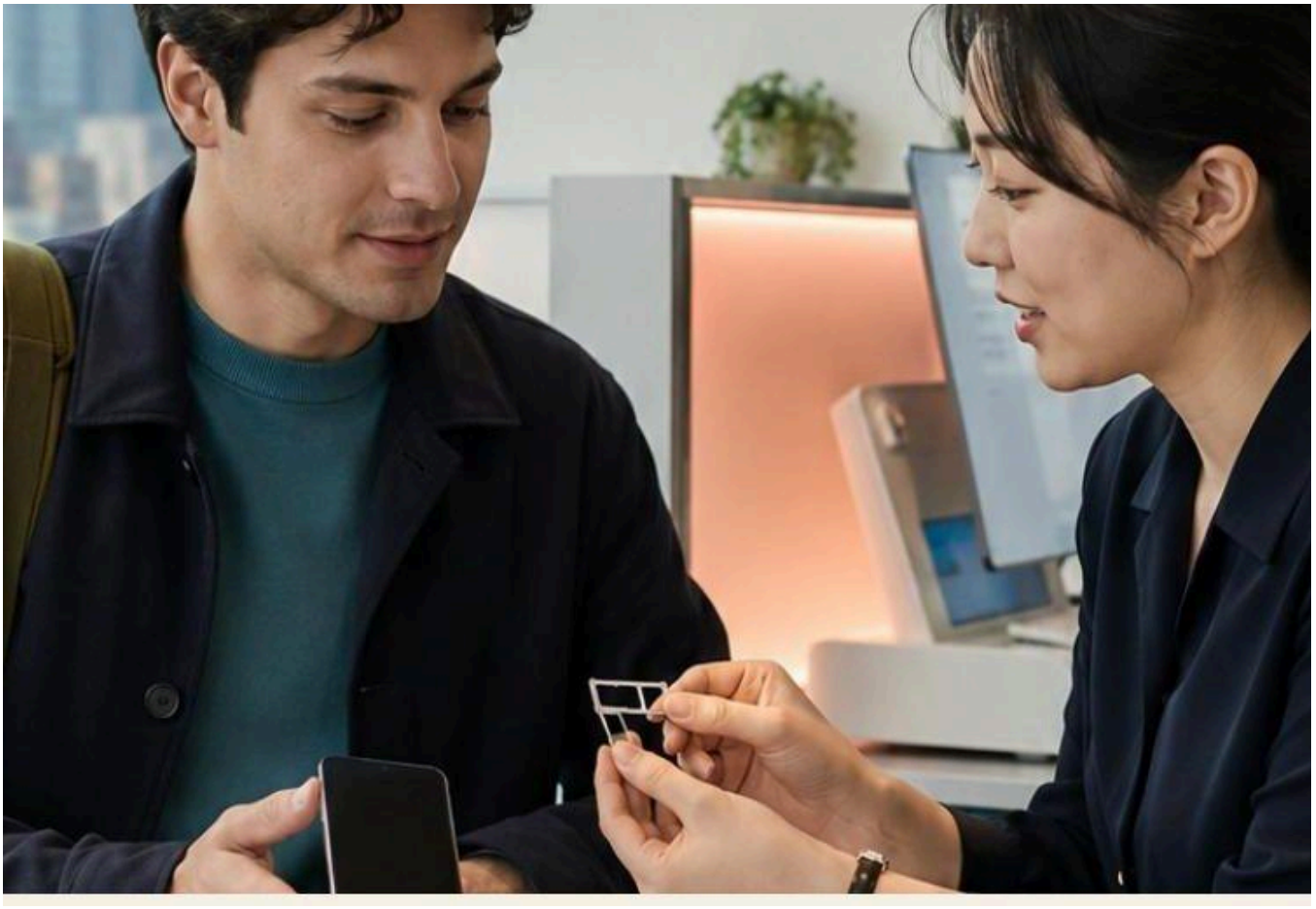

Settle. Seoul

MONEY · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Open the account you actually need.

Banking, remittance, tax and pension records become easier when you know the purpose of each account and keep a clear trail of money moving in and out.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/open-the-account-you-actually-need

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

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1. Bring proof of purpose
2. Compare the total transfer
3. Ask the institution responsible

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Call the chosen branch for its exact document list.
- Compare the amount the recipient receives, not just the transfer fee.
- Keep payslips, contribution notices and transfer records.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 28, 29, 30, 31.

Official routes: MY SEOUL+ · National Tax Service · National Pension Service.

BANKING

Bring proof of purpose

Document requirements vary by branch and product. A new account may have transaction limits until sufficient proof is supplied.

Prepare

- Passport and residence card when issued.
- Employment contract, certificate of employment or other objective proof of purpose.
- Korean phone number, address and tax-residency information when requested.

Ask before leaving

- Confirm app access, transfer limits, debit card, transport function and overseas use.
- Ask which limits can be reviewed later and what evidence is needed.
- Never share one-time passwords or security certificates.

Fraud warning
Treat urgent calls about frozen funds, prosecutors or moving money into a 'safe' account as potential fraud. Use independently confirmed official contact channels.

Full guide: banking & everyday payments →

REMITTANCE

Compare the total transfer

The cheapest advertised fee can hide an exchange-rate margin or receiving-bank charge.

Like-for-like comparison

- Amount the recipient actually receives, exchange rate and stated fee.
- Sending limits, processing time, receiving deductions and cancellation route.
- Regulation, identity requirements, supported currencies and customer support.

Build an audit trail

- Check the recipient name, bank address, account number and SWIFT details.
- Keep confirmations, exchange records and the source of large incoming funds.
- Seek qualified advice for significant cross-border tax or reporting questions.

Pause the transfer
Secrecy, urgency, remote-control software and cryptocurrency conversion are warning signs. Do not choose a service solely for a referral bonus.

Full guide: sending money home →

YOUR RECORDS

Ask the institution responsible

The public-service routes in the edition cover different questions; one office does not control every financial record.

National Tax Service

- Tax guidance and income records.
- Ask how your circumstances affect tax filing rather than relying on a general online estimate.

National Pension Service

- Coverage and contribution records.
- Nationality-specific benefit questions require confirmation with NPS.

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Settle. Seoul

WORKING IN KOREA · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

The numbers behind your pay.

Your worker status, workplace size and contracted hours matter. Read the whole working week, then reconcile the payslip with the money that reaches your bank.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/the-numbers-behind-your-pay

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Read the effective date
2. From gross pay to the bank deposit
3. Make the first month auditable

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Keep a complete signed contract and itemised wage statement.
- Count contracted work, not only classroom or client hours.
- Use MOEL 1350 for labour guidance and 1345 for immigration consequences.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46.

Official routes: Ministry of Employment and Labor — 1350 · HiKorea — 1345 · National Tax Service · NHIS.

WORK / REFERENCE

Read the effective date

The PDF records KRW 10,320 as the 2026 minimum hourly wage and KRW 10,700 from 1 January 2027. These are the edition's figures, not independent live verification.

Monthly comparison

- The edition gives KRW 2,236,300 on the ministry's 209-hour basis for 2027.
- That is a calculation basis for 40 contracted weekly hours, not every worker's monthly entitlement.

Workplace size

- The Labour Standards Act generally applies at five or more employees; smaller workplaces still have obligations.
- Confirm how worker classification and workplace size affect your case.

Hours and annual leave

- The guide notes Articles 55 and 60 exclusions for employees averaging under 15 contracted weekly hours over four weeks.
- Where Article 60 applies, 80% annual attendance generally earns 15 days; a fully attended month in the first year generally earns one day.

Retirement benefits

- The guide describes exclusions for service under one year and average weekly hours under 15 over four weeks.
- Ask which scheme applies before assuming a benefit is payable.

Check before acting
Confirm current rates and the provisions that apply to your status with MOEL or a qualified labour adviser. Keep your contract, schedule and payslips together.

WORKED EXAMPLE

From gross pay to the bank deposit

All amounts below are fictional teaching examples. The deductions are not statutory rates or a personal payroll estimate.

1. **Match each earning** — Check the contract, allowances and agreed extra work, alongside the pay period and hours.
2. **Explain each deduction** — Ask what it covers and how the amount was calculated.
3. **Reconcile the bank credit** — Gross pay minus deductions should equal the deposit. Keep personal copies of both records.

Example earnings

- Base salary: KRW 2,800,000.
- Housing allowance: KRW 500,000.
- Gross pay: KRW 3,300,000.

Example deductions

- Pension: KRW 150,000; health and long-term care: KRW 130,000.
- Income and local tax: KRW 70,000; other lawful deduction: KRW 20,000.
- Total deductions: KRW 370,000; expected bank credit: KRW 2,930,000.

CONTRACTS & EVIDENCE

Make the first month auditable

The first payslip and insurance records reveal whether the role is administered as promised.

Before and during work

- Keep the signed contract and confirm permitted workplace and any filing.
- Record actual start, finish, breaks and extra duties.
- Keep schedules, approved leave and written changes to duties or location.

At payday

- Match gross pay and allowances to the contract.
- Confirm NHIS and pension records where applicable.
- Save a monthly folder with the schedule, payslip, bank credit and approved overtime or leave.

Escalate safely

For wage, safety or retaliation concerns, preserve personal copies outside employer-controlled accounts. Ask 1350 or a qualified adviser; immediate danger may require 112 or 119. Check immigration effects before resigning or changing jobs.

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TEACHING & EDUCATION · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Choose the teaching system, not only the school name.

Hagwons, public schools, international schools and universities offer very different working lives. The individual timetable and leadership team matter more than the label.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/choose-the-teaching-system

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

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1. Compare the whole package
2. Evidence is stronger than reassurance
3. Keep every version of the offer

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Request a realistic whole-week timetable.
- Speak privately with a current or recent teacher.
- Confirm that visa permission matches the actual duties and workplace.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52.

Official routes: MOEL · HiKorea · Seoul Office of Education · MY SEOUL+.

TEACHING PATHWAYS

Compare the whole package

These are scouting tendencies, not guarantees of pay, eligibility or conditions.

Hagwon

- Private-academy work shaped by enrolment and parent expectations.
- Check teaching load, preparation, events, curriculum ownership and staff turnover.

Public school

- School calendar and an institutional setting.
- Check co-teaching, camps, placement, desk-warming, vacation expectations and renewal.

International school

- Often requires recognised teaching credentials and relevant experience.
- Check curriculum, safeguarding, assessment and extracurricular workload.

University or specialist role

- Can involve language teaching, research, testing, curriculum or corporate training.
- Check contact hours, split shifts, qualifications, benefits and renewal criteria.

CHOOSING AN EMPLOYER

Evidence is stronger than reassurance

A polished advert is not proof of a well-run school.

1. **Identify the employer** — Confirm the registered institution and every work location.
2. **Read the real timetable** — Include teaching, planning, breaks, meetings, events and travel.
3. **Check classroom support** — Ask about class sizes, ages, curriculum materials, assessment and behaviour procedures.
4. **Listen to staff** — Ask how recent departures, final pay, housing and documents were handled.

> **Warning pattern**
> Vague employer identity, conflicting salary or hours, requests to surrender documents, late pay and visa threats are reasons to pause. Do not start before permission is clear.

JOB OFFERS

Keep every version of the offer

Read the employer's original advert and confirm the final terms before accepting.

Collect the facts

- Employer, recruiter, workplace, age group, duties, salary, housing and start date.
- Verify why each sensitive document is needed and use the confirmed application route.

Before signing

- Resolve contradictions in writing and retain the original advert and final contract.
- Ask 1345 about permission or workplace reporting before starting or changing jobs.

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Settle. Seoul

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Build a Seoul support map.

Moving countries can intensify isolation, anxiety and work stress. Support is easier to reach when you have identified the people and professional routes before a crisis.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/build-a-seoul-support-map

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

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1. Ask for help before the problem becomes a crisis
2. Give support a place in the week

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Save one professional route you would genuinely use.
- Ask about qualifications, language, confidentiality and fees.
- In immediate danger, call 112 or 119 rather than waiting for an appointment.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 37, 38.

Official routes: MY SEOUL+ · University or employer support programme · 112 / 119 emergency help.

FIND THE RIGHT LEVEL

Ask for help before the problem becomes a crisis

Different providers offer different kinds of support. A qualified professional should assess your needs.

Types of support

- Counselling: adjustment, patterns, coping and support.
- Clinical psychology: structured assessment and psychological treatment.
- Psychiatry: medical evaluation, diagnosis and medication where appropriate.

Questions for a provider

- Qualifications, registration, supervision and experience with your concern.
- Language, confidentiality, records, fees, cancellation and emergency boundaries.
- Whether online sessions are legally and clinically suitable for your location.

Lower-cost routes

- Foreign-resident centres periodically offer multilingual counselling programmes.
- Universities and employers may offer confidential assistance.
- Check current eligibility and programme dates through MY SEOUL+.

Immediate danger

- Call 112 or 119 for immediate danger or urgent medical need.
- Contact a trusted person and move away from means of harm.
- Use a crisis service suited to your language and location.

Your safety matters
If you may harm yourself or someone else, seek immediate emergency help now rather than waiting for a routine appointment.

EVERYDAY RESILIENCE

Give support a place in the week

Build a small network and routine that you can actually maintain.

People and professional help

- One local person for practical support.
- One person at home with an agreed check-in rhythm.
- One professional route and one community around an activity or interest.

Boundaries and backup

- A regular sleep boundary and movement routine.
- A small money buffer for uncertainty.
- A crisis plan naming who to call, where to go and what helps you stay safe.

Notice the pattern
Persistent changes in sleep, appetite, concentration, mood, substance use or functioning are reasons to seek professional assessment.

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NEIGHBOURHOODS · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Compare the weekday, not the postcode.

A station name is only a starting point. Test the exact building, station exit and walk home at the times you will actually travel.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/compare-the-weekday-not-the-postcode

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Put the journey on your shortlist

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Test a door-to-door commute, not only the train journey.
- Visit at departure time, after work and on a weekend.
- Treat these areas as scouting prompts, not rankings or price estimates.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 69, 70, 71, 72.

Official routes: Seoul official route map · Public transport · MY SEOUL+.

FOUR STARTING POINTS

Put the journey on your shortlist

Nearby streets can differ in noise, hills, crossings and useful shops. No area label can substitute for visiting the exact block.

Hongdae & Yeonnam

- Start at Hongik University for university, creative and social life.
- Compare quieter residential streets with entertainment routes; check late-night noise and your chosen exit.

Jongno

- Start at Jongno 3-ga for journeys to the old city or central business areas.
- Check older-building condition, stairs and evening street activity.

Wangsimni

- Test connections using Lines 2 or 5, Gyeongui-Jungang or Suin-Bundang.
- Time the interchange and the walk from the platform to your building.

Gangnam

- Consider it when work or study regularly takes you to southern business districts.
- Test peak-hour crowds, road crossings and the full accommodation cost.

Your test route
Record door-to-door minutes, transfers, walking and hills, the last return option and total monthly housing cost. The PDF's locator is schematic, not a navigation map.

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SEOUL ON FOOT · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

A different city above the streets.

Four ways to start, from a gentler forest loop to a demanding mountain day. Choose the whole journey, including the approach and the walk back down.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/hiking-around-seoul

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

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1. Start gently. Or follow the wall.
2. Two very different mountain days
3. Pack for the walk back down

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Match the route to fitness, weather and remaining daylight.
- Save the route offline and decide a turnaround time.
- Check official access and closure notices before setting out.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 75, 76, 77, 78.

Official routes: Seoul Hiking Tourism Center — seoulhiking.or.kr · National-park closures · KMA weather · AirKorea.

FOREST & CITY WALL

Start gently. Or follow the wall.

A short distance on a city map can still involve steep approaches, steps or exposed rock.

Ansan Jarakgil

- The official route is a 7 km circular, mostly decked forest trail. Walk a shorter section and retrace your steps if preferred.
- Dongnimmun, Hongje or Sinchon are approach options; use the official access guide to choose the entrance.
- The trail is described as barrier-free, but station approaches can be steep. Plan the entire wheelchair or stroller journey.

Inwangsan city wall

- Donuimun Gate site to Changuimun Gate: 4 km, about 2 hours 30 minutes in the official route description.
- Seodaemun Station, Line 5, Exit 4 is close to the Donuimun start. Plan a separate journey home from Changuimun.
- Allow extra time for stops. Choose dry conditions and avoid slippery rock, especially in winter.

RIDGE & NATIONAL PARK

Two very different mountain days

Start early. Add distance only while energy, daylight and conditions allow.

Achasan

- Start from the Ecological Park side and follow the signed route towards the fortress and viewpoints; return the same way.
- Achasan Station, Line 5, Exit 2 is about 1 km from the park; Gwangnaru Exit 1 is another approach.
- Allow roughly 2–3 hours for a modest outing. This is the PDF's editorial planning allowance, not an official route time.

Bukhansan

- Baegundae reaches 836.5 m. The official Baegundae–Ui Gugok circuit is 9.98 km, rated advanced, with a listed average of 4 hours 20 minutes.
- Give it a full day including access, rests and a safety margin. Bukhansan Ui Station is a useful starting point; the hiking centre is not the trailhead.
- Steep rock, handrails and queues can slow progress. First-time hikers should choose a lower marked route or seek guidance.

BEFORE YOU GO

Pack for the walk back down

A popular city mountain still deserves preparation.

Check the day

- Read weather, air-quality and trail-closure notices.
- Avoid exposed ridges in thunderstorms and slippery rock after rain or ice.
- Respect barriers and turn back when conditions change.

Carry the basics

- Grippy footwear, water, food, layers and rain protection.
- Charged phone, offline route, power bank and small first-aid kit.
- Torch for delays; plan to finish in daylight.

Gear & local advice

Seoul Hiking Tourism Centers operate at Bukhansan, Bugaksan and Gwanaksan. Check rental eligibility, reservations, closing days and return times at seoulhiking.or.kr. In an emergency call 119 and give the mountain, trail or rescue-marker number and your location.

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Settle. Seoul

GETTING AROUND · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Choose for the trips you make.

A card that still taps may no longer carry its old benefits. The expanded edition explains the October 2026 transition and the registration step for resident benefits.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/the-climate-card-transition

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. The Climate Card transition
2. Keep a simple backup

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Check live terms for your exact line, station and service.
- Register before relying on resident benefits.
- Plan airport and intercity ticketing separately.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 53, 54, 55, 56.

Official routes: Seoul card Q&A · K-Pass · Seoul official route map · 120 Dasan.

OCTOBER 2026 POSITION

The Climate Card transition

These dates and arrangements are reported by the PDF, whose principal transport sources were checked on 3 October 2026. Confirm current terms before buying.

Old monthly cards

- The edition says prepaid 30-day Climate Cards ended by 29 September 2026.
- Postpaid Climate Cards became ordinary transport cards on 1 October; temporary enhanced high-fuel-price discounts ended on 30 September.

Short-term cards

- The 1-, 2-, 3-, 5- and 7-day Climate Cards remain in the edition's October position.
- It describes coverage as Seoul plus Incheon Airport exit, excluding former neighbouring-city coverage. Check the exact journey.

Resident benefits

- Climate Pass adds Seoul benefits to Modu Card / K-Pass; the edition lists a Seoul youth category of 19–39.
- Foreign residents need a foreigner registration number and supported identity verification; issuer requirements also apply.

Registration matters

- Obtain a participating card and complete K-Pass registration.
- Prepaid products also need issuer registration and a refund account.
- Registered use is assessed in the same calendar month in Seoul's cited Q&A; refund timing is separate.

Verification fails?
Compare spelling and numbers with your residence record and phone account. The edition lists K-Pass support on 031-427-4415; contact the card issuer for issuer-specific problems.

CHOOSE THE JOURNEY

Keep a simple backup

A route with fewer transfers or reliable lifts may be better than the fastest route on paper.

Occasional and longer trips

- Use T-money or compatible pay-as-you-go cards for occasional journeys and maintain a sufficient balance.
- Check airport terminals, operator, fare and tickets separately.
- Build backwards from the departure deadline, allowing time for lifts, luggage, queues and traffic.

Accessible and late-night travel

- Check lift locations, long interchanges and support with the operator or 120.
- Last trains vary by line, station and day; night buses do not cover every neighbourhood.
- Keep phone battery and payment capacity for an unexpected taxi ride.

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Settle. Seoul

ACCOUNTS & APPS · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

The apps that run everyday Seoul.

Once your phone number and identity checks are working, a small set of Korean apps takes over daily life: maps, messages, taxis, shopping and dinner. Install them in the right order.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/the-apps-that-run-seoul

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Korean maps beat the global defaults
2. KakaoTalk and Naver are infrastructure
3. Coupang comes last, not first
4. Make every account recoverable

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Install only what solves a real task, from official app-store links.
- Set up identity and payment before delivery or shopping apps.
- Make every account recoverable before you depend on it.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 15, 16.

Official routes: Naver Map · KakaoMap · Kakao T · KakaoTalk · Naver & Papago · Coupang · Coupang Eats.

MAPS & GETTING AROUND

Korean maps beat the global defaults

The guide recommends a Korean mapping app for addresses, buses and walking routes. In practice that means Naver Map or KakaoMap; both offer English interfaces and far more accurate local data than international maps.

Naver Map

- The most complete English-language map for Korea: addresses, bus arrivals, subway exits and walking routes.
- Save your home and work addresses in Korean as favourites on day one.

KakaoMap

- The other trusted Korean map; some venues and bus data appear here first.
- Worth keeping alongside Naver Map when one app cannot find an address.

Kakao T

- Korea's main taxi app: set pick-up and destination in the app, pay in the app or direct to the driver.
- Removes the need to pronounce your address; check the plate number before getting in.

Do this first
Save your complete Seoul address in Korean inside your map app before you need a taxi, a delivery or emergency help.

COMMUNICATION & SEARCH

KakaoTalk and Naver are infrastructure

The guide lists KakaoTalk for messages and service notifications. Schools, landlords, clinics and delivery drivers all assume you have it.

KakaoTalk

- The default messaging app; many businesses send appointment and delivery updates through it.
- Register with your Korean number once identity verification works; add a backup email to the account.

Naver

- Korea's dominant search engine; Korean-language results here often beat global search for local questions.
- A Naver account unlocks reservations, reviews and Naver Pay; Papago, its translation tool, handles image and conversation modes.

Name check
The guide's advice: write down the exact English name shown on your passport and residence record before creating finance or government accounts. Use that same spelling in every app.

SHOPPING & FOOD

Coupang comes last, not first

The guide's rule: delivery or shopping only after identity and payment are working. Coupang and Coupang Eats need a Korean phone number, a local payment method and a precise Korean address.

Coupang

- Korea's largest online shop, with next-day Rocket Delivery on much of the catalogue.
- Set the delivery address carefully, including the building entrance code and unit number, in Korean.

Coupang Eats

- Food delivery from local restaurants; English support is limited, so the translation tools above help.
- Check the delivery fee and minimum order before assuming it beats walking to the restaurant.

Privacy check
Use official app-store links, review permissions, and avoid giving identity documents to unofficial intermediaries. Remove access from apps you stop using, especially location, contacts and identity data.

BEFORE YOU DEPEND ON THEM

Make every account recoverable

A lost phone should be inconvenient, not catastrophic. The guide's recovery checklist applies to every app on this page.

1. **Use a durable email** — Keep an address you control independently of your employer or Korean mobile plan.
2. **Add recovery methods** — Where supported, add a backup email, trusted device or recovery code.
3. **Protect your SIM** — Set a device lock and understand how your carrier replaces a lost SIM.
4. **Store key numbers elsewhere** — Keep bank, carrier, immigration and accommodation contacts outside the phone.
5. **Avoid shared logins** — Do not rely on an employer, partner or agent to control your personal accounts.

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Settle. Seoul

STUDYING IN SEOUL · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Six ways to be a student in Seoul.

New arrivals, exchange students, postgraduates, students with families, funded scholars and those working their way through a degree all settle in differently. Start with your own situation, not a generic checklist.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/studying-in-seoul

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Which student are you?
2. Keeping your GPA where the award needs it
3. The order that saves trouble
4. Where Seoul's top universities help their international students

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Your visa category decides what you may do before anything else does.
- Register with immigration within 90 days if you stay longer than 90 days.
- Ask your university's international office before asking the internet.
- Funding renews on your academic record: find the GPA and credit conditions in your award letter before the first semester ends.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 51, 52, 17.

Official routes: HiKorea · Immigration contact centre 1345 · Seoul Office of Education · University international office.

STUDYING IN SEOUL

Which student are you?

The guide's education advice is to choose by eligibility, language and daily fit. The same applies to your own student life: the right next step depends on which of these descriptions matches you.

New students from abroad

- Arriving for a full degree: your university usually guides the student-visa paperwork, but the application is yours.
- Keep the admission letter, proof of funds and passport copies together from day one.
- Read our immigration feature before booking anything: a visa in your passport is not a residence card.

Exchange students

- One or two semesters: your home university and the host office share responsibility, so confirm who handles what.
- Housing is often arranged or brokered by the host university; check what the fee actually covers.
- Shorter stays still need immigration registration if they pass 90 days.

Graduate students

- Research visas and lab or departmental funding can change what work and income are allowed.
- Your supervisor's expectations on hours matter as much as immigration's; get both in writing.
- Health insurance and dependant rules differ from undergraduate arrangements.

Students with families

- Schooling for children is a separate decision: the guide compares Korean public schools with foreign and international schools, each with its own eligibility, admissions and fees.
- Prepare previous school, health, identity and academic records early.
- Housing near a chosen school often matters more than housing near campus.

Funded students

- Scholarships such as government or university awards may restrict outside work or require a minimum enrolment.
- Keep the award letter; banks and immigration may ask for it as proof of funds.
- Confirm whether the funding covers insurance, housing and dependants before signing a lease.
- Most awards are renewed on your academic record, not just your arrival paperwork — read the GPA and credit rules in the funding block below.

Working & partially funded

- Part-time work on a student visa generally needs permission and stays within hour limits; rules vary by visa, programme and language level, so ask 1345 or immigration before starting.
- The guide's job-offer advice applies: record the employer, duties, pay and hours, and check eligibility before accepting.
- Our work feature lists realistic student jobs and where to look.
- If you are partially funded, a slipping GPA can cost you the funded share; check whether the award tops up each semester or only once.

Do this first
Write down your visa category, your funding source and your weekly hour limit (if any). Every housing, work and banking decision hangs off those three facts.

FUNDING THAT RENEWS

Keeping your GPA where the award needs it

Most scholarships and assistantships are not one-off payments; they renew each semester or year on conditions written into the award letter. The guide does not set these rules — your funding body does — so the numbers below are the questions to ask, not figures to assume. Get the answers in writing before the first semester ends.

Read the conditions first

- Find the GPA threshold in your award letter or contract — common forms are a minimum on a 4.5 or 4.3 scale, or a percentage floor.
- Check whether the rule is a per-semester GPA, a cumulative average, or both.
- Note the credit requirement too: many awards expect a full course load each term, and dropping below it can pause funding even with good grades.

Track it during the term

- Ask each professor how grades are weighted (attendance, midterms, finals, papers) and keep your own running total.
- Korean universities usually post midterm warnings; treat one as a signal, not a verdict.
- Save syllabi, graded work and correspondence — you may need them to appeal or explain a bad semester.

If grades slip

- Talk to the international office or your academic adviser before the registrar's deadline — some programmes allow retakes, grade replacements or an approved light semester.
- Check whether your award has a probation semester; many government and university schemes give one warning term before cutting funds.
- Do not hide the problem: immigration status rarely depends on GPA, but visa extensions can depend on staying enrolled, and enrolment can depend on the funding paying its share.

Related rules that touch money

- Some awards require a set number of credits completed, not just passed; failed courses may need to be retaken at your own cost.
- Work hour limits and GPA rules interact: a part-time job that eats study time can endanger the funding that pays the rent.
- Renewal paperwork usually needs enrolment certificates and transcripts — learn where your university issues them before renewal season.

Ask your funding office
What GPA and credit load must I hold to keep the award, is there a probation semester, and when is renewal decided? Three questions, in writing, before the first semester ends.

SETTLING IN AS A STUDENT

The order that saves trouble

Campus support offices solve most problems faster than official hotlines, but some steps are yours alone.

1. **Confirm your visa route** — Check with the university and immigration which student visa category applies and what it permits.
2. **Register within 90 days** — Book the immigration visit early and apply for your residence card; keep proof of every accepted filing.
3. **Set up phone and banking** — A verified Korean number and a local account unlock campus systems, delivery and part-time payroll.
4. **Sort housing and insurance** — Confirm what the university covers, then check health-insurance enrolment before the first clinic visit.
5. **Map your support network** — Save the international office, your department, 1345 and the nearest foreign-resident centre.
6. **Only then add work** — Once registration and enrolment are stable, check work permission and read our student jobs feature.

Keep evidence
Universities, immigration and banks occasionally give different answers. Record the office, date and answer, and follow the most authoritative one.

OFFICIAL SUPPORT

Where Seoul's top universities help their international students

Every question in this feature — visas, funding conditions, GPA rules, work permission, family support — has an official answer at your own university's international office. Start there before the internet. These are the official international-student support pages for six of Seoul's leading universities; if yours is not listed, search your university's name with "international office" and confirm the address ends in the university's own domain.

Seoul National University

- Office of International Affairs handles admissions, visas, scholarships and exchange support.
- Scholarship renewal conditions are published per award; ask OIA for yours in writing.

SNU Office of International Affairs →

Yonsei University

- Office of International Affairs supports degree, exchange and visiting students.
- Publishes guidance on registration, insurance and part-time work permission.

Yonsei Office of International Affairs →

Korea University

- Global Services Center is the first stop for visa, housing and enrolment letters.
- Issues the certificates and transcripts needed for funding renewal.

Korea University Global Services Center →

Hanyang University

- Office of International Affairs covers admissions, visas and scholarship queries.
- Runs orientation and buddy programmes for new arrivals.

Hanyang Office of International Affairs →

Sungkyunkwan University

- International student support sits within the university's official site.
- Confirm GPA and credit conditions for university scholarships with your department.

Sungkyunkwan University (English) →

Kyung Hee University

- Office of International Affairs advises on visas, insurance and exchange matters.
- Ask about dependant and family support if you arrived with a spouse or children.

Kyung Hee Office of International Affairs →

One habit
Bookmark your international office's page and check it at the start of every semester — deadlines for registration, scholarships and visa paperwork are posted there first.

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WORKING IN KOREA · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Part-time work that fits around a degree.

The right student job respects your visa permission, your timetable and your Korean level. Here is what is realistically available, and where to look.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/part-time-work-for-students

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Permission comes first
2. Realistic part-time work in Seoul

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Check your work permission and hour limit before applying, not after.
- Record the employer, duties, pay and hours from the original advert.
- A job that breaks your visa conditions costs far more than it pays.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 52.

Official routes: Immigration contact centre 1345 · University international office · Settle Seoul job boards — see the Jobs page.

WORKING WHILE STUDYING

Permission comes first

The guide's job-offer rule applies doubly to students: match your visa and permission to the actual duties, location and employer before accepting. Student part-time work usually needs immigration approval and stays within a weekly hour limit that varies by visa, programme and language level. Confirm your own limit with 1345 or your international office.

Before you apply

- Ask immigration or 1345 what permission your visa needs for part-time work.
- Get the hour limit in writing from your university's international office.
- Some scholarships restrict outside work; check the award terms.

Before you sign

- Keep the original advert and every version of the offer.
- Confirm salary, hours, payday and who the legal employer is.
- Resolve conflicting information in writing before starting.

Red flag
Cash-in-hand work without paperwork can breach your visa conditions. If an employer discourages a written contract, walk away.

WHAT STUDENTS ACTUALLY DO

Realistic part-time work in Seoul

These are the roles students most commonly combine with a degree. Availability depends on your Korean level, your visa permission and the semester timetable.

Language & tutoring

- Conversation tutoring and language exchange partnerships, often arranged through university boards.
- Private English or other-language lessons where your visa permits teaching.
- Campus roles: research assistance, library or international-office support.

Hospitality & retail

- Cafés, restaurants and convenience stores; Korean ability widens the options considerably.
- Evening and weekend shifts fit around lectures but check they stay inside your hour limit.
- Busy tourist districts hire more readily for language skills.

Remote & freelance

- Translation, proofreading, design or content work for clients at home or abroad.
- Check whether remote work for a foreign employer is permitted under your visa; ask before assuming.
- Keep invoices and contracts; income may still need to be declared.

Where to look
Settle Seoul's job boards list roles suited to students and newcomers in Seoul. University noticeboards, department mailing lists and the international office are the other reliable routes.

Browse student-friendly jobs →

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Settle. Seoul

GETTING AROUND

Seoul by subway, one leg at a time.

Three checks get you almost anywhere: the right station, the right direction and the right exit. Plan in KakaoMetro, check the street in a map app, and treat every transfer as part of the journey.

Online guide · Reviewed 12 October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/seoul-by-subway

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Turn a map into a journey
2. Hongik University to Gyeongbokgung
3. Read the signs, choose the train
4. One station, several decisions
5. Make the gates the easy part
6. A wrong turn is usually fixable

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

The essentials

- Match the station name and line, then the next station along your route, then the street exit.
- Plan stations in KakaoMetro; check the address and final walk in KakaoMap or Naver Map.
- Carry your own rechargeable transport card and some won cash for top-ups.

PLAN WITH KAKAOMETRO

Turn a map into a journey

Build the route before entering the gates, then read it one leg at a time. App layout and wording vary by version.

1. **Choose your stations** — Pick the Seoul metropolitan map, set your departure station as the start, then set the destination.
2. **Compare the options** — Compare shortest time with fewest transfers. A simpler change can be worth a slightly longer journey.
3. **Read every train leg** — Note the line, direction, transfer and final station. Check the selected travel day and time.
4. **Open the station details** — Look for carriage and exit information, and match the platform marker before boarding.
5. **Keep a copy, then recheck** — Save a screenshot. Run a fresh search when leaving and again for the return journey.

> **If English search is unhelpful**
> Try the Korean name or tap the map: Hongik Univ. = 홍대입구; Gyeongbokgung = 경복궁. English spellings can vary.

WORKED ROUTE

Hongik University to Gyeongbokgung

A worked example with one transfer. Use the app for the departure time and services on your travel day; distances and station layouts are not to scale.

Leg 1 · Line 2

- Board at Hongik Univ.; the next stop for this route is Sinchon.
- Seven stops via Ewha Womans Univ., Ahyeon, Chungjeongno, City Hall and Euljiro 1-ga.
- Change lines at Euljiro 3-ga.

Leg 2 · Line 3

- Follow Line 3; the next stop is Jongno 3-ga.
- Three stops via Anguk to Gyeongbokgung.
- Leave by Exit 5 for the palace, as listed in its official directions. Check opening arrangements separately.

> **Your checkpoints**
> Line 2 / Sinchon / Euljiro 3-ga / Line 3 / Exit 5.

ON THE PLATFORM

Read the signs, choose the train

Line numbers, train destinations and door markers each answer a different question.

Direction

- Use the next stop as your check: match it to the first station after your boarding point.
- A train's destination display may name a terminus much farther away.

Where to wait

- A marker such as 3-2 means the third carriage's second door. Match it on the platform.
- It is separate from your street exit number.

Check the service

- On Line 9, express trains skip stations; confirm your stop is in that train's stopping pattern.

Check the destination

- On Line 2, match the next stop on the circle.
- On branching or short-running services, check the train's destination. Line colour alone is not enough.

TRANSFERS & EXITS

One station, several decisions

Give yourself time inside large stations. The transfer walk is part of the journey. Look for 환승 (transfer) and 출구 (exit).

1. **Follow your next line** — Look for its number, name and colour together, through corridors, stairs or lifts.
2. **Check direction again** — At the new platform, compare the next stop and destination with your route.
3. **Read signs at internal gates** — Some interchanges have transfer gates. Tap when instructed; Line 9's transfer gates record the interchange without a new fare by themselves.
4. **Choose the street exit** — Find the numbered exit before leaving the concourse, then use the street map for the final walk.

> **Lifts, luggage & pushchairs**
> The quickest transfer position may lead to stairs. Follow lift signs for the whole route, including street level, and confirm current lift availability with station staff. Connecting to a bus? Tap the same card on and off: the usual transfer window is 30 minutes, 60 minutes from 21:00 to 07:00.

PAY, TAP & TRAVEL

Make the gates the easy part

The standard adult base fare is ₩1,550 with a transport card, or ₩1,650 for a single-journey ticket; longer trips and some lines cost extra (fare table effective 28 June 2025, checked 12 October 2026).

Using a Tmoney card

- Buy a physical card at a participating convenience store and add credit; card price and balance are separate.
- Each traveller carries their own card.
- Keep won cash for ordinary recharge machines and check the payment methods shown.

At the gates

- Tap once, wait for acceptance and walk through; keep other contactless cards away from the reader.
- Tap the same card to leave. If the gate will not open, use the help button or ask staff.

Single-journey tickets

- Select English and your destination at the machine.
- A ₩500 refundable deposit is added; return the card at the destination's refund machine.

2026 payment update

- Designated new machines on Lines 1–8 accept international cards for single-journey tickets and short-term Climate Cards. Fees apply.
- For ordinary Tmoney top-ups, keep won cash ready.

WHEN PLANS CHANGE

A wrong turn is usually fixable

Stop somewhere out of the flow of passengers, identify your current station, then rebuild the next step.

Wrong direction or missed stop

- Get off at the next station and search again. If changing sides means leaving the gates, ask staff first.

Train finishes early

- Leave when instructed and check the next service; some trains terminate early or serve another branch.

Balance too low

- Use the fare-adjustment or recharge machine, or ask staff. Keep the card you entered with.

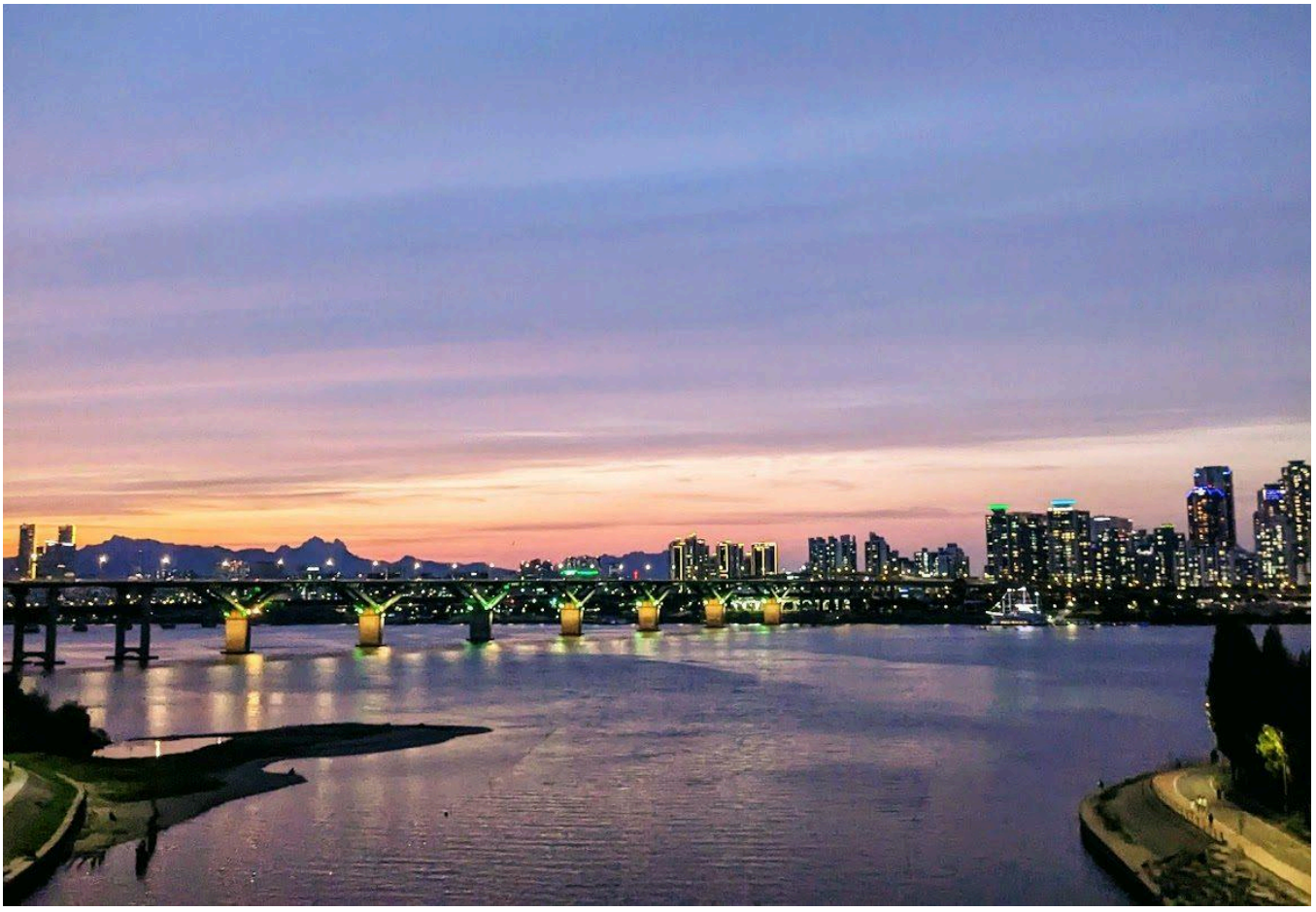
Late at night

- Search the whole journey home, including the last connection (막차, last train). Keep a taxi or night-bus alternative.

Leaving & re-entering
A limited 15-minute re-entry scheme exists on participating sections. It is not universal: ask station staff whether it applies to your card and station.

Source field guide

Subway field guide · Reviewed 12 October 2026



Settle. Seoul

GETTING AROUND

Seoul by bicycle, from first Ttareungi to riverside afternoon.

Set up the right login, understand that every ride has its own clock, and never walk away until the app confirms the return. Then start beside the river.

Online guide · Reviewed 12 October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/seoul-by-bicycle

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Three ways to get on a bike
2. Start with the right login
3. One pass, a clock for every ride
4. Check the bike, then scan and go
5. Park. Lock. Confirm.
6. Ride predictably, leave room
7. Begin beside the river
8. A different bike, a different system
9. Stop first, sort the next step

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

The essentials

- Ttareungi (Seoul Bike) suits short trips; Hangang Park shops are a separate system with their own returns.
- Each rental has its own time limit, even on a day pass.
- A temporary lock is not a return: confirm the rental has ended.

CHOOSE YOUR RENTAL

Three ways to get on a bike

The rental loop is simple: set up, ride, finish. Choose the option that fits your day.

Ttareungi / Seoul Bike

- Short city trips and flexible returns at official Seoul Bike stations.

Hangang Park rental shops

- Leisure rides, tandems and children's bikes, with different prices and return rules.

Specialist rental shop

- For a fitted road bike, e-bike or full-day tour: ask about equipment, deposits, breakdown support and returns.

GET READY TO RENT

Start with the right login

The visitor payment route and the resident member route are different. Install the official app (Seoul Bike / 서울자전거 따릉이, published by Seoul Metropolitan Government).

Visiting or using an overseas card

- Choose Foreigner on the start screen and select the language and pass offered.
- Enter an email you can access; keep the purchase email and pass code for recovery.
- The operator specifies an overseas-issued credit card, one pass per card. Each adult arranges their own access.
- At the station: mobile data, battery, Bluetooth, camera and location permissions.

Resident member account

- If you can complete the app's member verification, compare local payment options and longer passes.
- A Korean-issued card belongs in the domestic checkout, not the overseas-card visitor route.

UNDERSTAND YOUR PASS

One pass, a clock for every ride

Standard day passes (published rates, checked 12 October 2026): 1-hour ₩1,000 (up to 60 minutes per rental), 2-hour ₩2,000 (120 minutes), 3-hour ₩3,000 (180 minutes). The foreigner menu may show a different product; read its terms before paying.

How the clock works

- Rent at 10:00, return at 10:45, rent again at 11:15, return at 12:00: two 45-minute rides fit a 1-hour pass.
- A stop between properly completed rentals uses no riding time.
- The day pass expires 24 hours after the first rental; returning a bike does not restart that period.

Staying longer: member passes

- 7 days ₩3,000 / ₩4,000 · 30 days ₩5,000 / ₩7,000 (1-hour / 2-hour rides).
- 180 days ₩15,000 / ₩20,000 · 365 days ₩30,000 / ₩40,000.
- Non-members are limited to daily passes; confirm eligibility in your app.

Overtime is extra
₩200 per 5 minutes beyond the included time — 15 minutes over adds ₩600. Set a reminder early enough to reach a station and confirm the return.

AT THE STATION

Check the bike, then scan and go

Choose a bike that fits and looks ready to ride. Report a fault instead of taking it onto the path.

1. **Tyres** — Look for obvious damage or a flat.
2. **Brakes** — Squeeze both levers and test stopping gently.
3. **Chain & pedals** — Check for loose parts or a displaced chain.
4. **Saddle** — Adjust it to fit and secure the clamp firmly.
5. **Scan and unlock** — Start a rental in the app and scan the rear-wheel QR code (or enter the bike number). Wait for confirmation; never force a locked bike.
6. **Practise first** — Note the return deadline and practise a slow start and stop away from traffic.

FINISH THE RENTAL

Park. Lock. Confirm.

A bike that looks parked may still be on your rental. Check the completed return before walking away.

1. **Find an official station** — Use the app's station map. A general rack or a Hangang shop is not a Seoul Bike return point.
2. **Park neatly** — Keep entrances, tactile paving and the walking route clear.
3. **Close the lock** — Pull the QR bike's locking lever fully into place; do not force it against a spoke.
4. **Check the rental ended** — Listen for the return message and check the app. Keep the record if in doubt.

Temporary lock is still an active rental
Away from a station, locking a QR bike can put it into temporary-lock mode. For a long stop, return the bike properly first. No confirmation? Stay with the bike if safe and call support on 1599-0120; a photo does not end the rental.

ON THE PATH

Ride predictably, leave room

For a first outing, choose daylight and a short riverside ride before adding busy streets.

Where to ride

- Use a designated cycle path where available; on ordinary roads keep right.
- A normal pavement is not automatically a cycle path: follow signs and walk when unsure.
- Dismount at pedestrian crossings unless a dedicated bicycle crossing permits riding.

People come first

- In Hangang parks, ride at 20 km/h or below, much slower around people.
- Watch for children, dogs and blind corners; a bell does not give you priority.

Before you set off

- Wear a properly fitted helmet — arrange one before reaching an unattended station.
- Stop clear of the path to check your phone; ride sober; use lights after dark.
- Skip the ride in strong wind, ice, poor visibility or heavy rain.

YOUR FIRST OUTING

Begin beside the river

A suggested practice plan, not a mapped route: find a Ttareungi station near Yeouinaru in the app, walk the bike to the riverside path, ride 10–15 minutes out and back, and return to a station you already know.

Green Shade Trail · 4 km

- Seoul's suggested route from the Olympic Park area via Seongnaecheon to Jamsil Hangang Park.

Ring Ring Bike Park Tour · 9 km

- Links the Nodeul Station area, Yeouido's Saetgang and Yanghwa Hangang Park, ending near Seonyudo Station.

> **Before either route**
> Open the official route description, then check today's station availability, closures, daylight and a return point before your pass deadline.

HANGANG PARK RENTALS

A different bike, a different system

Park rental shops are separate from Ttareungi. Selected published rates (1 hour / 2 hours, checked 12 October 2026): standard bike ₩3,300 / ₩6,600; with child seat ₩5,000 / ₩10,000; adult tandem ₩6,600 / ₩13,200; family cycle for 3–4 people ₩20,000 / ₩40,000.

Rent at the shop

- Choose the bike and duration at the kiosk, enter a phone number and pay.
- Take the receipt to staff and keep it for the return.

Return to the same shop

- Other-shop returns need a qualifying, pre-arranged weekday rental.
- A Ttareungi station cannot complete this return. Some branches close in winter.

Riding with children

- Ordinary Ttareungi use is listed for ages 13 and over; age 13 requires membership.
- A separate family pass has household-verification conditions — don't assume the visitor checkout includes it.
- Never improvise a passenger seat on a single-person bike.

WHEN SOMETHING GOES WRONG

Stop first, sort the next step

Keep the bike number, station name, rental time and a screenshot ready.

Payment or QR problems

- Check you chose the right member or foreigner route, and look for an existing purchase before paying again.
- If QR won't scan, check camera, Bluetooth and location settings, or enter the bike number.

Faults and returns

- Stop riding a faulty bike and report it through the app or helpline.
- If a return isn't confirmed, check the station and lock, and contact support; a photo or temporary lock doesn't end the charge.

Accident or injury
Get to safety and help anyone injured. Call 119 for medical help and 112 for police, then notify the rental operator. Useful words: 대여 rent · 반납 return · 대여소 rental station · 고장 신고 report a fault.

Source field guide

Cycling field guide · Reviewed 12 October 2026



Settle. Seoul

EVERYDAY LIFE

Your neighbourhood starts at the community centre.

The 주민센터 is where everyday local questions, certificates and community classes begin. Find the right desk, arrive with one clear request, and find a reason to come back.

Online guide · Reviewed 13 October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/seoul-community-centres

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Three kinds of local centre
2. One neighbourhood, several kinds of help
3. Arrive with one clear request
4. Ask for the document by its exact name
5. A reason to return after the paperwork
6. You can ask for help before you visit
7. A first visit to Yongdu-dong
8. Useful Korean for a first visit

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

The essentials

- Similar English names do not mean the same powers: 주민센터, 자치회관 and foreign-resident centres do different jobs.
- Arrive with one clear request, the exact Korean document or course name, and the ID the service accepts.
- Visa extensions and status changes start with 1345 / immigration, not the community centre.

KNOW WHICH CENTRE

Three kinds of local centre

Ask, arrange, join: the three ways in. Facilities differ by location.

Neighbourhood administration · 주민센터

- Your local administrative counter and a starting point for neighbourhood enquiries.

Foreign-resident support · 외국인주민센터 / 글로벌센터

- Services aimed at international residents; check each centre's remit and languages.

Community activities · 주민자치회관

- Courses and activities, sometimes in the same building as the administrative centre.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT DESK

One neighbourhood, several kinds of help

Start with the service you need.

Everyday and paperwork

- Rubbish, special bags or bulky waste: your dong centre or district cleaning department — ask for instructions for your exact address.
- Certificates and local administrative enquiries: the civil-service counter (민원실), with the exact Korean document name.

Classes and support

- Classes and local programmes: the community-programme desk / 자치회관, which may have its own booking system.
- Welfare or family support: ask the welfare desk (복지상담); eligibility is scheme-specific.
- Multilingual guidance or Korean classes: a foreign-resident / global centre.

> **Ask for a specific referral**
> Ask staff to write down the correct office and phone number, then check its jurisdiction and appointment requirements. Immigration procedures go to 1345 / Korea Immigration Service.

YOUR FIRST VISIT

Arrive with one clear request

A short note in Korean, the right identification and a saved address make the first visit easier.

1. **Check the centre and hours** — Search your neighbourhood name + 주민센터, confirm the address on the district website and check that counter's hours; class hours can differ.
2. **Prepare a small folder** — Check accepted ID in advance; bring your residence card and/or passport as instructed, the exact request from the bank or employer, and supporting papers.

3. **Write down your goal** — For example: “I need this certificate for my employer.” Include the Korean document or course name.
4. **Ask which queue to use** — If there is a ticket machine, ask which category fits. Explain the task before completing unfamiliar forms.
5. **Check before leaving** — Review spellings and dates on issued documents, keep receipts, and confirm any next step.

> **No residence card yet?**
> Call before travelling and ask what that service accepts. A passport, application receipt or photo of a card is not automatically interchangeable with the original ID.

DOCUMENTS

Ask for the document by its exact name

“Proof of address” can mean different things. Show the requesting organisation's written instructions.

Example: 외국인등록 사실증명

- Certificate of Alien Registration. Government24 lists immigration offices and district/dong offices as channels; confirm with the office.
- Published fee ₩2,000 per copy; free online issuance. Representatives need extra papers.

Before requesting

- Which certificate, language and issue date are needed?
- Does it need address history or particular dates?
- Can this office issue it, online too, and how do you pay?

> **A move can involve more than one process**
> Ask 1345 which address-reporting obligation and deadline apply to your status. Telling the landlord or getting a certificate does not update every government record.

CLASSES & COMMUNITY LIFE

A reason to return after the paperwork

Look at the current intake, not an old poster. Key listing terms: 접수기간 application window · 교육기간 course dates · 수강료 tuition fee.

Before you book

- Can foreign residents join, do local residents have priority, and what proof is required?
- Confirm teaching language, level, total fee, equipment, cancellation terms and venue.
- If online identity verification blocks registration, ask for an in-person route.

> **Real example: Yongdu-dong**
> October–December 2026 listings included yoga, line dancing and Korean dance; registration (21–22 September) had closed. Ask about a waiting list or the next intake.

LANGUAGE SUPPORT

You can ask for help before you visit

Confirm appointments and language cover directly; ordinary call charges may apply.

120 Dasan · Seoul enquiries

- English: call 02-120, then 9, then 1. Weekdays 09:00–18:00, excluding public holidays.

1345 · Immigration

- Weekdays 09:00–22:00 (after 18:00: Korean, English, Chinese). Offers three-way interpretation for foreigner-related work with public bodies.

Foreign-resident centres

- Seoul Foreign Resident Center, 40 Dosin-ro, Yeongdeungpo-gu, 02-2229-4900.
- Dongbu Foreign Resident Center, 47-1 Muhak-ro 6-gil, Seongdong-gu, 02-2282-7974. Find others on My Seoul+.

WORKED EXAMPLE

A first visit to Yongdu-dong

용두동 주민센터, 35 Cheonho-daero 27-gil, Dongdaemun-gu · 02-2171-6022. Listed weekday hours 09:00–18:00, extended to 20:00 on the third Thursday — call to confirm which services are covered.

1. **Confirm the address** — Show your full home address and ask whether this is your responsible centre.
2. **Solve one everyday question** — Ask for your waste-collection instructions or the right department for a document.
3. **Find a reason to come back** — Ask when the next community-course registration opens and where notices appear.

SHOW THIS AT THE COUNTER

Useful Korean for a first visit

Point to the sentence you need; English meanings are functional translations.

Address and documents

- 이 주소의 관할 주민센터가 어디인가요? — Which centre is responsible for this address?
- 이 서류를 여기서 발급받을 수 있나요? — Can I get this document issued here?
- 필요한 서류가 무엇인가요? — Which documents do I need?

Programmes and help

- 외국인도 이 프로그램에 신청할 수 있나요? — Can foreign residents apply?
- 영어로 상담할 수 있나요? — Is an English consultation available?
- 다음 접수는 언제 시작하나요? — When does the next registration open?
- 담당 부서와 전화번호를 적어 주시겠어요? — Could you write down the department and phone number?

Download the local-centre visit planner →

Source field guide

Community centres field guide · Reviewed 13 October 2026



Settle. Seoul

EVERYDAY LIFE

Your district, decoded: six Seoul neighbourhoods.

Each Seoul district runs its own office, website and local services, and your address decides which immigration office you use. Here is where to go in Mapo, Yongsan, Seodaemun, Gangnam, Seongdong and Dongdaemun.

Online guide · Reviewed 13 October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/seoul-neighbourhoods

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. District office, dong centre or immigration?
2. The right office for your address
3. Mapo-gu: Hongdae, Hapjeong, Mangwon, Yeonnam, Gongdeok
4. Yongsan-gu: Itaewon, Hannam, Haebangchon, Huam, Yongsan Station
5. Seodaemun-gu: Sinchon, Yeonhui, Ewha, Hongje
6. Gangnam-gu: Gangnam Station, Yeoksam, Samseong, Apgujeong, Sinsa
7. Seongdong-gu: Seongsu, Wangsimni, Oksu, Haengdang
8. Dongdaemun-gu: Hoegi, Cheongnyangni, Yongdu, Jegi-dong, Imun

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

The essentials

- Your registered address, not your workplace, decides your immigration office.
- Mapo and Seodaemun use Seoul Southern Immigration; Yongsan, Seongdong and Gangnam the Seoul Immigration Office; Dongdaemun the Sejongno Branch.
- Use the district website for local services and My Seoul+ for foreign-resident centres.

WHICH OFFICE DOES WHAT

District office, dong centre or immigration?

Each district (구, gu) has its own office; each neighbourhood (동, dong) has a community centre.

Dong community centre · 주민센터

- Certificates, waste rules and local questions. See the community centres feature.

District office · 구청

- District services, local tax, welfare and jobs support, with an English website.

Immigration and support

- Visa, residence card and address reporting: your district's immigration office via HiKorea or 1345.
- English help, classes and counselling: a global village or foreign-resident centre (My Seoul+).

IMMIGRATION BY DISTRICT

The right office for your address

Immigration offices are assigned by registered address. Moved district? Your office may change; ask 1345 which address report applies.

Seoul Immigration Office · 서울출입국·외국인청

- Yongsan, Seongdong, Gangnam and six other districts (Gwanak, Gwangjin, Gangdong, Dongjak, Songpa, Seocho)

Seoul Immigration Office, Sejongno Branch · 세종로출장소

- Dongdaemun, Jongno, Jung, Eunpyeong, Seongbuk and other northern districts. 2–3F Seoul Global Center, 38 Jong-ro, Jongno-gu.

Seoul Southern Immigration Office · 서울남부출입국·외국인사무소

- Mapo, Seodaemun, Guro, Geumcheon, Gangseo, Yangcheon and Yeongdeungpo. 48 Magokseo 1-ro, Gangseo-gu (Magok Station, Line 5, exit 1).

DISTRICT PROFILE · 마포구

Mapo-gu: Hongdae, Hapjeong, Mangwon, Yeonnam, Gongdeok

Many newcomers live near Hongdae for universities and nightlife. Ask your dong centre for waste-collection days on your street; they differ block by block.

District office

- 212 World Cup-ro, Mapo-gu (Seongsan-dong)
- 서울특별시 마포구 월드컵로 212
- Phone: 02-3153-8114

District website →

Immigration and support

- Immigration: Seoul Southern Immigration Office
- Use My Seoul+ to find the nearest foreign-resident or global village centre and its current languages.

DISTRICT PROFILE · 용산구

Yongsan-gu: Itaewon, Hannam, Haebangchon, Huam, Yongsan Station

The most English-friendly district for everyday errands. Itaewon GVC is a good first stop for questions before visiting a dong centre.

District office

- 150 Noksapyeong-daero, Yongsan-gu (Itaewon-dong)
- 서울특별시 용산구 녹사평대로 150
- Phone: 02-2199-8780 / 8790 / 8800 (English website contacts, weekdays 09:00–18:00)

District website →

Immigration and support

- Immigration: Seoul Immigration Office
- Itaewon Global Village Center: B1, 54-14 Itaewon-ro 27ga-gil · 02-2199-8883 / 8884 / 8885. Korean classes, volunteer programmes and free legal consultations.

DISTRICT PROFILE · 서대문구

Seodaemun-gu: Sinchon, Yeonhui, Ewha, Hongje

University neighbourhood: many questions about housing, part-time work and residence reporting are best asked at your school first, then confirmed with immigration.

District office

- 248 Yeonhui-ro, Seodaemun-gu (Yeonhui-dong)
- 서울특별시 서대문구 연희로 248
- Phone: 02-330-1114 (connects to 120 Dasan)

District website →

Immigration and support

- Immigration: Seoul Southern Immigration Office
- Students at Yonsei and Ewha should start with the university's international office; use My Seoul+ for district centres.

DISTRICT PROFILE · 강남구

Gangnam-gu: Gangnam Station, Yeoksam, Samseong, Apgujeong, Sinsa

Many office workers live here. The district office has a jobs support centre (일자리통합지원센터) on 1F; ask about English help before going.

District office

- 426 Hakdong-ro, Gangnam-gu (Samseong-dong). Passport and civil-service desk (민원여권과) on 1F.
- 서울특별시 강남구 학동로 426
- Phone: 02-3423-5114 (connects to 120 Dasan)

District website →

Immigration and support

- Immigration: Seoul Immigration Office
- Gangnam Global Village Center: 5F Yeoksam 1 Culture Center, 16 Yeoksam-ro 7-gil · 02-3423-7961.

DISTRICT PROFILE · 성동구

Seongdong-gu: Seongsu, Wangsimni, Oksu, Haengdang

Seongsu and Wangsimni are popular with young professionals. The Dongbu Foreign Resident Center serves eastern Seoul, so it is close by.

District office

- 270 Gosanja-ro, Seongdong-gu (Haengdang-dong)
- 서울특별시 성동구 고산자로 270
- Phone: Check the district website for the current main number

District website →

Immigration and support

- Immigration: Seoul Immigration Office
- Dongbu Foreign Resident Center: 47-1 Muhak-ro 6-gil, Seongdong-gu · 02-2282-7974.

DISTRICT PROFILE · 동대문구

Dongdaemun-gu: Hoegi, Cheongnyangni, Yongdu, Jegi-dong, Imun

Home to Kyung Hee and Hankuk University of Foreign Studies. Immigration for this district is handled at the Sejongno Branch, not the main Seoul office.

District office

- 145 Cheonho-daero, Dongdaemun-gu (Yongdu-dong) · Yongdu Station, Line 2, exit 2
- 서울특별시 동대문구 천호대로 145
- Phone: 02-2127-4114 (connects to 120 Dasan)

District website →

Immigration and support

- Immigration: Seoul Immigration Office, Sejongno Branch
- Dongbu Foreign Resident Center (Seongdong-gu) is nearby: 02-2282-7974. See the community centres guide for a worked Yongdu-dong visit.

Source field guide

Neighbourhoods field guide · Reviewed 13 October 2026



Settle. Seoul

EVERYDAY LIFE · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Recycling in Seoul: the right waste, in the right place.

Separate food scraps, clean recyclables and general rubbish — then follow your building's collection arrangements. A small kitchen routine makes the system much easier.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed 13 October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/recycling-in-seoul

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Your building’s rules come first
2. Use the local volume-based bag
3. Food scraps are not everything from the kitchen
4. Empty, rinse, separate — then sort
5. Keep hazards out of the ordinary bins
6. Book furniture and appliance disposal before moving day
7. Sources & verification

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Ask your landlord or building manager where, when and how each waste stream is collected.
- Use the approved local bags or food-waste system — not any spare shopping bag.
- Empty containers, remove contamination and separate materials before recycling.

> Official routes: Your district office's waste service · Building management or landlord · Local community service centre · Seoul city information: 120 · Eligible appliance collection: 1599-0903.

START AT HOME

Your building's rules come first

Seoul's districts and buildings do not all use the same collection days, containers or food-waste payment system. Confirm your own address rather than copying the building next door.

1. **Find the collection point** — Ask where general rubbish, food waste, recycling and special items belong. Apartment compounds may have a shared sorting area; smaller buildings may use a designated outdoor spot.
2. **Check the timetable** — Record the permitted days and hours for each category, including holiday changes. There is no single collection timetable for all Seoul addresses.
3. **Buy the correct bags** — Ask a nearby convenience store or supermarket for your district's general-waste bags: 종량제봉투 (jongnyangje bongtu). Confirm any separate food-waste bags with your building.
4. **Set up three spaces** — Keep a small food-scrap container, a general-rubbish bin and a dry recycling area. Separate the recycling further when taking it to the collection point.

> **A useful question**
> 쓰레기는 어디에, 언제 버리나요? [sseuregineun eodie, eonje beorinayo?] — Where and when should I put out the rubbish? Show your address and ask for the building's instructions.

See a district's English disposal guide →

GENERAL RUBBISH

Use the local volume-based bag

General waste is the material left after food waste, accepted recyclables and special collections have been separated. Your district specifies the bags and disposal arrangements.

What goes here

- Used tissues, hygiene waste and other non-recyclable household rubbish belong in the approved general-waste stream.
- Packaging that cannot be cleaned sufficiently is not made recyclable just by having a recycling symbol.
- Food-waste exclusions such as bones and shells usually belong here; keep hazardous and non-combustible items separate.

What does not

- Do not mix ordinary food scraps or clean accepted recyclables into the general bag.
- Do not put batteries, fluorescent tubes or appliances in ordinary rubbish.
- Check the district's special-bag instructions for ceramics, broken glass and other non-combustible waste.

> **After a move**
> Check before using bags left over from your previous home. Buy the approved bags for your current district; do not assume another district's bags are accepted.

Read Seoul's sorting guidance →

FOOD WASTE

Food scraps are not everything from the kitchen

Use your building's designated food-waste bags, container or RFID machine. Drain excess liquid and remove packaging, cutlery and other foreign materials first.

In the food-waste stream

- Ordinary leftover rice, noodles, edible vegetable scraps and soft fruit peel generally belong in food waste.
- Remove wrappers, toothpicks and plastic; drain soup and other excess liquid before disposal.
- Follow the building's instructions for accessing and paying for an RFID food-waste machine, if provided.

Not food waste

- Meat and fish bones; shellfish and crustacean shells; eggshells.
- Hard fruit stones and nut shells; tough onion and garlic skins and corn husks.
- Tea bags, tea residue and coffee grounds. Follow a separate local collection only if one is explicitly provided.

> **Skip the shortcut**
> The 'could an animal eat it?' rule of thumb is not a complete sorting list. Check the official exclusions when an item is unclear.

Check Seoul's food-waste exclusions →

RECYCLABLES

Empty, rinse, separate — then sort

Use the categories displayed at your building's recycling point. Keep recyclables free of food and liquid; separate different materials where possible.

Clear PET drink bottles

- Empty and rinse transparent water and drink bottles; remove labels and flatten them.
- Follow the local instructions for replacing caps after flattening.
- Use the separate clear-PET stream. Coloured bottles and other plastic containers are not the same category.

Paper and cardboard

- Flatten boxes and remove tape and other non-paper attachments where possible.
- Keep paper dry and free of food contamination. Used tissues are not paper recycling.
- Milk and drink cartons may have a separate collection stream: check the labels at your collection point.

Cans and glass bottles

- Empty and rinse metal cans and glass bottles; separate removable non-matching parts.
- Use the labelled metal and glass collection areas, rather than mixing everything together.
- Broken glass, mirrors and ceramics are not bottle recycling.

Plastic packaging

- Empty and clean containers; separate detachable parts made from different materials.
- Check whether your building collects plastic films and bags separately.
- Do not assume every plastic object or mixed-material package is accepted: check the district guidance when uncertain.

Read the clear-PET separation rules →

SPECIAL ITEMS

Keep hazards out of the ordinary bins

Special waste needs the right collection route. Your district or community service centre can tell you which nearby collection point accepts the item.

Batteries and fluorescent tubes

- Use designated collection points, not general waste or mixed recycling.
- Ask building management or your community service centre where the appropriate bins are.
- Do not break tubes or dismantle batteries; seek specific handling advice for damaged or leaking items.

Broken glass and ceramics

- Never put shards in the glass-bottle recycling bin.
- Wrap sharp edges securely and warn the person handling the waste.
- Ask your district whether a special non-combustible sack is required for that material and quantity. Do not assume a regular bag is suitable.

Check special-item sorting with Seoul →

MOVING OUT

Book furniture and appliance disposal before moving day

A mattress, desk or refrigerator is not ordinary bagged rubbish. Use your district's bulky-waste service and confirm the building's placement arrangements before leaving items outside.

1. **Identify the service** — Find 대형폐기물 [daehyeong pyegimul] (bulky waste) on your district office's website. Use only the booking route or app that your district accepts.
2. **Register and pay if required** — Declare the item and size, check the fee and collection arrangements, then obtain the required sticker or booking reference. Fees vary by district and item.
3. **Label and place it correctly** — Attach or display the required identifier and follow the agreed location and date. Do not block entrances or assume unregistered items will be collected.
4. **Check the appliance alternative** — Eligible large appliances may qualify for free home collection through 1599-0903. Confirm eligibility, minimum quantities for small appliances and access requirements before booking.

> **Local example, not a citywide booking**
> The linked Gangseo-gu instructions illustrate the process. Residents elsewhere must use their own district's service. Ask Seoul city information on 120 if you need help identifying the correct office.

See bulky-waste and appliance arrangements →

SOURCES

Sources & verification · Recycling in Seoul: the right waste, in the right place

Reviewed 13 October 2026. Check the official links before relying on dates, fees or rules.

- Seoul: household waste sorting (Korean)
  https://news.seoul.go.kr/env/archives/564022
- Seoul: what is not food waste (Korean)
  https://mediahub.seoul.go.kr/archives/2004122
- Seoul: separate clear PET bottles (Korean)
  https://news.seoul.go.kr/env/archives/510080

- Jung-gu: waste disposal (English; district example)
  https://www.junggu.seoul.kr/english/content.do?cmsid=14842
- Gangseo-gu: bulky waste and appliances (Korean; district example)
  https://www.gangseo.seoul.kr/gs010204

Settle Seoul article PDF. Editorial guidance, not legal, immigration or medical advice — confirm requirements with the responsible office (1345 Immigration Contact Center, HiKorea). Photographs credited by name are by the photographer named. Corrections: support@settleseoul.com · Read online · www.settleseoul.com/downloads



Settle. Seoul

WORKING IN KOREA · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Health checks when arriving in Korea and starting work.

Know which examination to book — and avoid paying for the wrong one.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed 15 October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/health-checks-starting-work

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Is a health check required for everyone?
2. Book the correct examination
3. Prepare before you pay
4. Waiting for your residence card?
5. Collecting and submitting your results
6. Sources & verification

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Ask your employer for the exact examination name and required tests before booking.
- Confirm the clinic currently offers that examination before travelling there.
- Before paying, check four things: the correct examination, an accepted clinic, the required copies and the submission deadline.

> Official routes: Your employer or school · The designated clinic's reception · Your Office of Education (teachers) · Immigration Contact Center: 1345.

WHO NEEDS WHAT

Is a health check required for everyone?

Requirements vary. The certificate you need depends on your visa, your role and the organisation receiving it.

E-2 English teachers

- Need an employment medical certificate for the relevant immigration process.
- It must be issued by a Ministry of Justice-designated medical institution.
- The E-2 examination includes drug screening.

F-series visa holders

- Ask your employer about employment and education-office requirements separately.
- Your visa alone does not tell you which paperwork the school needs.

Other visa categories

- Requirements differ by status and employer.
- Ask the employer which examination, if any, is required — and for whom the certificate is issued.

Read Korea.net guidance →

BOOKING

Book the correct examination

Explain whether your certificate is for immigration, employment or teacher registration. A routine health screening may not meet the requirements for an E-2 teacher examination.

채용신체검사

- [chaeyong sinche geomsa] [chaeyong sinche geomsa] Employment medical examination.

원어민 교사 채용신체검사

- [woneomin gyosa chaeyong sinche geomsa] [woneomin gyosa chaeyong sinche geomsa] Native-speaking teacher employment medical examination.

마약검사

- [mayak geomsa] [mayak geomsa] Drug screening.

건강검진

- [geongang geomjin] [geongang geomjin] Health screening — a broader term that may refer to a different service.

> **Show this at the clinic**
> Show reception your employer's written instructions rather than relying on the examination name alone.

Check the current Ministry of Justice-designated clinic list on HiKorea →

BEFORE YOUR APPOINTMENT

Prepare before you pay

For E-2 examinations, recruiter guidance gives an indicative cost of ₩70,000–₩130,000, with results in roughly three days to one week. Prices and turnaround times vary.

1. **Documents** — Confirm the required identification, photographs and any employer forms.
2. **Appointment** — Ask whether you need to book ahead.
3. **Fasting** — At least eight hours is commonly requested; check whether water is allowed and follow your clinic's instructions.
4. **Medication** — Ask how to manage prescribed medication. Do not stop it yourself.
5. **Cost and copies** — Confirm the total price, collection date and number of certificates.

Read recruiter guidance on E-2 checks →

NO RESIDENCE CARD YET

Waiting for your residence card?

Ask whether you can attend using your passport. Official guidance for incoming guest English teachers lists a passport, photographs and the examination fee among the items to bring.

> **Don't postpone by default**
> Confirm the clinic's identification requirements before delaying your appointment until the card arrives.

See education-office guidance →

RESULTS

Collecting and submitting your results

Check whether your employer needs the examination completed, or the certificate delivered, by its deadline. Allow time for processing and any follow-up the clinic requests.

Originals and copies

- Ask which organisations need an original copy.
- Where sealed results are required, leave the envelope unopened.
- Request a separate personal copy if you want to read your results.

> **Settle Seoul tip**
> Before paying, confirm four things: the correct examination, an accepted clinic, the required copies and the submission deadline. A quick check with your employer can save a second appointment.

SOURCES

Sources & verification · Health checks when arriving in Korea and starting work

Reviewed 15 October 2026. Check the official links before relying on dates, fees or rules.

- Korea.net: E-2 teacher medical requirements
  https://www.korea.net/

- Korvia: E-2 medical check guidance (recruiter)
  https://www.korvia.com/
- Gyeongnam Office of Education: guest English teacher guidance
  https://www.gne.go.kr/
- HiKorea: Ministry of Justice-designated clinics for health checks (list updated 12 October 2026, Korean)
  https://www.hikorea.go.kr/board/BoardNtcDetailR.pt?BBS_SEQ=1&BBS_GB_CD=BS10&NTCCTT_SEQ=365&page=1
- Ministry of Justice (Korea Immigration Service): designated clinics notice (Korean, archived 2023 list — use HiKorea for the current list)
  https://www.immigration.go.kr/bbs/immigration/211/572724/artclView.do

> Settle Seoul article PDF. Editorial guidance, not legal, immigration or medical advice — confirm requirements with the responsible office (1345 Immigration Contact Center, HiKorea). Photographs credited by name are by the photographer named. Corrections: support@settleseoul.com · Read online · www.settleseoul.com/downloads



Settle. Seoul

LEARNING KOREAN

A little Korean goes a long way.

Start with the language you can use today.

Online guide · Reviewed 15 October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/a-little-korean-goes-a-long-way

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Start with Hangul
2. Hangul to Roman at a glance
3. Learn phrases for your actual life
4. Choose a way to learn
5. A 15-minute routine
6. Your first-month milestones
7. Use translation tools thoughtfully

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

The essentials

- Learn Hangul first — it unlocks station names, menus and dictionary searches.
- Practise phrases for situations you meet every week.
- Choose a way to learn you can keep doing consistently.

START HERE

Start with Hangul

You don't need to be fluent to make Seoul feel like home. Learning how letters combine into syllable blocks helps you recognise station names, read menus and type words into a dictionary.

> **Romanisation**
> Use it as a temporary aid. English spellings cannot capture every Korean sound, so move towards reading Korean directly.

REFERENCE

Hangul to Roman at a glance

Revised Romanisation, the system on Seoul's street and station signs. Keep the Settle Seoul bookmark beside you while you learn.

Basic vowels

- ㅏ a · ㅓ eo · ㅗ o · ㅜ u
- ㅡ eu · ㅣ i · ㅐ ae · ㅔ e

Combined & y-vowels

- ㅘ wa · ㅙ wae · ㅚ oe · ㅝ wo · ㅞ we · ㅟ wi · ㅢ ui
- ㅑ ya · ㅕ yeo · ㅛ yo · ㅠ yu · ㅒ yae · ㅖ ye

Consonants

- ㄱ g · ㄴ n · ㄷ d · ㄹ r/l · ㅁ m · ㅂ b · ㅅ s
- ㅇ ng · ㅈ j · ㅊ ch · ㅋ k · ㅌ t · ㅍ p · ㅎ h

Double consonants

- ㄲ kk · ㄸ tt · ㅃ pp · ㅆ ss · ㅉ jj
- 화이팅 [hwaiting] — Good luck!

> **Sounds change**
> Letters can sound different at the start or end of a syllable (ㄱ is often k at the end). Listen to audio as well as reading the chart.

Download the Settle Seoul Hangul bookmark (PDF) →

EVERYDAY KOREAN

Learn phrases for your actual life

Romanisation is shown in brackets. These polite expressions are useful starting points when speaking with people you don't know.

1. **안녕하세요** — [annyeonghaseyo] Hello
2. **감사합니다** — [gamsahamnida] Thank you
3. **죄송합니다** — [joesonghamnida] I'm sorry
4. **저기요** — [jeogiyo] Excuse me — to get someone's attention
5. **이거 주세요** — [igeo juseyo] This one, please
6. **얼마예요?** — [eolmayeyo?] How much is it?
7. **화장실 어디예요?** — [hwajangsil eodiyeyo?] Where is the toilet?

8. **한국어를 잘 못해요** — [hangugeoreul jal motaeyo] I don't speak Korean well
9. **천천히 말씀해 주세요** — [cheoncheonhi malsseumhae juseyo] Please speak slowly
0. **다시 말씀해 주세요** — [dasi malsseumhae juseyo] Please say that again
1. **영어 하세요?** — [yeongeo haseyo?] Do you speak English?
2. **포장해 주세요** — [pojanghae juseyo] To take away, please

WAYS TO LEARN

Choose a way to learn

The best starting point is something you can keep doing consistently.

Structured classes

- A clear sequence, regular practice and feedback.
- Look into university language centres, private schools and local programmes.

Community programmes

- Check your district office, community centre and foreign-resident support organisations.
- Eligibility and schedules vary.

Seoul Foreign Portal →

Tutoring & language exchange

- Tutoring helps with specific situations, such as workplace conversations or appointments.
- In an exchange, agree time for each language so both people benefit.

Independent study

- Combine a beginner course with audio, reading and short speaking practice.
- Talk To Me In Korean offers structured beginner lessons with audio; King Sejong Institute runs public online courses.

Talk To Me In Korean →

> **Before paying for a course**
> Check its level, teaching language, class size, location, timetable and cancellation policy.

DAILY HABIT

A 15-minute routine

Keep a small note on your phone for useful words. Review a manageable selection rather than collecting a long list you never revisit.

1. **Five minutes: review** — Go over a few words or phrases from previous days.
2. **Five minutes: listen** — Listen to a short recording and repeat it aloud.
3. **Five minutes: prepare** — Practise a sentence you expect to use that day.

FIRST MONTH

Your first-month milestones

Treat these as flexible goals. Confidence grows through repetition, and progress looks different for everyone.

1. **Week 1** — Practise Hangul and recognise your nearest station's name.
2. **Week 2** — Order a familiar drink or meal using Korean.
3. **Week 3** — Introduce yourself and ask someone a simple question.
4. **Week 4** — Repeat a familiar everyday exchange with less help from your phone.

Settle Seoul challenge
Choose one phrase, say it aloud a few times, and use it this week. A small, successful exchange is a good reason to try again.

TRANSLATION

Use translation tools thoughtfully

Translation tools can help you check words and prepare a question. For important medical, legal or contractual conversations, seek appropriate language support rather than relying entirely on automatic translation.

SOURCES

Sources & verification · A little Korean goes a long way

Reviewed 15 October 2026.

- Talk To Me In Korean (TTMIK): free and paid lessons, audio and textbooks
  https://talktomeinkorean.com/
- King Sejong Institute Foundation: public online Korean courses
  https://www.ksif.or.kr/
- Seoul Foreign Portal: classes and support for foreign residents
  https://global.seoul.go.kr/



Settle. Seoul

MONEY · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Banking & everyday payments.

Get your account, bank card, transport and shopping apps working together.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/banking-and-everyday-payments

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

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1. Banks with English-language support
2. Prepare before the branch visit
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6. When something does not work
7. Sources & verification

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Aim for one working account, one suitable debit card and reliable mobile banking.
- Make your name match exactly across bank, phone and apps.
- Add transport and app payments one service at a time.

> Official routes: Hana 1599-6111 · Shinhan 1577-8380 · Woori 1599-2288 · KB Kookmin 1599-4477 · Coupang, Kakao T and KakaoPay help centres.

YOUR SETUP

Banks with English-language support

A foreign-language support line does not mean every branch has an English-speaking employee. Call ahead and ask which nearby branch can help. These are domestic numbers; check official sites for hours.

Hana Bank · 1599-6111

- Foreign-language customer support.
- Ask about account opening, English banking, suitable debit cards and overseas transfers.

Shinhan Bank · 1577-8380

- SOL Global app includes English.
- Ask about SOL Global setup, foreign-resident accounts and eligible transport cards.

Woori Bank · 1599-2288

- Dedicated foreigner call centre; English is option 1.
- Ask about branch help, account documents and English digital banking.

KB Kookmin Bank · 1599-4477

- Foreign-language support and three-way telephone interpretation for branch visits.
- Ask about Global Star accounts and mobile banking.

> **How to choose**
> Compare support at your nearest branch, the app you will actually use, card eligibility and transfer fees. Ask your employer or university whether it works with a local branch.

OPENING YOUR ACCOUNT

Prepare before the branch visit

Treat this as a preparation checklist, not a universal document list. Requirements depend on the bank, account and your circumstances.

1. **Account access** — Your account number and how to receive salary.
2. **Limits** — Daily transfer and withdrawal limits, and the evidence needed to raise them.
3. **Card** — Active and usable for domestic online payments.
4. **Mobile banking** — You can log in and complete authentication.
5. **Transport** — Whether the card includes it and how fares are collected.
6. **Fees** — ATM, transfer, card and overseas-remittance charges.

Bring

- Passport and residence card, if issued.
- Korean address, any requested proof of address and your Korean mobile number.
- Evidence of why you need the account, such as employment or enrolment documents.
- Any tax-residency information requested.

No residence card yet?

- Ask about passport-based opening and its restrictions.
- Passport-only opening may not unlock every digital service.
- App-based opening often has different requirements from branch opening.

Opening online

- Shinhan SOL Global offers remote opening for eligible residents with Korean residence ID and a phone in your own name.
- KB's app opening requires an account at another bank — so it rarely suits a first account.

Ask for it all at once

- “I would like an everyday bank account, a debit card, mobile banking and — if I'm eligible — a postpaid transport function.”
- Enter your passwords and PINs yourself; never disclose them to a helper.

TRANSPORT

Use your bank card for buses and the subway

The transport feature is added to an eligible card, not to the bank account. Ask for 후불교통 기능 [hubul gyotong gineung] — a postpaid transport function.

1. **Ask which cards qualify** — Check which debit cards support postpaid transport for your circumstances.
2. **Apply** — Request the transport-enabled version and complete eligibility checks; an existing card may need replacing.
3. **Confirm** — Activation, collection date and any transport limit.
4. **Use it** — Tap at supported readers — and keep a backup transport option until it works.

Separate prepaid T-money card

- You load a balance before travelling.

Bank card, prepaid transport

- Uses a separate prepaid balance; money in the account is not necessarily enough.

Bank card, postpaid transport

- Fares accumulate and are collected from the linked account on the issuer's schedule.
- Approval is not automatic: issuers screen applicants and may refuse or restrict it.

Important distinctions

- Purchases and fares may leave your account at different times — keep funds for the collection date.
- A Visa or Mastercard logo alone does not confirm transit compatibility.
- It does not make your phone a transport card or enrol you in discount schemes.

> **Say this at the counter**
> 후불교통 기능이 있는 체크카드를 발급받고 싶어요. [hubul gyotong gineung-i inneun chekeukadeureul balgeupbatgo sipeoyo] — “I'd like a debit card with a postpaid transport function.”

MOBILE BANKING

Get the app working

Opening an account, enrolling in digital banking and registering a shopping-app payment are separate tasks.

Ask the bank to help you

- Install the genuine app from the official site or verified store listing.
- Complete mobile/internet banking enrolment.
- Set up its certificate, OTP or other authentication.
- Confirm your transfer limit and enable notifications.
- Find card-management support if the card issuer uses a separate app.

Identity details first

- Coupang and similar services need valid residence ID and a Korean phone in your own name.
- Names must match across bank, app and phone — spacing, letter case and order.
- If verification fails, check the registered details instead of trying new spellings.

APPS

Connect your card to Coupang, Kakao T and KakaoPay

There is no single registration that enables every Korean app. Add a payment method inside each service — a card, or a linked bank account where supported. You do not normally need both.

Coupang

- My Coupang / 마이쿠팡 → Payment methods / 결제수단 → Accounts · Cards / 계좌 · 카드 → Register / 결제수단 등록.
- Verify identity, choose card or account, authorise, set the payment PIN.
- CouPay Money is a prepaid balance, not a saved card — read any top-up authorisation.

KakaoPay

- Kakao T, KakaoPay and KakaoBank are separate services.
- KakaoTalk → More / 더보기 → pay → Settings → Money management / 머니 관리 → Linked accounts / 연결 계좌 → Link account.
- Follow ownership and withdrawal-authorisation prompts; availability depends on eligibility.

Kakao T (taxis)

- Kakao T → My info / 내 정보 → Manage payment methods / 결제수단 관리 → register a card.
- Check the selected payment method before each request; with automatic payment, check the receipt before paying the driver.
- If no card registers, General Call with direct payment may be available.

> **Menus change**
> These routes follow each company's published help pages in October 2026. Wording may change — use the official help centre if a menu has moved.

TROUBLESHOOTING

When something does not work

Ask the relevant provider to identify the cause. Avoid repeated PIN guesses or duplicate app accounts as a workaround.

Identity verification fails

- Name formatting, phone ownership, mobile-provider selection and residence details.

Card works in shops, not an app

- Activation, online-payment authentication and whether the app supports that card.

Card fails on transport

- Whether the issued card actually has an active transport function.

Transfer blocked

- Balance, transfer limit, authentication and account restrictions.

Automatic taxi payment fails

- Saved-card details, available funds and the journey's selected method.

Everyday money habits

- Know ATM and transfer fees and how to waive them.
- Update address, phone and residence details with the bank.
- Keep a small cash reserve and a backup payment method.
- Never share passwords, codes or security-card details with unexpected callers.

Settle Seoul takeaway
One working everyday account, one suitable debit card, reliable mobile banking and matched identity details. Then add transport and app payments one at a time. Sending money abroad? Read “Sending money home — and receiving it in Korea”.

SOURCES

Sources & verification · Banking & everyday payments

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  https://www.kbstar.com/
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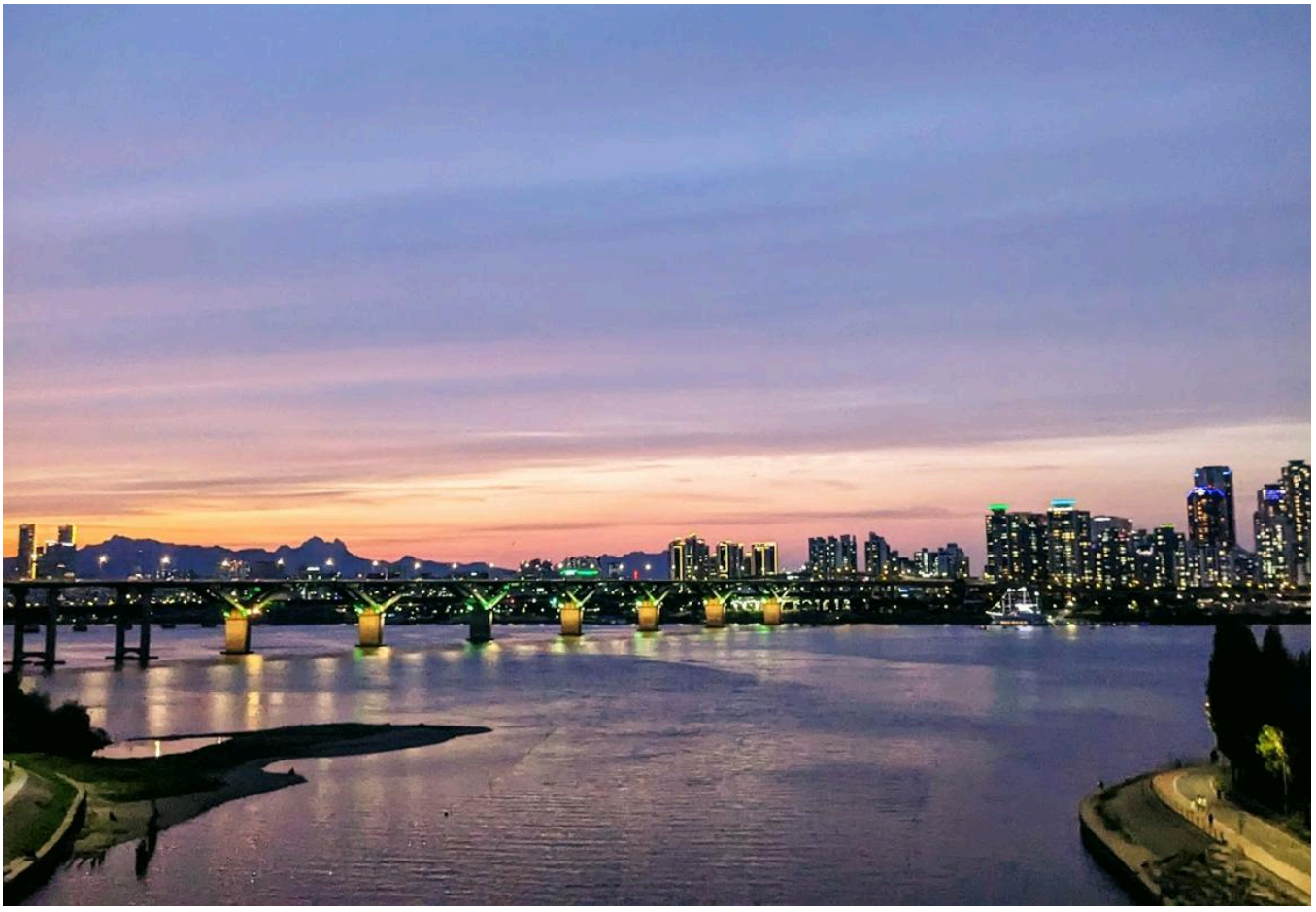

Settle. Seoul

MONEY · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Sending money home — and receiving it in Korea.

Compare the amount that arrives, not just the advertised fee.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/sending-money-home

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. Which service fits your transfer
2. Setting up SentBe
3. Wise inbound and Korean bank wires
4. What a transfer really costs
5. The less-visible cost: intermediary-bank fees
6. Limits, records and safety
7. Sources & verification

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Direction matters: a service good for sending money into Korea may not send Korean earnings out.
- Compare total outlay, recipient amount and arrival time — not the headline fee.
- Keep source-of-funds records and verify any changed bank details independently.

Official routes: SentBe help centre · Wise help centre · Your Korean bank's overseas-remittance service.

CHOOSE THE ROUTE

Which service fits your transfer

Compare three things every time: the total you pay, the amount the recipient receives and the expected arrival time.

Korean won out of Korea

- Compare SentBe and your Korean bank's overseas-remittance service.

Overseas savings into Korea

- Wise where the currency and payment method are supported, or an international bank transfer.

Large or unusual payments

- Speak to your bank or provider first about limits, documents and purpose of payment.

Recipient needs cash

- Check a provider with cash pickup for that destination, such as Western Union.

Wise and Korean won
Wise currently cannot be funded in KRW from an external Korean bank account. Holding or converting KRW inside Wise is a different function. To send a Korean salary abroad, compare a Korea-based remittance service with your bank.

SENTBE

Setting up SentBe

SentBe's published requirements include being 19 or older, a valid Korean bank account in your own name and valid identification. Verification may take up to 24 hours — allow time before an urgent first payment.

1. **Download** — Get the genuine app through SentBe's official site.
2. **Register** — Create a login and verify your mobile number.
3. **Verify** — Complete identification and enter your Korean address.
4. **Link your bank** — Select your bank, enter account details and complete verification.
5. **Wait for approval** — Only then arrange the transfer.

Verifying vs. funding

- Verifying your bank account confirms ownership.
- Funding supplies money for a particular transfer.

Virtual-account deposit

- Transfer from your banking app to the account shown, with its amount, reference and deadline.
- Current instructions give a six-hour window; follow the deadline on your transaction and never reuse old references.

Auto-debit

- Where available, approve withdrawal from your linked account with the authentication requested.

First transfer

- Choose destination, currency and payout method; add the recipient's legal name and bank details.
- Review fee, rate, recipient amount and delivery estimate; save the reference.
- A small first transfer to a new recipient is sensible, though it may carry its own fee.

WISE AND BANKS

Wise inbound and Korean bank wires

Wise suits supported routes into Korea. Your Korean bank can send abroad via its app, online banking or a branch — ask about both standard wires and lower-cost remittance products.

Wise into Korea

- Register with your actual country of residence and complete verification.
- Choose currencies, add the recipient and compare payment methods and estimates.
- Korean recipients may need to verify with Wise's partner PayGate; missing it within two working days can stop the transfer.
- Wise pays to Korean bank accounts, not virtual accounts.

Before your first bank wire

- Is overseas remittance enabled on your account?
- Does your transfer need foreign-exchange-bank designation?
- Which documents prove source and purpose of funds? (Hana, for example, may ask for prior registration and income evidence.)
- What are your limits, and can it be done in the app?

Recipient details

- Full registered name and address.
- Bank name, address and SWIFT/BIC.
- Account number or IBAN, plus local routing (UK sort code, US routing number, Australian BSB).
- Purpose, currency and reference. Never use a card number for an account number.

Receiving a wire in Korea

- Ask your bank for official incoming instructions: registered name, account, bank address, SWIFT/BIC and intermediary details.
- Confirm whether funds arrive as KRW or stay in a foreign-currency account.
- Never copy a SWIFT code from an old blog — Hana has replaced a former code after its systems integration.
- Keep proof of the payment's source and purpose.

COSTS

What a transfer really costs

There is no single international transfer fee. Costs depend on provider, destination, payment method, amount and account benefits. Published examples below are not guaranteed quotes.

Four cost components

- Transfer fee — the visible charge.
- Exchange-rate difference — the provider's rate versus another quote.
- Intermediary and receiving charges — deductions along the route.
- Funding charge — any cost of supplying the money.

Published examples

- SentBe advertises ₩2,500 Standard and ₩5,000 Express options on its customer channel.
- Hana electronic transfers: ₩3,000 plus a ₩5,000 wire fee up to US$5,000 equivalent.
- Hana branch transfers: ₩5,000–₩25,000 plus an ₩8,000 wire fee.
- Wise: use the live quote; no single percentage applies.

Illustration only: ₩2,000,000 to GBP

- SentBe-style: ₩5,000 fee, ₩1,995,000 converted at ₩1,800/£1 → £1,108.33.
- Bank-style: ₩25,000 fee, ₩1,975,000 converted at ₩1,820/£1 → £1,085.16.
- Difference £23.17 — from both fee and rate. A different quote could narrow or reverse it.

Compare fairly

- Request quotes at about the same time.
- Use the same KRW outlay, destination currency and payout method.
- Compare the final recipient amount and note any excluded charges.

HIDDEN COSTS

The less-visible cost: intermediary-bank fees

An international bank payment may pass through an intermediary bank, which — like the receiving bank — can deduct charges from the money in transit. You notice only when less arrives. Hana's own guidance confirms these charges can apply.

A reader's Hana-to-UK example

- Upfront Hana charge: ₩5,000.
- Deducted along the route: about £20 (≈ ₩36,000 at an illustrative ₩1,800/£1).
- Combined explicit charges ≈ ₩41,000, before any exchange-rate difference.
- Send £1,000 after conversion and only £980 arrives. This is one experience, not a fixed fee.

Compare with SentBe fairly

- If a SentBe quote charges ₩5,000 and guarantees the recipient amount, the explicit difference is about £20 — at identical rates.
- The saving is conditional: do not add £20 to every bank quote, or assume every app route avoids it.

Ask before sending

- “Does this quote include all intermediary and receiving-bank charges?”
- “Is the ‘recipient receives’ amount guaranteed?”
- “Can you offer a local-payout or guaranteed-amount service for this destination?”

After a deduction

- Ask your sending bank for a payment trace and charge breakdown.
- Ask the receiving bank whether it charged an incoming-payment fee.

> **Settle Seoul tip**
> Compare what actually arrives. A low advertised transfer fee can conceal a considerably higher total cost.

SAFETY

Limits, records and safety

A provider's ceiling, your bank's daily funding limit and documentation requirements are separate. Before a large transfer, ask what applies to your residency status and purpose.

1. **Supported?** — Is this country and currency supported?
2. **Correct details?** — Are the recipient's details right?
3. **Total outlay?** — What leaves my account, and what should arrive?
4. **Deductions?** — Are further charges possible?
5. **Verified?** — Is all verification complete?
6. **On time & saved?** — Does the estimate meet my deadline, and have I saved the reference?

Do

- Keep statements, payslips, transfer confirmations and recipient receipts.
- Confirm changed bank details through a known contact before paying.
- Before leaving Korea, plan account access, verification messages and outstanding card settlements.

Don't

- Split payments to avoid checks or reporting requirements.
- Treat a remittance limit as a tax-free allowance — seek cross-border tax advice for large or complex payments.
- Share your banking password or OTP.

> **Settle Seoul takeaway**
> Choose by the complete quote and the reliability of the route — not a “zero-fee” headline. Setting up your account first? Read “Banking & everyday payments”.

SOURCES

Sources & verification · Sending money home — and receiving it in Korea

Reviewed October 2026. Check the official links before relying on dates, fees or rules.

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EVERYDAY LIFE · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Shopping & setting up home.

From your first supermarket trip to furnishing your apartment.

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> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Check what your accommodation already includes before you buy anything.
- First night: only what you need tonight. First week: make the home usable.
- Measure rooms and access routes before ordering furniture.

Official routes: Daiso store finder · E-mart branch information · IKEA Korea delivery and assembly · Visit Seoul market guides.

START HERE

Where should I go?

Photograph the space, measure storage areas and ask about supplied bedding, appliances and furniture first. These are starting points, not price rankings — stock, services and value vary by branch.

Everyday needs

- Drink, quick meal or forgotten essential: GS25, 7-Eleven or a nearby convenience store.
- Cleaning tools, hangers, kitchen utensils, small storage: Daiso.
- Groceries and a bigger household shop: E-mart or a local supermarket.
- Skincare, cosmetics, haircare: Olive Young.

Home and more

- Clothing: Zara, department stores and local shops.
- Furniture: IKEA, Hanssem or online furniture retailers.
- Second-hand: Daangn and local resale shops.
- Produce and side dishes: your neighbourhood traditional market.
- Branded goods, gifts, food halls: Shinsegae, Lotte or Hyundai.

FIRST TRIPS

First night, then first week

A nearby convenience store can cover tonight's gaps. Leave the larger household shop until you have checked the apartment properly.

First evening

- Toilet paper and hand soap.
- Toothbrush, toothpaste and shower essentials.
- A towel.
- Drinking water and a simple meal.
- Bedding, if none is supplied.
- A suitable charger or adaptor.

First week

- Kitchen: bowl, plate, mug, cutlery, food container, washing-up liquid, sponge.
- Laundry: detergent for your machine, hangers, a drying solution.
- Bathroom: cleaning tools, bathmat, missing toiletries.
- Bedroom: correctly sized bedding, laundry basket.
- General: reusable bag, measuring tape, small storage.

Wait before buying

- Large storage units, a desk, extra appliances and decorative furniture — a few days in the space shows what you really need.

Rubbish bags
Check your building's waste instructions before buying rubbish or food-waste bags. Ordinary bin liners may not be the bags required for collection.

다이소 [DAISO]

Daiso: the first stop for everyday essentials

Daiso's departments cover a surprisingly wide range of everyday needs, so you may tick off several moving-in items in one visit. Stock varies by branch, size and season.

Home departments

- Kitchen: bowls, plates, mugs, cutlery, chopsticks, chopping boards, strainers.
- Food storage: containers, lunchboxes, bottles, sealing clips, zip bags.
- Cleaning: sponges, brushes, cloths, rubber gloves, lint rollers, dustpans.
- Laundry: hangers, laundry nets, pegs, baskets.
- Bathroom: shower baskets, soap dishes, drain strainers, slippers.
- Storage: drawer dividers, baskets, boxes, hooks, shoe and cable organisers.

Everything else

- Stationery and study: notebooks, pens, folders, labels, desk organisers.
- Arts and crafts, beauty and grooming, travel pouches and bottles.
- Phone stands, cables and small desk accessories.
- Sewing kits, felt furniture pads and basic tools.
- Plants, pets, gift wrap and seasonal items.

Shop efficiently

- Bring measurements for drawers, cupboards and shelves.
- Check each item's price — not everything costs the same.
- Read size, material and usage labels.
- Buy a few organisers before committing to a whole system.

> **Settle Seoul tip**
> Photograph the cupboard or awkward corner you are shopping for. It is much easier to compare products when you can see the space.

이마트 · 올리브영 [IMATEU · OLLIBEUYEONG]

Supermarkets and Olive Young

Use a larger supermarket trip for groceries, cleaning products and household supplies. Check your branch's opening hours and closure dates — not every E-mart follows the same schedule.

E-mart first visit

- Bring reusable bags.
- Compare unit prices, not just package prices.
- Check whether discounts need membership, a particular card or multiple purchases.
- Buy quantities that fit your fridge and storage.
- Plan how you will carry bulky purchases home.

Olive Young tips

- Bring a photo of a product you already use.
- Check whether it is full-size, refill, miniature or a promotional set.
- Compare the total quantity in a bundle.
- Use the domestic Korean shop for delivery within Korea.
- Start small with unfamiliar products.

Medication
For medicine or advice about a medical condition, look for a pharmacy marked 약국 [yakguk].

편의점 [PYEONUIJEOM]

Convenience stores: GS25 and 7-Eleven

Best for filling a gap today. Compare prices with supermarkets for your regular shop. Do not assume every branch is open all night or offers parcel services or seating.

Offer labels

- 1+1 — buy one qualifying item, get another.
- 2+1 — buy two qualifying items, get one more.
- 행사상품 [haengsa sangpum] — promotional item.
- Check which products qualify, and ask before mixing flavours or brands.

CLOTHES AND FURNITURE

Clothing, IKEA, Korean retailers and second-hand

Check measurements rather than relying on S, M and L, keep tags and receipts, and read return conditions before paying. For furniture, delivery and assembly are separate decisions.

1. **Measure** — The room and the access route: doorway, corridor, stairs and lift.
2. **Check the complete product** — Does the bed include a mattress? Does the wardrobe include its fittings?
3. **Confirm delivery** — To the entrance, doorstep or inside the room?
4. **Confirm assembly** — Included, optional or your responsibility?
5. **Ask about access charges** — Stairs, difficult access or specialist lifting.
6. **Check removal** — Packaging and old furniture may need separate arrangements.
7. **Read cancellation terms** — Especially for made-to-order items. Compare the delivered and assembled price, not the headline price.

이케아 [Ikea]

- Useful for comparing dimensions and coordinating bedding, lighting, kitchenware and storage.
- Offers delivery and optional assembly for eligible orders; its Korean guidance lists a ₩30,000 minimum assembly charge — confirm the current quote.

당근 [Danggeun] — Daangn

- Neighbourhood second-hand trading for desks, chairs and shelves.
- Confirm condition, measurements, collection time and who moves it.
- Inspect where practical; never pay through unfamiliar links sent in messages.

Korean retailers

- Hanssem: furniture, home furnishings and interior services.
- 오늘의집 [Oneurui jip] — Ohouse: online home shopping; delivery and installation differ by seller.

백화점 [BAEKHWAJEOM]

Department stores

Useful for comparing products in person or buying a carefully chosen gift. Check the floor directory when you arrive — food halls are often on lower floors, but layouts vary.

신세계 [Sinsegye] — Shinsegae

- Main Store near Myeongdong/Namdaemun; Gangnam branch.

롯데 [Rotde] — Lotte

- Myeongdong Main Store; other branches through its directory.

현대 [Hyeondae] — Hyundai

- The Hyundai Seoul in Yeouido; other branches through its directory.

> **Watch the building names**
> A department store, shopping mall, outlet and duty-free shop are different formats, even under the same brand. For an everyday essentials trip, start with a supermarket or household shop.

전통시장 [JEONTONG SIJANG]

Traditional markets: useful as well as enjoyable

Your nearest market may be especially good for produce and prepared side dishes. A famous market is not automatically the cheapest.

Markets to explore

- 남대문시장 [Namdaemun sijang]: clothing, accessories, household goods.
- 경동시장 [Gyeongdong sijang]: produce, ingredients, herbal-medicine area.
- 망원시장 [Mangwon sijang]: neighbourhood food shopping and snacks.
- 광장시장 [Gwangjang sijang]: market food and textiles.
- 통인시장 [Tongin sijang]: smaller Seochon market known for its lunchbox experience.
- 동묘벼룩시장 [Dongmyo byeongnyuk sijang]: second-hand clothes and vintage finds.

Shop comfortably

- Bring a reusable bag and some cash alongside your card.
- Ask whether the price is per item, pack, basket or weight.
- Confirm the total before buying.
- Ask before handling produce or taking close-up photos.
- Do not assume bargaining is expected.
- Stalls keep their own hours.

SAY IT

Useful shopping Korean

Romanisation follows Revised Romanisation, the system on Seoul's street and station signs.

At the till

- 이거 얼마예요? [igeo eolmayeyo?] — How much is this?
- 카드 돼요? [kadeu dwaeyo?] — Can I pay by card?
- 봉투 주세요. [bongtu juseyo] — A bag, please.
- 영수증 주세요. [yeongsujeung juseyo] — A receipt, please.
- 다른 사이즈 있어요? [dareun saijeu isseoyo?] — Do you have another size?

Delivery and returns

- 배송 가능해요? [baesong ganeunghaeyo?] — Is delivery available?
- 배송비가 얼마예요? [baesongbiga eolmayeyo?] — How much is delivery?
- 조립비가 포함돼 있어요? [joripbiga pohamdwae isseoyo?] — Is assembly included?
- 교환이나 환불이 가능해요? [gyohwanina hwanburi ganeunghaeyo?] — Can I exchange or return it?

> **Settle Seoul tip**
> Keep your first shopping route simple — household basics, groceries and toiletries. Furnish the rest gradually, once you know your space. Ranges, hours, delivery charges and services vary, so check the branch or product page first.

SOURCES

Sources & verification · Shopping & setting up home

Reviewed October 2026. Check the official links before relying on dates, fees or rules.

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- Olive Young (Korean shop and store finder)
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  https://www.7-eleven.co.kr/
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  https://global.lotteshopping.com/eng/main
- Hyundai Department Store branches (Korean)
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- Visit Seoul: shopping and markets (English)
  https://english.visitseoul.net/shopping

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Settle. Seoul

EVERYDAY LIFE · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Spend less, live well: smart shopping in Seoul.

Coupons, everyday discounts and smarter shopping — without buying more than you need.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/spend-less-live-well

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

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3. Make 1+1 and 2+1 offers work for you
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6. Cards, phone plans and recurring costs
7. A five-minute weekly savings routine
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THE ESSENTIALS

- A discount saves money only when it lowers the cost of something you actually need.
- Collecting a coupon and applying it are separate steps — check the final total before paying.
- Promotions, memberships and eligibility change: always check the live terms.

Official routes: Shopping & setting up home · Banking & everyday payments · Sending money home · The apps that run everyday Seoul.

COUPONS

How to find and use a coupon

Many Korean shopping sites distinguish between collecting a coupon and applying it. Seeing a discount advertised does not necessarily mean it has reduced your bill. Start with the shops you already use — you do not need dozens of apps.

A simple checkout routine

- Sign in to the retailer's official website or app.
- Look for 쿠폰 (kupon), 혜택 (hyetaek) or 이벤트 (ibenteu) — coupons, benefits or promotions.
- Select 쿠폰 받기 (kupon batgi) or 다운로드 (daunrodeu) to collect an eligible coupon.
- Read the minimum spend, expiry date and excluded products.
- Add only the items you need, then look for 쿠폰 적용 (kupon jeogyong) at checkout.
- Confirm the final amount, including delivery, before paying.

Labels worth recognising

- 할인 (harin) — discount
- 행사상품 (haengsa sangpum) — promotional item
- 최소 주문금액 (choeso jumun geumaek) — minimum order
- 최대 할인금액 (choedae harin geumaek) — maximum discount
- 사용기한 / 유효기간 (sayong gihan / yuhyo gigan) — expiry
- 신규회원 (singyu hoewon) — new member; 첫 구매 (cheot gumae) — first purchase

More labels

- 앱 전용 (aep jeonyong) — app only
- 온라인 전용 (onrain jeonyong) — online only
- 중복 사용 불가 (jungbok sayong bulga) — cannot be combined
- 무료배송 (muryo baesong) — free delivery
- 적립 (jeongnip) — earn points
- 결제금액 (gyeolje geumaek) — amount payable

Watch the cap
A “20% off” coupon capped at ₩3,000 saves only ₩3,000 on a ₩30,000 purchase — not ₩6,000. Exact menus vary; some discounts apply automatically, others must be claimed.

APPS

A few useful retailer apps

Choose a small number of apps for shops you already use. Offers change, so check the live terms rather than relying on an old screenshot.

Olive Young

- Membership, coupons, sale products and promotional sets.
- Collect eligible coupons and compare the checkout total with the single-item price.

GS25 / Our Neighbourhood GS

- Promotions, stock lookup and 나만의냉장고 (naman-ui naengjanggo) — “My Refrigerator”.
- Ask whether an eligible promotional item can be saved for later collection; check its rules and expiry.

Coupang

- Product coupons and member-specific offers.
- Collect any required coupon, then check eligibility, delivery and the final payment total.

IKEA Family

- Member offers and benefits.
- Check the current Korean membership terms and identify yourself as a member when purchasing.

If registration fails
Check whether the service needs a Korean phone in your own name or local identity verification. Guest checkout may be available, but some member benefits may not be. See “Banking & everyday payments” for matching identity details.

CONVENIENCE STORES

Make 1+1 and 2+1 offers work for you

A ₩2,000 product on 1+1 costs ₩2,000 for two — ₩1,000 each. On 2+1, ₩4,000 buys three — about ₩1,333 each. These assume identical prices and that you receive all qualifying items.

Before paying

- Check the exact products and sizes included.
- Ask whether different flavours can be combined.
- Confirm whether a membership or payment condition applies.
- Make sure you will actually use the extra items.

Useful question

- 이 상품도 행사에 포함돼요? (I sangpumdo haengsa-e pohamdwaeyo?) — “Is this item included in the promotion too?”

POINTS & SUBSCRIPTIONS

Collect points — and test any paid membership

At checkout staff may ask 적립하시겠어요? (Jeongnip hasigesseoyo?) — “Would you like to collect points?” Open an eligible membership barcode before paying. Treat points as a small extra: a cheaper product elsewhere may still win.

Membership checks

- Is it free or paid?
- How are points earned and redeemed — and do they expire?
- Does it work online, in-store or both?
- Must you activate the offer first?

Is a subscription worth it?

- Actual monthly savings − membership fee − extra spending the membership encourages.
- Example only: a ₩8,000 membership saving ₩3,000 on three planned deliveries nets just ₩1,000 — not a current price.
- Check renewal price, billing date and cancellation; set a reminder before a trial renews.

COMPARE

Avoid the free-delivery trap and compare unit prices

Basket ₩24,000, delivery ₩3,000, free delivery from ₩30,000: buying what you need costs ₩27,000; adding ₩6,000 of unneeded items costs ₩30,000. You spent ₩3,000 more for “free” delivery.

Price ÷ quantity

- 500 ml bottle at ₩8,000 = ₩1,600 per 100 ml.
- Two 300 ml bottles at ₩9,000 = ₩1,500 per 100 ml.
- The bundle is cheaper per millilitre — but only useful if you will use it.
- Apply the same check to detergent, rice, coffee and toiletries; include delivery online.

Setting up home

- Start small at Daiso; return once you know what fits.
- Compare furniture's complete cost: delivery, assembly and access charges.
- Daangn supports neighbourhood resale — inspect condition and arrange transport before agreeing to a bulky item.
- Measure first: the wrong size costs more than a missed discount.

> **Related**
> What to buy and where is covered in “Shopping & setting up home”; this guide is about buying deliberately.

BIGGER SAVINGS

Cards, phone plans and recurring costs

Before a larger purchase, check the benefits section of your existing card issuer's app and whether your mobile plan includes a membership programme. Avoid opening a new financial product just because a checkout screen advertises a discount.

Card-offer conditions

- Does your specific card qualify, and must you register?
- Is there a minimum or previous-month spend?
- Immediate discount, statement credit or later cashback?
- Does paying through another wallet affect eligibility?

Recurring costs to review

- Unused subscriptions and small-order delivery fees.
- Repeated taxi journeys that could be planned differently.
- Mobile services you do not use.
- International transfers: compare the amount that arrives — intermediary and receiving banks may deduct further charges. See “Sending money home”.

ROUTINE

A five-minute weekly savings routine

A short habit beats chasing every notification.

1. **Check** — See what is already in your fridge and cupboards.
2. **List** — Write a short shopping list.
3. **Look** — Check official offers for those items only.
4. **Compare** — Compare the final price at one or two relevant shops.
5. **Review** — Use expiring coupons or saved promotional items; ignore the rest.

Settle Seoul rule
Ask 사용할 수 있는 쿠폰이나 할인이 있나요? (Sayonghal su inneun kuponina harini innayo?) — “Are there any coupons or discounts I can use?” A discount saves money only when it lowers the cost of something you actually want or need. Promotions and eligibility change: check the current terms and final amount.

SOURCES

Sources & verification · Spend less, live well: smart shopping in Seoul

Reviewed October 2026. Check the official links before relying on dates, fees or rules.

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EVERYDAY LIFE · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Sending & receiving parcels in Korea.

Korea Post, DHL and FedEx, customs declarations and your Personal Customs Clearance Code (PCCC).

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/sending-and-receiving-parcels-in-korea

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THE ESSENTIALS

- Your PCCC (개인통관고유부호, gaein tonggwan goyu buho) is for goods coming INTO Korea — you normally don't need it to post a parcel out.
- Describe contents honestly on every customs form; gifts and used items still need a declaration.
- Postage, thresholds and PCCC rules change — check the official sites before you send or buy.

> Official routes: Your phone is your identity · Shopping & setting up home · Spend less, live well: smart shopping in Seoul · Forms & documents.

CHOOSE A SERVICE

Korea Post, DHL or FedEx?

Korea Post (우체국, ucheguk) is the national postal service and usually the cheapest way to send personal parcels. Private express couriers such as DHL Express and FedEx cost more but add door-to-door pickup and faster, time-definite delivery. Not every service runs to every country, and prices depend on actual and volumetric weight.

Korea Post

- EMS — faster tracked service for documents, gifts and urgent parcels.
- International air parcel — often cheaper than EMS for ordinary items.
- Surface parcel — slow but potentially much cheaper for heavy, non-urgent boxes (where available).
- Small packet / K-Packet — small, light eligible items.
- Use the official EMS postage & delivery time calculator (ems.epost.go.kr, English) to check price and availability; a quoted price does not guarantee the service is available.

DHL Express / FedEx

- Best for urgent original documents: degree certificates, apostilles, contracts, embassy paperwork.
- Pickup can be booked online from home or work, so you don't carry a heavy box to the post office.
- Useful when an EMS route is limited or you need higher declared-value cover.
- Usually the most expensive option — get a quote on the official site first.

> **Rule of thumb**
> Cheapest: Korea Post surface or air. Balanced: EMS. Fastest door-to-door for vital documents: DHL or FedEx.

SENDING ABROAD

Posting a parcel from Korea

You can send a parcel abroad even with very little Korean. Bring the full addresses and know what is inside.

1. **Pack** — Use a sturdy box; many post offices sell them. Don't seal items that may need inspection until you've checked the rules.
2. **Addresses** — Recipient's full name, street address, city, postcode, country and phone number — plus your Korean return address and mobile number.
3. **Choose** — Ask to compare EMS, air and surface parcel, or get a DHL/FedEx quote for urgent documents.
4. **Declare** — List contents, quantity, weight, value and purpose on the customs declaration.
5. **Pay and track** — Check the address on the receipt, keep the tracking number and follow it on the carrier's site.

At the counter
이거 해외로 보내고 싶어요 (Igeo haeoero bonaego sipeoyo) — “I want to send this overseas.” 배송비가 얼마예요? (Baesongbiga eolmayeyo?) — “How much is shipping?” 더 저렴한 방법이 있나요? (Deo jeoryeomhan bangbeobi innayo?) — “Is there a cheaper option?” 이 물건을 보낼 수 있나요? (I mulgeoneul bonael su innayo?) — “Is this item allowed?” 운송장 번호를 알려주시겠어요? (Unsongjang beonhoreul allyeojusigesseoyo?) — “Can I have the tracking number?”

PAPERWORK

Completing a customs declaration

International parcels containing goods generally need a declaration, even for gifts and used belongings. Korea Post uses CN22 (short form, certain mail items) and CN23 (detailed form, used for merchandise via EMS); couriers use their own waybill and, for goods, a commercial or pro-forma invoice.

Illustrative example only

- Contents: Used cotton T-shirts
- Quantity: 3
- Declared value: USD 30
- Weight: 0.8 kg
- Category: Gift (only if genuinely a gift)
- Country of origin: where they were actually made

Declaration rules

- Avoid vague words like “stuff”, “personal items” or “miscellaneous”.
- Give realistic values — never mark purchases as gifts to avoid tax.
- Commercial goods may need an invoice and tariff (HS) classification.
- The destination country may still charge duty even if everything was declared correctly.

YOUR CUSTOMS CODE

Getting and using a PCCC

The Personal Customs Clearance Code (개인통관고유부호, gaein tonggwan goyu buho) identifies you when personal goods enter Korea. It starts with P followed by 12 digits. Foreign residents ordering from overseas retailers should use it rather than an ARC or passport number.

How to get one

- Open the official Korea Customs PCCC portal (ecos.customs.go.kr) — an English interface is available.
- Choose new code issuance (개인통관고유부호 신규발급, singyu balgeup).
- Complete identity verification, then enter name, address, phone and email.
- Check the details match those you use when ordering.

Newcomer catch

- Online verification usually needs a Korean phone in your own name or other local authentication.
- If you've just arrived and don't have your residence card or own-name phone yet, online issuance may fail.
- Options: wait until your phone is verified, or follow the portal's guidance on applying at a customs office.
- See “Your phone is your identity”.

The official PCCC portal (since 28 August 2026)

- Services: issuance (발급, balgeup), lookup (조회, johoe), updating details (수정, sujeong), renewal (갱신, gaengsin), import history (통관내역, tonggwan naeyeok) and misuse reporting (도용 신고, doyong singo).
- New or updated codes may require one-time email verification at participating checkouts.
- Codes now have validity periods — renew within the window shown on the portal, or the code may be cancelled.
- If you spot imports you didn't make in your history, report misuse on the portal.

> **At checkout**
> Look for fields labelled PCCC, Personal Customs Clearance Code, Customs ID or 개인통관고유부호. Enter the code of the person actually receiving the goods; mismatched names or phone numbers cause delays.

RECEIVING

Post versus courier: how parcels clear customs

Postal items (Korea Post / overseas postal services) and express courier shipments (DHL, FedEx and others) clear customs through different procedures. Many low-value, straightforward items clear on the sender's information; others need you to respond.

Arriving by post

- If held, you may get a notice to file a simplified postal clearance application (국제우편물 간이통관 신청서, gukje upyeonmul gani tonggwan sincheongseo).
- Apply through UNI-PASS or the Mobile Customs app (모바일 관세청, mobail gwansecheong), following the notice.
- Have the tracking number, invoice or order confirmation, item description, shipping cost and purpose ready.
- Korea Post lists a separate customs-handling surcharge for certain taxable inbound items.

Arriving by DHL / FedEx

- Couriers handle express clearance (특송통관, teuksong tonggwan) for you.
- Expect a text, email or KakaoTalk message asking for your PCCC or invoice — confirm it is genuine via the courier's official site.
- If duty or VAT is due, the courier may pay it on your behalf and add its own handling or disbursement fee — check its current Korea fee page.
- Reply promptly so the parcel isn't held.

POSTAL CLEARANCE

Filing a simplified postal declaration

If customs holds a postal item and sends you a notice, you can usually submit the simplified clearance application online through UNI-PASS. Alternatively, the official Mobile Customs app (모바일 관세청, mobail gwansecheong) provides a postal simplified-clearance function. Follow the current instructions on your customs notice, since online menus and submission requirements can change.

1. **Enter the item** — Enter the postal item number and the arrival details from your notice.
2. **Review** — Check the retrieved shipment matches your parcel.

3. **Declare** — Complete the application: declared contents, value, shipping charges and purpose of receipt.
4. **Verify** — Complete identity verification and submit, then keep your confirmation.

> **Example form**
> Korea Customs publishes a Korean-language declaration form (customs.go.kr/download/Customs_Declaration_Form_01.pdf) showing the information required — contents, value, shipping charges, purpose and applicant details. Use the latest form or online procedure specified in your actual notice. For restricted products, commercial shipments or goods needing a formal import declaration, a licensed customs broker (관세사, gwansesa) may be necessary.

DUTY

Will I pay customs duty?

A common starting point for personal imports is a US$150 threshold, with a special US$200 limit for eligible express list-clearance shipments from the United States. Rules differ by shipping method, origin and product — these are guidelines, not a tax-free allowance.

General guidance

- Personal postal gift around US$80 — normally exempt if requirements are met.
- Personal parcel around US$200 — may be subject to duty and VAT.
- Alcohol, certain foods, supplements and restricted items — special rules apply regardless of value.
- Use Korea Customs' official overseas-purchase tax estimator before buying something expensive.

RESTRICTIONS

What causes problems

A product sold legally in Korea is not necessarily allowed in the mail. Check Korea Post or the courier's restrictions — and the destination country's — before you buy something to send.

Check before sending

- Perfume and aerosols — often barred from air mail.
- Lithium batteries, power banks and electronics.
- Food, meat, seeds and plants — quarantine rules.
- Alcohol — postal limits and destination taxes.
- Medicine and supplements — permits and quantity limits.
- Cosmetics and liquids; expensive electronics and jewellery (insurance and valuation).

PROBLEMS

Tracking, held parcels and scam messages

“Customs clearance in progress” usually just means routine processing. If it persists or a notice arrives, check recipient details, proof of value, outstanding duties and whether the contents need approval. Don't ignore a formal notice — storage, return and disposal deadlines can apply.

Beware fake messages

- Scam texts claim a parcel is held or that a fee is due.
- Check the tracking number yourself on the official Korea Post, Customs, DHL or FedEx site.
- Never pay through an unexpected link or enter card details from a text.

Helplines

- Korea Post customer service: 1588-1300
- Korea Customs enquiries: 125
- DHL and FedEx: use the contact page on their official Korea websites.

SOURCES

Sources & verification · Sending & receiving parcels in Korea

Reviewed October 2026. Check the official links before relying on dates, fees or rules.

- Korea Post (English)
  https://www.epost.go.kr/main.retrieveMainPage.comm
- Korea Post EMS: postage & delivery time calculator (English)
  https://ems.epost.go.kr/front.EmsDeliveryDelivery09.postal?langtype=en
- Korea Customs Service (English)
  https://www.customs.go.kr/english/main.do
- Korea Customs Service: official PCCC portal (English available)
  https://ecos.customs.go.kr/ecp/index.do
- Korea Customs UNI-PASS (clearance, tracking)
  https://unipass.customs.go.kr/
- Korea Customs: sample customs declaration form (Korean, PDF)
  https://www.customs.go.kr/download/Customs_Declaration_Form_01.pdf
- DHL Express Korea
  https://www.dhl.com/kr-en/home.html
- FedEx Korea
  https://www.fedex.com/en-kr/home.html

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Settle. Seoul

EVERYDAY LIFE · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Volunteer in Seoul: make Seoul yours, give something back.

Grassroots groups welcoming English speakers, official 1365 programmes, and what to check before you sign up.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/volunteering-in-seoul

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. PLUR: Sunday evenings at Seoul Station
2. Other groups and programmes
3. Official directories
4. Getting started with 1365
5. Visa, language and safeguarding
6. Sources & verification

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Grassroots groups like PLUR need only a Meetup sign-up; official programmes usually use the 1365 portal.
- Volunteering is not automatically outside visa rules — ask Immigration on 1345 before regular, work-like commitments.
- Schedules change: always confirm the organiser's current listing before you travel.

Official routes: Community · Seoul Foreign Portal · Visas · Learning Korean.

FEATURED GROUP

PLUR: Sunday evenings at Seoul Station

Founded around 2010 by international residents, PLUR (Peace, Love, Unity, Respect) is a non-religious, non-political volunteer community. Korean and international volunteers prepare and hand out food to people experiencing homelessness around Seoul Station. First-timers are welcome and children may attend with adult supervision.

At a glance

- When: Sundays, 7:00 PM (food packing listed from about 6:25 PM).
- Duration: around 90 minutes.
- Meeting point: Seoul Station, Exit 2.
- Contribution: ₩10,000 requested, which funds the food.
- Bring comfortable walking shoes.

Good to know

- Details come from PLUR's current listings — check the event before attending.
- Little or no Korean needed.
- An independent Meetup event — don't assume it provides official 1365 volunteer hours.

MORE PLACES

Other groups and programmes

Choose by cause, location and how much time you have. Each organiser sets its own schedule and rules.

Korea International Volunteers

- Homeless outreach — food preparation, cooking, cleaning and serving at shelters around Seoul.
- October 2026 listings included sessions near Garak Market and Yeongdeungpo stations.
- Register for each event through Meetup.

Share with Homeless — Volunteer Seoul

- Mixed Korean and international group handing out food, drinks and donated clothing around Yeongdeungpo Station.
- Sunday sessions roughly every two weeks, usually 5–6 PM; ₩10,000 contribution requested.
- Welcomes first-timers and families.

Seongbuk Global Village Center

- Recruits foreign residents for programme preparation and participant support.
- Autumn 2026 sessions ran Fridays 9:30–11:30 AM, with two hours eligible for 1365 recognition.
- Needs a valid visa and a 1365 account; check spaces remain.

Beautiful Store (아름다운가게, Areumdaun Gage)

- Charity retail and reuse: sorting donations, shop help and occasional office or translation support.
- Short- and longer-term pathways, depending on branch.
- A good fit for a regular commitment.

FIND MORE

Official directories

These portals list opportunities across the city. Most are Korean-first, so a translation app helps.

Where to look

- 1365 Volunteer Portal — national directory; search by city (서울특별시, Seoul teukbyeolsi), district, category or date. Participating organisations register completed hours.
- Seoul Volunteer Center — the city's coordination body for local, environmental and specialist projects.
- Seoul Donghaeng — projects for university students and young people; check eligibility and Korean requirements.
- Seoul Foreign Portal — local centres periodically recruit foreign-resident volunteers, including the Global BARO Volunteer Corps (watch for future intakes).

REGISTERING

Getting started with 1365

Community groups usually just need you to sign up on their Meetup page. Official programmes may ask you to register on 1365 (자원봉사, jawon bongsa — volunteering). Seoul publishes an English registration guide.

1. **Create an account** — Visit 1365.go.kr and sign up.
2. **Verify** — Complete identity verification and your profile. This may need a Korean phone in your own name, so new arrivals may have to wait.
3. **Search** — Choose Seoul, then narrow by district or category.
4. **Check** — Read eligibility, location, language needs and deadline.
5. **Apply** — Wait for the organiser's confirmation before attending.
6. **Record** — After an eligible activity, check your account for registered hours.

BEFORE YOU COMMIT

Visa, language and safeguarding

A little preparation keeps volunteering rewarding for you and respectful for the people you help.

Checklist

- Visa: unpaid activity isn't exempt from every immigration restriction — payments, benefits in kind and work-like roles matter. Ask 1345 if unsure.
- Language: international groups suit English speakers; local government programmes may expect conversational Korean.
- Dignity: respect people's privacy and never photograph anyone without permission.
- Screening: roles with children or vulnerable people may require checks or training.
- Hours: if official volunteer hours matter to you, ask in advance.

> **Useful phrase**
> 봉사하고 싶어요 (Bongsahago sipeoyo) — “I'd like to volunteer.” 영어로 참여할 수 있나요? (Yeongeoro chamyeohal su innayo?) — “Can I take part in English?”

SOURCES

Sources & verification · Volunteer in Seoul: make Seoul yours, give something back

Reviewed October 2026. Check the official links before relying on dates, fees or rules.

- PLUR Seoul (Facebook group)
  https://www.facebook.com/groups/1432791873704382/
- PLUR Seoul (Meetup events)
  https://www.meetup.com/volunteer-for-plur-seoul-sunday-walk-to-feed-homeless/
- Korea International Volunteers (Meetup)
  https://www.meetup.com/volunteers/
- Korea International Volunteers (Facebook)
  https://www.facebook.com/groups/koreavolunteers/
- Beautiful Store (아름다운가게)
  https://www.beautifulstore.org/
- 1365 Volunteer Portal
  https://www.1365.go.kr/
- Seoul Volunteer Center
  https://volunteer.seoul.go.kr/
- Seoul Foreign Portal
  https://global.seoul.go.kr/

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WORK & MONEY

Registering a business in Seoul.

Which visas let you run a business, how the D-8 investor and OASIS startup routes work, and the tax office's registration form translated line by line.

Contents

1. Two different permissions
2. Which statuses can, can't, or need permission
3. D-8-1: corporate investor
4. OASIS and the D-8-4 startup visa
5. What to bring and what to decide
6. The registration form, translated
7. Your first-year obligations
8. Sources & verification

THE ESSENTIALS

- A business registration certificate (사업자등록증) is a tax registration. It does not give you permission to run a business, and the tax office does not check your visa.
- Check your visa first. Call Immigration on 1345 before you register, sign a lease or take payment.
- Investors usually use D-8-1 (₩100 million or more under the Foreign Investment Promotion Act). Tech founders usually use D-8-4 through OASIS points.
- The registration form is in Korean. Use the line-by-line translation below and take your residence card, passport and lease to your district tax office (세무서).

> Official routes: /forms · /guide · /tools.

START HERE

Two different permissions

Running a business in Korea involves two separate offices that don't check each other's decisions.

Immigration decides whether your status of stay allows business activity. **The tax office** registers the business so it can issue invoices and pay VAT and income tax. A tax office will usually issue a certificate to anyone with a residence card and a valid business address. Holding that certificate doesn't make the activity legal under your visa.

The gap catches people out. In 2021 *The Korea Times* reported that some F-2-7 holders, who had registered businesses at tax offices under earlier guidance, were turned away at immigration renewals. Some were told the businesses should not have been allowed. Get your status confirmed in writing, or by noting the date and adviser of a 1345 call, before you commit money.

> **Before anything else**
> Ask Immigration (1345, English available) whether your exact status and sub-code allow you to run this kind of business, and whether you need permission for activities outside your status (체류자격외 활동허가).

VISA CHECK

Which statuses can, can't, or need permission

This is a general map, not legal advice. Sub-codes, conditions and policy change, so confirm your own case.

Generally allows business activity

- F-5 permanent residence.
- F-6 marriage migrant.
- F-2 residence statuses, including F-2-7 points-based. Policy on business activity has changed before, so confirm before registering.
- F-4 overseas Korean. Most business is allowed, with listed exceptions such as some simple-labour and speculative activities.

Restricted: usually not allowed without permission

- E-2 teaching and E-7 professional: your permitted activity is your sponsored job. A side business or freelance income is usually outside your status.
- D-2/D-4 students: part-time work needs its own permission. Running a business is generally not permitted.
- D-10-1 job-seeking: for looking for work, not running a business.
- C-3/visa-free visitors: no business activity in Korea. Short business meetings are not the same as operating a business.

Visa pathways on Settle Seoul →

Business visas

- D-8-1 corporate investor: you invest and run a foreign-invested company.
- D-8-4 technology startup: you found a technology-based corporation.
- D-8-4(S) Startup Korea Special Visa: you're recommended by the Ministry of SMEs and Startups.
- D-10-2 startup preparation: you're preparing a technology startup, usually on the way to D-8-4.

INVESTOR ROUTE

D-8-1: corporate investor

The best-known route for foreign founders who bring capital from abroad.

1. **Report the investment** — File a foreign investment report (외국인투자신고) with a foreign-exchange bank or KOTRA's Invest KOREA before remitting funds.
2. **Remit and incorporate** — Send the capital from abroad, incorporate the company at the court registry (법인설립등기), then register the company with the tax office.
3. **Register as foreign-invested** — Complete foreign-invested company registration once the investment is paid in.
4. **Apply for D-8-1** — Apply at immigration or a Korean consulate with the registration documents. KOTRA's 2026 Visa Guide lists the current documents.

InvestKOREA describes the corporate investor visa as available to a foreigner who **brings ₩100 million or more in investment funds from abroad** and sets up and runs a company under the Foreign Investment Promotion Act (외국인투자촉진법). The money is usually remitted through a foreign-exchange

bank and reported as foreign direct investment. The company then registers as a foreign-invested company (외국인투자기업 등록) with KOTRA or the bank.

Plan for more than the minimum. Rent, deposits, staff and professional fees come on top, and immigration looks at whether the business is real and operating when you extend.

> **Free help**
> KOTRA's Foreign Investment Consulting Center and Invest KOREA offer free consultations in English. Use them before paying a broker.

STARTUP ROUTE

OASIS and the D-8-4 startup visa

OASIS (Overall Assistance for Start-up Immigration System) is the government-designated training programme that earns points towards D-8-4.

Typical D-8-4 documents (per OASIS)

- Application form and passport.
- Degree certificate.
- OASIS certificates showing 60+ points.
- Corporate registration documents.
- Patent, utility-model or design registration or application.

Where to start

- OASIS · KIPA, 131 Teheran-ro, Gangnam-gu · oasis@kipa.org · 02-3459-2850.
- Seoul Global Center: business consultations for foreign residents.
- K-Startup portal (k-startup.go.kr) for Startup Korea visa rounds.

D-8-4 is for founders of a **technology-based corporation**. The Korea Immigration Service overview says applicants need **a bachelor's degree or higher from abroad**, an associate degree or higher from Korea, or a recommendation from a central government agency. They also need intellectual property rights or equivalent technology.

OASIS is run by Global Start-up Immigration Centers designated by the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of SMEs and Startups. They include the Korea Invention Promotion Association (KIPA), the Korea Productivity Center, the Seoul Business Agency and Seoul Global Center. Its courses cover intellectual property, starting a business and mentoring. According to OASIS, you need **at least 60 points that include at least one required item**, usually a registered or filed patent, utility model or design, plus an established corporation.

D-10-2 lets you stay while you prepare. OASIS describes it as issued in six-month periods and extendable. The Startup Korea Special Visa, D-8-4(S), launched in November 2024. It replaces the points test with a business evaluation and a recommendation from the Ministry of SMEs and Startups. Applications open in recruitment rounds, so check the K-Startup portal for current dates.

AT THE TAX OFFICE

What to bring and what to decide

If your status allows it, registering a sole proprietorship (개인사업자) is usually done in one visit to the tax office for your business address. You can also apply on Hometax if your identity verification works.

Bring

- Residence card (외국인등록증) and passport.
- Lease for the business premises (임대차계약서), or proof you own them.
- A permit or licence if your trade needs one, such as food service, academies (학원) or travel agencies.
- Any immigration document showing your business activity is permitted.

Common problems

- Many residential leases and goshiwon rooms don't allow business registration. Ask the landlord and check the building use.
- Hometax login needs a certificate or phone verification in your own name. Name-order mismatches often block it, so go in person.
- Shared offices must provide a lease or occupancy agreement in your name.

Forms & Documents library →

Decide beforehand

- Business name (상호).
- Business type and items (업태/종목), which set your industry code.
- General or simplified VAT taxpayer (일반/간이과세자). Simplified status depends on expected turnover and industry.
- Whether you register alone or as joint owners (공동사업자).

FIELD BY FIELD

The registration form, translated

The application form for individuals (사업자등록신청서, 개인사업자용) is an annex form to the Enforcement Rules of the Value-Added Tax Act. Below is each section in order. Tax offices may hand you a newer layout, but the fields are largely the same.

1. 인적사항: Personal details

- 상호 (단체명): business name you will trade under.
- 성명 (대표자): your name as on your residence card.
- 주민등록번호: resident registration number. Foreigners enter the 외국인등록번호 from their residence card.
- 전화번호 (사업장 / 자택 / 휴대전화): business, home and mobile phone.
- FAX 번호: fax number, optional.
- 사업장 (단체) 소재지: full address of the business premises, including unit number.

2. 사업장 현황: Business details

- 업종: type of business. 주업태 is main business type, 주종목 is main items or services, 주업종 코드 is the industry code.
- 부업태 / 부종목 / 부업종 코드: secondary business type, items and code, if any.
- 사이버몰 명칭 / 도메인: online store name and web address, if you sell online.
- 개업일: start date of business.
- 종업원 수: number of employees.

Premises and lease (임대차 명세)

- 사업장구분: premises type. 자가 면적 is owned area and 타가 면적 is rented area, both in ㎡.
- 사업장을 빌려준 사람 (임대인): landlord's name or company name, business registration number and resident or company number.
- 임대차 계약기간: lease period, from and to.
- (전세) 보증금 / 월세: deposit, or jeonse deposit, and monthly rent in won.

Licences and funding

- 허가 등 사업 여부: does the business need 신고 (report), 등록 (registration), 허가 (permit) or 해당 없음 (none)?
- 주류면허: alcohol licence. Give the 면허번호 (licence number) and tick 면허신청 (applying) 여 or 부, meaning yes or no.
- 개별소비세 해당 여부: subject to individual consumption tax? Options are 제조 (manufacture), 판매 (sale), 입장 (admission) or 유흥 (entertainment).
- 사업자금 명세: business funding. 자기자금 is own funds and 타인자금 is borrowed funds, including the deposit.

Tax options and contact

- 사업자단위과세 적용 신고 여부: register multiple premises as one taxpayer? Usually 부 (no).
- 간이과세 적용 신고 여부: apply for simplified VAT status? 여 (yes) or 부 (no).
- 전자세금계산서 회원가입 신청 여부: sign up for e-tax invoices, with a user ID.
- 전자우편주소: email address. 국세정보 수신동의 means you consent to receive NTS tax information.

Other requests (그 밖의 신청사항)

- 확정일자 신청 여부: request a fixed-date stamp on your commercial lease, which protects your deposit.
- 공동사업자 신청 여부: registering as joint owners? Attach the partnership agreement.
- 사업장소 외 송달장소 신청 여부: use a separate address for tax mail?
- 양도자의 사업자등록번호: seller's registration number, only if you're taking over an existing business.
- Sign by hand (자필 서명). The form warns that the information is kept permanently and used to check tax compliance.

> **Source of this translation**
> Field names come from the official annex form published on law.go.kr. The English is Settle Seoul's own working translation, not an official one. Ask the tax office if a field on your copy differs.

AFTER REGISTERING

Your first-year obligations

Once you have a certificate, you have tax filing obligations whether or not you make money.

Keep on top of

- VAT returns: general taxpayers usually file twice a year (January and July). Simplified taxpayers file once a year.
- Comprehensive income tax every May for sole proprietors.
- Tell the tax office if you close, move or change business (휴업/폐업/정정 신고).
- Tell immigration about any change that affects your status, such as a new business, closure or a new address.

Compare with employed take-home pay →

Where to get help in English

- NTS English helpline via 126 (press the option for foreign languages).
- Seoul Global Center: free tax, legal and business consultations.
- Your district's foreign-resident desk, where one exists.
- A licensed tax accountant (세무사) for bookkeeping once you have revenue.

SOURCES

Sources & verification · Registering a business in Seoul

Reviewed 1 November 2026. Check the official links before relying on dates, fees or rules.

- National Tax Service (English)
  https://www.nts.go.kr/english/main.do
- Hometax (홈택스) online registration
  https://www.hometax.go.kr/
- Business registration application, annex form (law.go.kr)
  https://www.law.go.kr/flDownload.do?flSeq=61505583&gubun=
- OASIS · Global Start-up Immigration Center
  https://www.oasis-kipa.kr/eng/
- OASIS · D-8-4 and D-10-2 visa documents
  https://www.oasis-kipa.kr/eng/visas.html
- Korea Immigration Service · OASIS programme overview (Korean)
  https://www.immigration.go.kr/bbs/immigration/211/486280/download.do
- InvestKOREA · Visas by status of stay
  https://www.investkorea.org/ik-en/cntnts/i-358/web.do
- KOTRA · 2026 Visa Guide for Investing in Korea
  https://openknowledge.kotra.or.kr/handle/2014.oak/33899
- Ministry of SMEs and Startups · Startup Korea Special Visa
  https://mss.go.kr/site/eng/ex/bbs/View.do?bcIdx=1054489&cbIdx=244
- HiKorea · Immigration application forms
  https://www.hikorea.go.kr/board/BoardApplicationListR.pt?locale=EN

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WORK & MONEY

D-8, OASIS and Startup Korea visas, explained.

The three main ways to found a company in Korea, in plain language, and the immigration application form translated field by field.

Contents

1. Three routes, one visa family
2. D-8-1 in plain language
3. OASIS and D-8-4 in plain language
4. Startup Korea Special Visa, D-8-4(S)
5. The Integrated Application Form, translated
6. Once you hold a D-8
7. Sources & verification

THE ESSENTIALS

- D-8 is the business visa family. D-8-1 is for investors who bring at least ₩100 million. D-8-4 is for technology founders.
- OASIS is a free government training programme. Its courses earn the points (60 or more) that D-8-4 usually needs.
- The Startup Korea Special Visa, D-8-4(S), swaps the points test for a business evaluation and a Ministry of SMEs and Startups recommendation. It opens in rounds.
- Inside Korea, every change or extension uses the same Integrated Application Form (통합신청서). It's translated field by field below.

> Official routes: /forms · /guide · /articles/registering-a-business-in-seoul.

THE BIG PICTURE

Three routes, one visa family

Most foreign founders end up on a D-8 visa. The sub-code depends on what you bring: money, technology, or a selected business plan.

Choose D-8-1 if

- You can remit at least ₩100 million from abroad.
- You want to run a foreign-invested company in any lawful industry.
- You don't have patents or a technology product.

Choose D-8-4 if

- You have a bachelor's degree (or a Korean associate degree).
- Your business is built on technology you can file a patent, utility model or design for.
- You can spend a few months on OASIS courses.

Try D-8-4(S) if

- You have a strong technology startup but lack a degree or points.
- You can pitch to an evaluation panel.
- A recruitment round is open on K-Startup.

D-8-1 (corporate investor) is about capital. You invest ₩100 million or more from abroad and run the company that receives it.

D-8-4 (technology startup) is about ideas. You found a technology-based corporation and prove it with intellectual property and training points, usually earned through OASIS.

D-8-4(S) (Startup Korea Special Visa) is about selection. A government panel evaluates your plan; if recommended, you skip the degree and points rules.

D-10-2 (startup preparation) is the waiting room. It lets you stay while you earn OASIS points or prepare the company.

INVESTOR

D-8-1 in plain language

Bring money, make it a company, show it's real.

1. **Report the investment** — File a foreign investment report (외국인투자신고) with a foreign-exchange bank or Invest KOREA before sending money.
2. **Send the money** — Remit at least ₩100 million from abroad. Cash carried in or money already in Korea generally doesn't count.
3. **Set up the company** — Incorporate at the court registry, register with the tax office, then register as a foreign-invested company.
4. **Apply** — Apply at a Korean consulate (visa) or immigration office (change of status) with the documents in KOTRA's current Visa Guide.

> **At renewal**
> Immigration checks that the business is operating: office, sales, tax filings, sometimes staff. A paper company with the money withdrawn is a common reason for refusal.

STARTUP

OASIS and D-8-4 in plain language

OASIS stands for Overall Assistance for Start-up Immigration System. Think of it as a points course run by government-designated centres.

Typical D-8-4 documents (per OASIS)

- Integrated Application Form and passport.
- Residence card, if you have one.
- Degree certificate (apostilled or consular-confirmed).
- OASIS certificates showing 60+ points.
- Corporate registration certificate and business registration certificate.
- Patent, utility model or design registration or application.
- Proof of business premises.

Where OASIS runs

- KIPA, 131 Teheran-ro, Gangnam-gu · oasis@kipa.org · 02-3459-2850.
- Seoul Global Center and Seoul Business Agency programmes.
- Other designated centres; the OASIS site lists current courses.

According to OASIS, you need **at least 60 points including at least one required item**. Required items are typically a registered or filed patent, utility model or design. Other points come from courses on intellectual property and starting a business, mentoring, and startup competitions. Courses are free, and some run in English.

You also need a degree: a bachelor's or higher from abroad, or an associate degree or higher from Korea, unless a central government agency recommends you. And you must have set up a corporation (법인), not a sole proprietorship.

If your current visa ends while you're still collecting points, OASIS describes D-10-2 as a six-month startup-preparation status that can be extended.

SPECIAL VISA

Startup Korea Special Visa, D-8-4(S)

Launched by the Ministry of SMEs and Startups in November 2024 for founders of technology startups who don't fit the points model.

Before you apply

- Check the open round and its deadline on K-Startup.
- Prepare a business plan focused on technology and growth in Korea.
- Confirm whether the round accepts applicants still abroad.

Don't assume

- That recommendation equals a visa. Immigration still decides.
- That the evaluation is in English. Check the announcement.
- That past round rules still apply.

Instead of degree and OASIS points, applicants go through a **business evaluation**. If the panel recommends you, the Ministry's recommendation supports a D-8-4 application at immigration.

Recruitment happens in rounds announced on the K-Startup portal and the Ministry's site. Eligibility details, such as team composition, technology focus and documents, are set in each announcement, so read the current one rather than relying on older summaries.

FIELD BY FIELD

The Integrated Application Form, translated

Inside Korea, a change of status to D-8 or D-10, an extension or a new residence card all use the Integrated Application Form (통합신청서), annex form No. 34 of the Immigration Act Enforcement Rules. It's printed in Korean and English; here's what each part asks. Applying from abroad uses the separate Visa Application Form (사증발급신청서).

1. 신청 업무: Type of application

- 외국인 등록 · Foreign resident registration: your first residence card.
- 체류기간 연장허가 · Extension of sojourn period: renew D-8 or D-10-2.
- 체류자격 변경허가 · Change of status of sojourn: e.g. D-10-2 → D-8-4, or D-2 → D-10-2. Write the 신청 자격 (status applied for).
- 체류자격 부여 · Granting of status: for people born in Korea or who lost another status.
- 체류자격 외 활동허가 · Engage in activities not covered by status.
- 근무처 변경·추가 · Change or addition of workplace.
- 재입국허가 · Re-entry permit; 체류지 변경신고 · Change of address; 등록사항 변경신고 · Change of registration information.

2. 인적사항: Personal details

- 성 Surname / 명 Given names: exactly as in your passport.
- 생년월일 Date of birth, 성별 Sex (남 M / 여 F), 국적 Nationality.
- 외국인등록번호 Foreign resident registration number, if you have one.
- 여권 번호 Passport No., 여권 발급일자 Issue date, 여권 유효기간 Expiry date.

3. 주소·연락처: Address and contact

- 대한민국 내 주소 Address in Korea.
- 전화 번호 Telephone No. and 휴대 전화 Cell phone No.
- 본국 주소 Address in home country, with 전화 번호 phone number.
- 전자우편 E-mail.

4. 근무처: Workplace

- 원 근무처 Current workplace and 사업자등록번호 its business registration number.
- 예정 근무처 New workplace: for D-8, your own company, with its registration number.
- 직업 Occupation, e.g. company representative (대표).
- 연 소득금액 Annual income, in ten-thousand-won units (만원) on recent versions.

5. 기타: Other

- 재입국 신청 기간 Intended period of re-entry: only if applying for a re-entry permit.
- 반환용 계좌번호 Refund account No.: for refunding fees if refused.
- 신청일 Date of application and 신청인 서명 또는 인 Signature or seal.
- The back page (공용란, For official use) is for immigration staff. Leave it blank.

> **About this translation**
> The English labels follow the form's own printed English; explanations are Settle Seoul's. Download the current form from HiKorea, as layouts change. Many applications must be booked in advance at hikorea.go.kr.

NEXT STEPS

Once you hold a D-8

The visa is the start. Immigration renews it only if the company keeps operating.

Keep

- Tax filings (VAT and corporate tax) up to date.
- Lease and office evidence.
- Records of sales, contracts and staff.
- Your address and company details current with immigration.

Free help

- Immigration Contact Center: 1345 (English).
- Invest KOREA and KOTRA foreign investment consultations.
- Seoul Global Center business consultations.
- OASIS centres for D-8-4 mentoring.

Registering a business in Seoul: tax office steps and form →

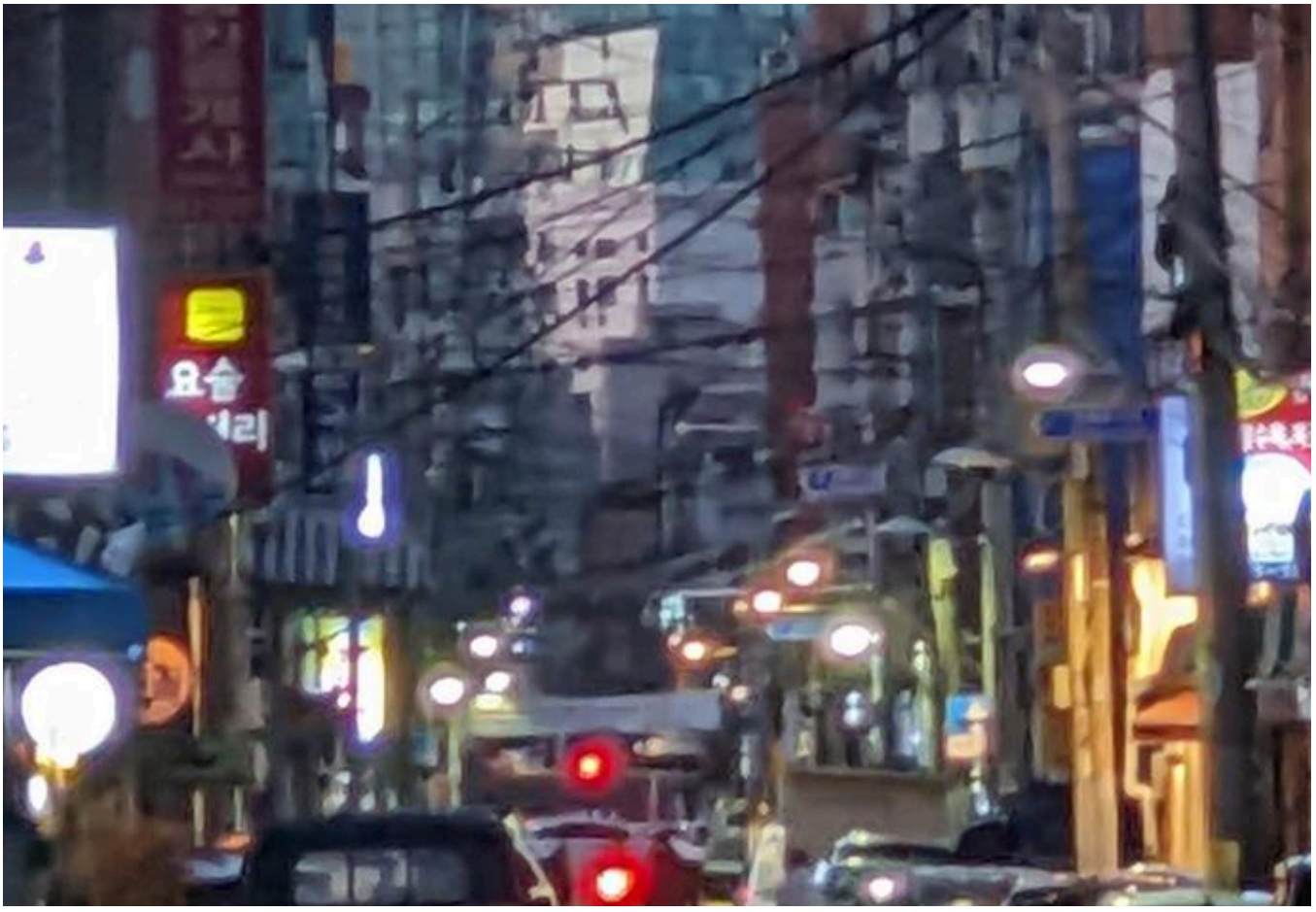
SOURCES

Sources & verification · D-8, OASIS and Startup Korea visas, explained

Reviewed 10 November 2026. Check the official links before relying on dates, fees or rules.

- OASIS · Global Start-up Immigration Center
  https://www.oasis-kipa.kr/eng/
- OASIS · D-8-4 and D-10-2 visa documents
  https://www.oasis-kipa.kr/eng/visas.html
- Ministry of SMEs and Startups · Startup Korea Special Visa
  https://mss.go.kr/site/eng/ex/bbs/View.do?bcIdx=1054489&cbIdx=244
- K-Startup portal
  https://www.k-startup.go.kr/
- InvestKOREA · Visas by status of stay
  https://www.investkorea.org/ik-en/cntnts/i-358/web.do
- KOTRA · 2026 Visa Guide for Investing in Korea
  https://openknowledge.kotra.or.kr/handle/2014.oak/33899
- HiKorea · Immigration application forms (Integrated Application Form)
  https://www.hikorea.go.kr/board/BoardApplicationListR.pt?locale=EN
- Immigration Act Enforcement Rules, annex forms (law.go.kr)
  https://www.law.go.kr/LSW/lsBylInfoPLinkR.do?lsiSeq=&lsNm=%EC%B6%9C%EC%9E%85%EA%B5%AD%EA%B4%80%EB%A6%AC%EB%B2%95+%EC%8B%9C%ED%96%89%EA%B7%9C%EC%B9%99&bylNo=0034&bylBrNo=00&bylCls=BF

Settle Seoul article PDF. Editorial guidance, not legal, immigration or medical advice — confirm requirements with the responsible office (1345 Immigration Contact Center, HiKorea). Photographs credited by name are by the photographer named. Corrections: support@settleseoul.com · Read online · www.settleseoul.com/downloads



Settle. Seoul

GETTING AROUND · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Custom photo transport cards: a fun first-day option.

Some kiosks print a rechargeable transport card with your own photo or design. They are a souvenir and a practical card — but they arrive with no balance, and terms change.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed 15 October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/custom-transport-cards

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. NAMANE Card: transit plus prepaid payment
2. Photo T-money kiosks
3. Sources & verification

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- A custom card costs more than a plain transport card and carries no starting balance — top it up before travelling.
- Check the operator's official kiosk list on the day; locations, hours and prices change.
- Keep a plain T-money card or cash as a backup if a kiosk is closed or out of service.

Official routes: NAMANE kiosk locations · Seoul subway fares · 120 Dasan.

OPTION A

NAMANE Card: transit plus prepaid payment

NAMANE is a prepaid card that its operator says works for public transport and for offline payments, managed through an English-language app. It is a separate product from T-money; check that it suits each journey you plan.

1. **Before you fly** — Install the NAMANE app and prepare your image so the design step is quick.
2. **At the kiosk** — Choose 'Design a Card', scan the QR code, design, then scan your saved code.
3. **Pay and collect** — Pay ₩7,000 (exact cash, or card) and wait for printing.
4. **Load it** — Add credit before entering the gates — the card starts empty.

Cost and printing

- The official kiosk guide lists a custom card at ₩7,000 each (store prices and discounts vary).
- Design the front with your own image and text on the site opened from the kiosk QR code, then scan the saved code.
- Printing takes about 20–30 seconds, or 80–90 seconds on newer kiosks.

Where to find kiosks

- The official list includes CU stores in Incheon Airport T1 and T2, Gimpo Airport, Seoul Station, Hongik Univ. Station and Myeongdong.
- Some sites have limited hours; check the list before relying on one.

Paying and topping up

- Kiosks accept cash, domestic or international debit/credit cards, or a NAMANE coupon.
- Cash change is not returned — insert the exact amount.
- Use the NAMANE app to check balance and history and to recharge; confirm top-up methods in the app.

Vouchers
The operator's store sells vouchers it says are valid for one year and redeemable at kiosks. Settle Seoul has no affiliate arrangement; buy only from official or reputable sellers.

OPTION B

Photo T-money kiosks

Photo-print kiosks that produce T-money-compatible cards have operated in tourist areas such as Myeongdong and Hongdae, usually in convenience stores, Daiso branches or stations.

What to expect

- You typically scan a QR code, upload an image from your phone, position it and print the card on the spot.
- Cards come unloaded; top up at a station machine or convenience store.
- Kiosk operators, prices and locations vary — we could not confirm an official current list, so check at the kiosk before paying.

> **Keep it simple**
> A plain T-money card from a convenience store does the same transit job. Choose a custom card only if the design matters to you.

SOURCES

Sources & verification · Custom photo transport cards: a fun first-day option

Reviewed 15 October 2026. Check the official links before relying on dates, fees or rules.

- NAMANE: buying a card at a kiosk (official, English)
  http://en.namanecard.com/service-manual-101
- NAMANE: kiosk locations (official, English)
  http://en.namanecard.com/namanekiosk-list
- NAMANE Store: card and voucher details (official)
  https://store.namanecard.com/en/product/namane-card-full-type-30-off-bfe29d1d-16bd-431d-a778-d4996e7eb396

Settle Seoul article PDF. Editorial guidance, not legal, immigration or medical advice — confirm requirements with the responsible office (1345 Immigration Contact Center, HiKorea). Photographs credited by name are by the photographer named. Corrections: support@settleseoul.com · Read online · www.settleseoul.com/downloads



Illustrative · school induction, not an identified institution.

JOBS & VISAS · COMPLETE STANDALONE GUIDE

The Complete E-2 Teaching Visa Guide: Arrival, Your First Year & Renewal.

From accepting the offer through the second teaching year — what teachers and schools must do and what changes after your contract

Online-only · Reviewed 17 October 2026

Read the online guide →

> Independent preparation guidance, not legal advice. Immigration 1345 and Labour 1350 determine the appropriate next steps for your case.

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. What E-2 authorises — and what it does not
2. Evaluate the offer, then negotiate in writing
3. The new-applicant document file
4. From the airport to your first school day
5. Registration, address and everyday systems
6. School versus teacher: who does what?
7. Your first-year timeline
8. What happens after year one?
9. Contract completion: money, documents and keys
10. Problems at school: protect yourself with evidence
11. The questions teachers ask at renewal
12. Korean glossary and your two essential phone calls
13. A · Renew at the same school
14. B · Move to another eligible E-2 school
15. C · Finish with no new employer
16. D · Closure, early dismissal or dispute
17. Official sources & verification

The essentials

- Your contract and immigration-authorised stay have separate expiry dates.
- E-2 workplace changes generally use a 15-day report — not E-9 prior permission.
- Plan renewal, transfer or departure before the sponsored job ends.

> The four next-year paths are reproduced in full. Tick boxes on your own copy; these pages are not official government forms.

What E-2 authorises — and what it does not

E-2 is a foreign-language teaching status, not general permission to work in Korea. The school, teaching activity and authorised place of work matter. An offer, visa issuance and residence permission are separate stages.

Eligibility comes before travel

- For the usual native-language teacher route, immigration checks nationality, native-language qualifications, an eligible university degree and the sponsoring institution. For English, the standard route commonly covers citizens of Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, the UK and the US; nationality alone does not establish eligibility.
- Education history, a degree from a different country, dual nationality and special programme routes can change the document assessment. Confirm your exact E-2 category through the Visa Portal, consulate and 1345 rather than assuming a recruiter's approval is final.
- Teach only the authorised foreign-language activity at eligible institutions and declared or authorised workplaces. Private tutoring, extra teaching at another academy or unrelated paid work is not automatically permitted; confirm the separate process before accepting it.

Two dates, two different meanings

- The employment contract fixes employment dates and agreed terms. Immigration sets the allowed period of stay. A signed twelve-month contract does not extend a residence card or grant workplace permission.
- Record contract start/end, passport expiry and allowed-stay expiry separately. The residence card is evidence of status, not a promise that employment can end without immigration consequences.

Route	Who hires / places you	What to confirm
Private academy (hagwon / 학원)	An individual academy or its employing business	Exact legal employer, registered teaching site, working hours, housing and immigration sponsorship documents. A recruiter is not necessarily your employer.
Public school via EPIK	EPIK recruits; an education office employs/places teachers under its programme contract	Spring 2027 programme requirements, placement and orientation instructions, co-teaching arrangements and the issuing education office. Do not copy a hagwon checklist blindly.

Sources · reviewed 17 October 2026: E2 · VISA · HIKOREA

Evaluate the offer, then negotiate in writing

Compare the whole working week and the whole cost of living, not just the headline salary. Ask for the complete contract and resolve unclear terms before you resign, book travel or hand over original documents.

Pay, hours and the classroom

- Ask whether the salary is gross or net, the pay date, the hourly/overtime calculation and every proposed deduction. Request an example itemised payslip; do not confuse pension, insurance and tax with a recruiter's "take-home" estimate.
- Write down teaching periods per week and the length of each period, total on-site hours, break time, paid planning, meetings, camps, weekend events and any split shifts. "30 classes" is not necessarily 30 clock hours.
- Ask who supplies books and curriculum, whether lesson preparation is inside paid working time, which ages and class sizes you will teach, and whether observation or demonstration lessons are expected.

Leave, housing and benefits

- Confirm how annual leave is scheduled, how national holidays and school closures are handled, and which labour protections apply to the actual workplace. Employer size, service length and employment arrangements can affect entitlements; a printed clause is not proof it is lawful.
- For employer housing, record the address or standard, furnishings, utilities, maintenance charges, deposit, deductions, repairs and move-out obligations. Ask what happens if housing is unsuitable or the job ends early.
- Confirm health-insurance enrolment, pension coverage and nationality/treaty eligibility, employer contributions, airfare payment or reimbursement, settlement allowances and early-exit terms. Do not assume every nationality receives a pension refund.
- Ask about probation, termination notice, repayment clauses and transfer cooperation. Automatic penalties or deductions can be unlawful; take questionable clauses to 1350 or a qualified adviser instead of accepting them as standard.

Keep in your folder

- ☐ Full contract and legal employer confirmed
- ☐ Gross salary, pay date and itemised deductions explained
- ☐ Teaching periods and total working hours written down
- ☐ Leave, holidays, housing and early-exit questions answered
- ☐ Benefits and nationality-dependent pension checked

Sources · reviewed 17 October 2026: LABOUR · NHIS · NPS · TAX

The new-applicant document file

This is a preparation matrix, not a universal consulate checklist. Get the current list from the sponsoring school and the Korean mission handling your nationality and residence. Ask who keeps each original and retain scans and courier records.



Illustrative · not an actual institution or official form.

Authentication and timing

- Begin national criminal-record and degree authentication early. Apostille/legalisation routes, accepted issuers, document validity periods and translations vary. Do not substitute a local police check for a required national check without confirmation.
- The employer typically supplies institutional documents for issuance confirmation; the teacher then follows the consulate's visa application process. Issuance confirmation is not itself permission to enter and teach.
- Keep names and dates consistent across passport, degree, criminal check, contract and forms. Confirm whether originals, authenticated copies or certified immigration-held copies are accepted at each stage.

EPIK Spring 2027 is a programme checklist

- EPIK's required-document guidance is updated for Spring 2027 (July 2026). It adds programme materials such as sealed transcripts, two recommendation letters, the programme application and qualification evidence. These are not all universal E-2 requirements.
- EPIK generally requires a 100-hour-or-more TEFL/TESOL/CELTA certificate where the qualifying education-degree/teaching-licence exemption does not apply. Placement-specific practicum requirements may differ; check EPIK's current qualification guidance.
- UK and Australian applicants must check EPIK's birth-certificate and related country-specific instructions. Do not tell all E-2 applicants from every country to obtain a birth certificate.
- In-country EPIK applicants should check the used-document rules. Eligible prior E-2 degree/criminal-check records may be replaced by certified copies from the original-holding authority; hagwon immigration copies need the itemised receipt. EPIK also asks for an Entry & Departure Certificate covering records from birth, both sides of the valid residence card and the initial Visa Grant Notice if still available. An absence over 90 consecutive days since the prior document submission invalidates this reuse route. Other required programme records still apply.

Document	Teacher	School / programme	When / verify
Passport and photos	Valid passport; recent photos to specified size	Check identity matches contract	Before application; passport validity, size and photo count with consulate/HiKorea
Degree	Degree and accepted apostille/legalisation or authenticated copy	Confirm eligibility and submission route	Start early; issuer, country and copy/original rules
National criminal-background check	Obtain required national check and authentication	Confirm acceptable document	Before issuance; freshness and nationality-specific requirements
Signed employment agreement	Read and keep a signed complete copy	Supply signed contract identifying employer/site	Before issuance; duties, term and employer match
Visa application / issuance confirmation	Complete consulate form; submit fee and required originals	Provide confirmation/application support as applicable	Before travel; mission jurisdiction, procedure and confirmation validity
Institution documents	Keep the sponsor's contact and legal name	Academy registration/licence, business registration and other required school documents	Employer's issuance stage; exact E-2 institution requirements
Medical / health check	Complete self-health statement and required examination at accepted provider	Explain programme and immigration examination arrangements	As instructed, often after arrival for registration; health forms/provider/expiry differ
EPIK extras — programme only	Sealed transcripts, references, qualification evidence and country-specific records	EPIK / education office specifies pack	Spring 2027 current instructions; used-document rules for in-country applicants

Sources · reviewed 17 October 2026: VISA · E2 · EPIK · USED · COUNTRY · QUALIFICATION

From the airport to your first school day

The following is a recommended induction agenda. Good onboarding is not the same thing as a statutory entitlement; confirm contractual support and programme instructions separately.

Travel and employer housing

- Before flying, confirm the entry visa, address in Hangul, emergency contact, airport meeting point, transfer cost and what happens after a delayed flight. EPIK arrivals must follow the programme's orientation and transfer instructions.
- Photograph accommodation condition, furniture, meter readings and any damage before unpacking. Test locks, heating, hot water and smoke alarms; ask who pays utilities and reports repairs. Keep an accepted proof-of-residence route ready.
- Carry a temporary phone connection and enough accessible money for transport, food and the period before payday. Never pack the only copies of essential documents in checked baggage.

A practical first-day agenda

- Meet the director, co-teacher, administrator and emergency/safeguarding lead. Get a named contact for timetable, payroll, immigration, housing and classroom concerns.
- Walk through curriculum, books, lesson aims, assessment, class ages and sizes, teaching periods and breaks. Confirm the planning timetable, printing, classroom technology and access to materials.
- Observe an agreed class; clarify whether the Korean co-teacher manages translation, behaviour, attendance or parent communication. Do not assume one person handles everything.
- Ask for attendance and absence procedures, authorised child handoff, dismissal/bus routines, safeguarding escalation, medical emergencies and rules for photos or messaging children. Clarify who communicates with parents and through which approved channel.
- Agree the first week's lesson expectations, feedback meeting and where to record hours. Raise a mismatch between the offer and reality promptly in writing.

Sources · reviewed 17 October 2026: EPIK · HIKOREA

Registration, address and everyday systems

For a stay above 90 days, foreign registration generally must be completed within 90 days of entry. Make the appointment early; a reservation alone is not a completed filing. Special entry/status cases can have different timing.

Prepare the registration visit

- Use HiKorea to check the responsible office, reserve if required, and obtain the current E-2 registration list. Typical preparation includes passport, application, photo, accepted accommodation evidence, employer documents, required medical results and the current fee.
- Employer housing may need a confirmation of accommodation plus the provider's identification and supporting lease or ownership evidence. Ask immigration which combination it accepts, rather than arriving with only a recruiter's address message.
- The school can organise help or an authorised representative where allowed. The teacher must still verify the filing, receipt, correct address, card details and allowed-stay date. Ask about collection/delivery and keep the application acknowledgement.

After moving or starting payroll

- Registered foreign residents generally report a new place of stay within 15 days of moving. A school's internal update or a housing lease report does not replace your immigration address report.
- Open a bank account using the branch's identification and purpose-of-account requirements; arrange payroll timing if the residence card is still pending. Link the phone subscription to the correct legal name when identity verification becomes available.
- Ask payroll for written health-insurance and pension registration details, employee/employer contributions, applicable nationality exclusions and tax withholding. Save payslips; insurance eligibility and pension refunds are separate questions.
- Check the first payment against the contract and actual hours, not just a bank deposit. Resolve missing enrolment or unexplained deductions with the relevant agency and 1350.

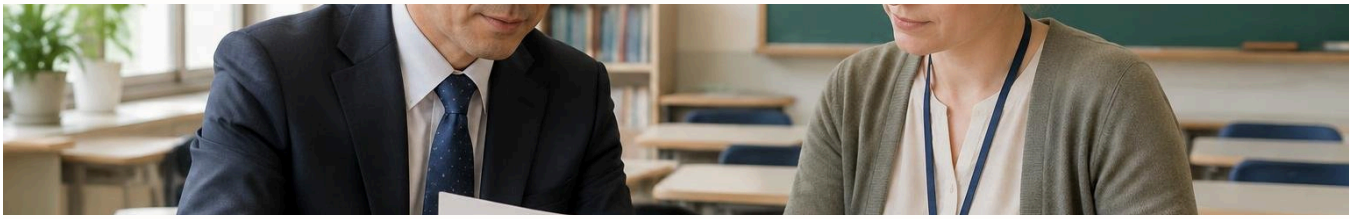
Keep in your folder

- ☐ HiKorea filing requirements and office checked
- ☐ Registration filed within applicable deadline and receipt retained
- ☐ Employer housing proof accepted
- ☐ Residence card and allowed-stay expiry checked
- ☐ Bank, phone and payroll records matched
- ☐ Address report filed within 15 days after any move

Sources · reviewed 17 October 2026: E2 · HIKOREA · NHIS · NPS · TAX

School versus teacher: who does what?

The employer provides institutional support; immigration decides status. Neither a director's promise nor a new employment contract legally extends your stay. Keep acknowledgements for your own filings and the school's separate reports.



Illustrative · not an actual institution or official form.

Separate notifications, separate accountability

- The employer generally must report reportable employment changes, including employment ending, within 15 days. The teacher's E-2 workplace-change report is a separate obligation; one party's report is not automatically the other's filing.
- For transfers and extensions, ask exactly who submits which form, on what date and by which authority. Authorised assistance does not remove the need to verify approval or acceptance.
- Contractual housing, leave and duties must be assessed alongside applicable labour law. Immigration acceptance of a contract is not a ruling that every clause is lawful.

Task	School / education office	Teacher
Initial immigration documents	Provide eligible institution/business documents and signed contract; support lawful sponsorship	Supply personal records, follow consulate route and verify entry/work status
Registration / renewal	Provide current employer documents; assist where authorised	Check deadline, make/verify actual filing and retain result; only immigration grants extension
End / workplace change	File its own reportable employment-end/change notification generally within 15 days	File required E-2 workplace-change report generally within 15 days; confirm early-end case and stay
Pay / statutory deductions	Pay agreed lawful wages; itemise authorised deductions and remit applicable contributions	Keep payslips, hours and bank receipts; query errors and check coverage
Paid leave / accommodation	Meet applicable law and agreed contract; explain leave scheduling and housing obligations	Request/record leave, protect property and keep housing inspection and deposit evidence
Tax / certificates	Withhold/remit as required; provide payroll/tax and employment records	Check tax treatment, retain certificates and complete personal obligations where required
Safeguarding / teaching duties	Set lawful policies, training, supervision and approved communication	Follow authorised duties and safeguarding procedures; report concerns promptly
Contract evidence	Provide signed copies and written changes	Keep independent copies; never rely only on a verbal assurance

Sources · reviewed 17 October 2026: E2 · ANSWER · HIKOREA · LABOUR · TAX · EMPLOYER

Your first-year timeline

Count from entry and employment start separately. This planner is recommended administration, not a promise of a particular immigration deadline or a twelve-month permission period.



Illustrative planner · use your actual immigration dates.

A monthly record habit

- Save the signed contract and amendments, timetable and actual hours, payslip, salary receipt, leave requests/approvals, insurance/pension records and important employer messages each month.
- Keep passport and residence-card expiry, address and registered workplace in the front of your folder. Back up scans securely and never put sensitive records into public community posts.
- At months 9–10, discuss the next contract and check the real allowed-stay date. Do not wait for the final teaching day to discover that the immigration deadline came earlier.

When	Actions	Record
Days 0–7	Confirm safe housing, transfer, school induction, timetable and medical/registration route	Housing photos, signed contract, contact sheet and visa/entry record
Days 7–30	Complete required health check; prepare/file registration as instructed; arrange phone, bank and payroll	Appointment/filing receipts, medical result, proof of housing
By day 90	For stays over 90 days, verify registration completed within applicable 90-day entry deadline	Residence-card details, filing evidence and authorised-stay expiry
Months 3–6	Review teaching workload, deductions, coverage and leave; report any address change promptly	Monthly payslips, hours, contributions and leave records
Months 9–10	Choose next-year path; check extension window, new employer eligibility or gap/departure plan	Written offer/contract and immigration questions
Months 11–12	File extension/transfer steps when required; agree final-pay and housing handover plan	Filing results, exit/transfer evidence, pay and handover checklist

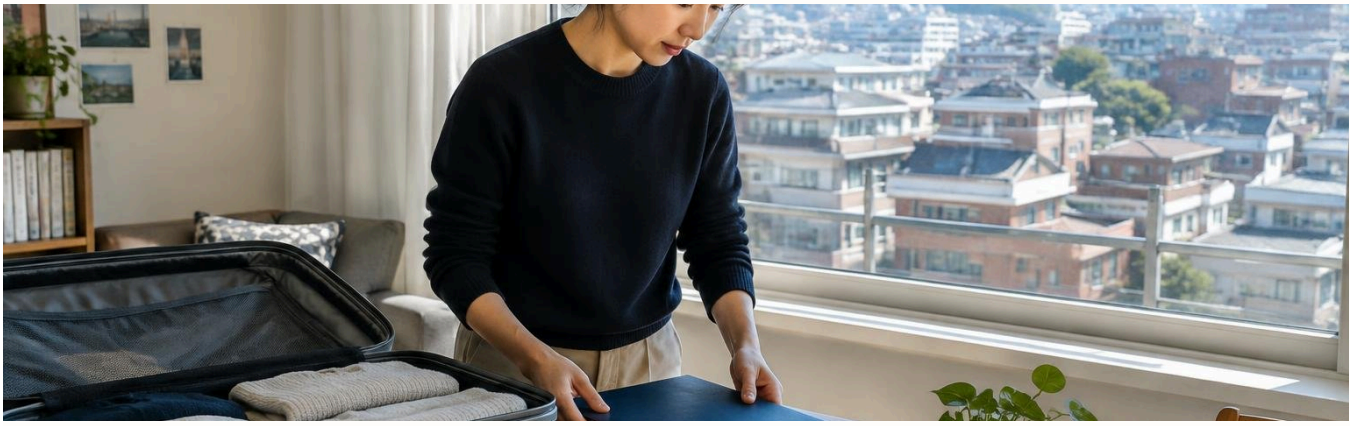
Keep in your folder

- ☐ Monthly timetable and actual hours saved
- ☐ Payslip and bank receipt saved
- ☐ Leave, insurance/pension and employer messages saved
- ☐ Passport, residence and workplace records still correct

Sources · reviewed 17 October 2026: E2 · EXTENSION · HIKOREA

What happens after year one?

Choose the situation that matches your next step. These are preparation paths, not an eligibility decision. A contract renewal, an employment dispute and permission to stay are different processes.



Illustrative · not an actual institution or official form.

Choose your path:

- A · Renew at the same school →
- B · Move to another eligible E-2 school →
- C · Finish with no new employer →
- D · Closure, early dismissal or dispute →

Sources · reviewed 17 October 2026: E2 · ANSWER · EXTENSION · HIKOREA · LABOUR · WINDOW · EMPLOYER

New contract + E-2 stay extension

> **Signing again does not automatically extend immigration permission. Apply before your authorised stay expires.**

Your action checklist

- ☐ Get a new signed contract and current employer documents. Check your passport and actual allowed-stay expiry; do not use the final payday as the deadline.
- ☐ Typical extension preparation: application form, passport, residence card, new contract, proof of residence and current fee. Immigration can request additional school or personal documents.
- ☐ Check the current extension window: general government guidance permits applications from four months before expiry up to expiry; verify the E-2 filing channel and your case with HiKorea/1345. A booked visit is not a filing.
- ☐ Keep the submission receipt and extension decision. Confirm travel/re-entry arrangements with 1345 before travelling while an application is pending.
- ☐ If employment continues without actual termination, do not assume severance must be paid at each contract anniversary. Keep your continuous-service records.

Sources · reviewed 17 October 2026: E2 · ANSWER · EXTENSION · HIKOREA · LABOUR · WINDOW · EMPLOYER

Workplace-change report — and possibly extension

E-2 generally uses a report within 15 days of the workplace change, not the E-9 prior-permission procedure. Confirm the facts before starting.

Your action checklist

- ☐ Confirm the new institution and teaching activity are eligible for your E-2, and agree a signed contract and genuine start/change date. Do not confuse a new contract with automatic immigration compliance.
- ☐ Prepare the workplace-change report, passport, residence card, new contract and required new-school documents; confirm exact documents, filing channel and timing with immigration. The general E-2 report deadline is 15 days after the change.
- ☐ EasyLaw's Manual summary says an extension is also needed if the new contract period plus one month exceeds the remaining authorised stay. Ask immigration to calculate the relevant dates in your case.
- ☐ The previous employer has its own employment-end notification. Keep completion/termination evidence and ask whether a letter of release or another explanation is needed for your particular early-exit transfer. A letter of release is not universally required in every completed-contract transfer.
- ☐ A fresh overseas E-2 application is not automatically mandatory for every in-country transfer. Confirm accepted previously submitted documents, including criminal checks, with immigration and EPIK where relevant.

Sources · reviewed 17 October 2026: E2 · ANSWER · EXTENSION · HIKOREA · LABOUR · WINDOW · EMPLOYER

AFTER YEAR ONE · C · FINISH WITH NO NEW EMPLOYER

Resolve the gap before employment ends

> **There is no blanket 30-day grace period. Do not rely on the residence-card expiry alone once the sponsored job ends.**

Your action checklist

- ☐ Call 1345 before your last employment day. Give contract-end date, allowed-stay expiry, nationality, current status and intended departure or job-search plan.
- ☐ Ask whether you qualify for D-10 or another status, whether an application is permitted in-country, the deadline and the effect of the employer's end report. A job-search intention is not authorisation.
- ☐ If a change of status is available, prepare and file through the required process and wait for the applicable permission. Do not teach during a gap or while merely intending to apply.
- ☐ If leaving Korea, confirm the lawful departure date, residence-card return requirements, insurance/pension closure and housing handover. Obtain final wage/tax records before losing access.
- ☐ Keep written confirmation and filing/departure evidence. Neither a recruiter's promise nor an unused date on a card guarantees lawful stay after a status-changing event.

Sources · reviewed 17 October 2026: E2 · ANSWER · EXTENSION · HIKOREA · LABOUR · WINDOW · EMPLOYER

Protect evidence and immigration status in parallel

> **An employment claim does not automatically extend a visa or permit work elsewhere. Seek immigration and labour advice urgently.**

Your action checklist

- ☐ Save your signed contract, termination/closure notice, timetables, messages, payslips and bank records. Write a dated factual account; keep copies outside school systems.
- ☐ Call 1345 promptly with the dismissal/closure date and ask about reporting, lawful stay, transfer documents, D-10 possibilities and any departure/status-change deadline.
- ☐ Call Labour 1350 about unpaid wages, deductions, termination and complaint routes. Remedies, coverage and filing deadlines depend on the facts; consider an adviser for contested dismissal.
- ☐ Do not assume a letter of release is always possible or universally indispensable. Ask immigration what alternative evidence it accepts for closure, dismissal or employer non-cooperation.
- ☐ Confirm housing access and document safety. Do not start teaching elsewhere until your E-2 workplace/status position is confirmed; keep labour and immigration receipts separately.

Sources · reviewed 17 October 2026: E2 · ANSWER · EXTENSION · HIKOREA · LABOUR · WINDOW · EMPLOYER

Contract completion: money, documents and keys

Begin the handover before your final week. Statutory entitlements depend on actual service, hours, employment coverage and termination facts — they are not simply benefits a director can waive in a contract.

Final money and earned benefits

- Check final salary, authorised deductions, overtime and earned but unused leave where payable under the applicable law. Ask for an itemised calculation rather than a single final bank transfer.
- Statutory severance generally requires at least one year of continuous service and an average of at least 15 scheduled working hours per week over four weeks. The minimum is 30 days of average wage for each eligible year of continuous service.
- Severance is due upon actual termination, not automatically at each annual contract signing. Continuous renewal at the same employer usually calls for continuity to be examined; obtain advice on any proposed “annual settlement”.
- Final wages and retirement benefits generally must be paid within 14 days of termination, subject to lawful arrangements for extending payment in the relevant circumstances. Ask 1350 about a missed payment or disputed calculation.

Close records, not just the classroom

- Confirm health-insurance and pension changes. Pension lump-sum refunds depend on nationality, reciprocal arrangements and individual circumstances; get the NPS answer for your case before departure.
- Request employment/service certificates, references, tax-withholding/year-end records and copies of relevant immigration submissions. Confirm a contact for later payroll or tax questions.
- Agree a housing inspection, deposit reconciliation, utility readings, cleaning obligations, key return and move-out date in writing. Keep dated photographs and receipts; do not authorise unexplained deductions.
- Align last working day, last housing day, next workplace/status filing and lawful departure date. None of those dates automatically equals another.

Keep in your folder

- ☐ Final salary and deductions itemised
- ☐ Continuous service and severance eligibility checked
- ☐ Earned leave treatment and payment dates confirmed
- ☐ Insurance, pension and tax records obtained
- ☐ Reference/service certificate requested
- ☐ Housing deposit, meters and keys documented
- ☐ Immigration/departure or transfer obligations completed

Sources · reviewed 17 October 2026: LABOUR · NPS · NHIS · TAX · HIKOREA · FINALPAY · TERMINATION

Problems at school: protect yourself with evidence

Keep disputes factual and dated. Immigration and labour rules run alongside one another; using a complaint procedure is not itself permission to remain in Korea or work at another school.

Documents, deductions and unpaid pay

- If an employer holds your passport, ask for its immediate return and keep evidence of the request. A school is not immigration. Contact 1345 and your embassy/consulate for advice; call police 112 for immediate danger or threats.
- For deductions, request the contractual/legal basis, payslip and calculation in writing. Compare hours, gross pay and deposits. Do not assume a housing or airfare label makes a deduction lawful.
- For unpaid wages, collect the contract, work records, bank statements, payslips and written requests for payment. 1350 can explain the competent labour office and petition process; eligibility and remedies depend on facts.

Dismissal or employer non-cooperation

- Request a written termination notice, reason and effective date. Preserve the original message and evidence of receipt; do not sign a resignation or settlement you do not understand.
- Ask 1350 whether Labour Relations Commission or labour-office routes fit your case and which deadlines apply. Unfair-dismissal remedies can depend on workplace size and other legal conditions.
- Contact 1345 separately and urgently about the end of sponsored employment. A pending labour claim does not automatically suspend an immigration deadline, extend stay or replace a workplace report.
- If you need interpretation or legal help, use a foreign-resident support centre or qualified professional. Avoid public accusations containing pupils' data or passport details.

Sources · reviewed 17 October 2026: LABOUR · HIKOREA · E2 · FINALPAY

The questions teachers ask at renewal

These answers explain what to verify, not a universal legal outcome. Tell immigration your current E-2 subtype, nationality, contract history, termination facts and actual dates.

“Do I always need a letter of release?”

- No universal rule should be inferred for every situation. Completed-contract changes, early resignation, dismissal, closure and disputed endings can require different evidence. Ask immigration whether a letter or accepted alternative is required in your specific transfer.

“Can I stay 30 days after the job ends?”

- Not as a blanket entitlement. Resolve the gap with 1345 before employment ends; card expiry alone is not a safe answer. D-10 requires eligibility and the proper authorised process.

“Must I get a new criminal check or leave Korea?”

- Not automatically for every renewal or transfer. Previous submissions, time outside Korea, changed circumstances and programme requirements matter. Check immigration’s document list and EPIK used-document guidance rather than assuming either a complete waiver or a fresh overseas application.

“Can I travel while my application is pending?”

- Check your pending application, re-entry position, passport and residence expiry with 1345 before booking. Do not assume departure has no effect on processing or that an application receipt guarantees re-entry.

“Can I teach evenings for another school?”

- Not simply because you already have E-2. A second workplace or activity may require reporting/permission under the applicable procedure. Confirm before extra lessons, paid online work or private tutoring.

“Same school, same visa — nothing to file?”

- Wrong: if you need more allowed stay, file an extension before expiry and verify the decision. A new signed contract, school promise or HiKorea reservation does not automatically extend permission.

Sources · reviewed 17 October 2026: E2 · ANSWER · EXTENSION · USED · HIKOREA

Korean glossary and your two essential phone calls

Reviewed 17 October 2026. This is independent editorial preparation, not legal advice or a government form. Recheck live guidance, required documents and fees immediately before filing; the responsible authority determines your case.

Immigration · 1345

- Ask about E-2 eligibility, registration, workplace reporting, extensions, early endings and D-10. Have passport nationality, current status, entry date, allowed-stay expiry, contract dates and exact question ready. Request language assistance and record the date and answer.
- Use HiKorea for the current manual, filing route and appointment requirements; use the Korea Visa Portal and your responsible Korean mission for overseas applications.

Labour · 1350

- Ask about wages, deductions, working hours, leave, severance, dismissal and the appropriate complaint office. Bring a factual timeline and your contract/payroll records. Immigration advice must still be obtained separately.
- Use NHIS, NPS and NTS for insurance, nationality-dependent pension and tax treatment respectively. No school, recruiter or this guide can guarantee immigration approval or a particular legal remedy.

Hangul	Romanisation	Meaning
외국인등록	oegugin deungnok	Foreign registration
체류기간 연장	cheryu gigan yeonjang	Extension of period of stay
근무처 변경 신고	geunmucheo byeongyeong singo	Workplace-change report
근로계약서	geullo gyeyakseo	Employment contract
퇴직금	toejikgeum	Severance / retirement payment
체류자격 변경	cheryu jagyeok byeongyeong	Change of status of stay
거소 / 체류지	geoso / cheryuji	Residence / place of stay
재직증명서	jaejik jeungmyeongseo	Certificate of employment

Sources · reviewed 17 October 2026: HIKOREA · VISA · E2 · LABOUR · NHIS · NPS · TAX

REVIEWED 17 OCTOBER 2026

Official sources & verification

Twelve official immigration, EPIK and labour pages were read on the review date. Other links are responsible-agency portals; current individual filing lists and eligibility must be confirmed. No immigration outcome is guaranteed.

- EasyLaw · E-2 foreign language teachers
  https://m.easylaw.go.kr/MOM/SubCsmOvRetrieve.laf?ccfNo=1&cciNo=1&cnpClsNo=1&csmSeq=2807&langCd=700101
- EasyLaw · workplace-change response, 31 March 2026
  https://easylaw.go.kr/CSM/CustLsiSrvDetailRetrieve.laf?custLsiSeq=165
- HiKorea · reservations, applications and immigration manuals
  https://www.hikorea.go.kr/
- Korea Visa Portal · E-2 application and consulate requirements
  https://visa.go.kr/
- EPIK · Spring 2027 required documents (July 2026 update)
  https://www.epik.go.kr/web/epik/contents/ReqDocGen
- EPIK · documents already used in Korea
  https://www.epik.go.kr/web/epik/contents/ReqDoc09
- EPIK · additional country-specific documents
  https://www.epik.go.kr/web/epik/contents/ReqDoc08
- EasyLaw · extension of period of stay
  https://m.easylaw.go.kr/MOM/SubCsmOvRetrieve.laf?ccfNo=1&cciNo=1&cnpClsNo=1&csmSeq=2492&langCd=700101
- MOEL 1350 · retirement benefits, 2026 guidance
  https://1350.moel.go.kr/rtmview.do?id=1000317104
- National Health Insurance Service · foreign residents
  https://www.nhis.or.kr/english/index.do
- National Pension Service · international coverage and refunds
  https://www.nps.or.kr/eng/
- National Tax Service · English guidance
  https://www.nts.go.kr/english/main.do
- HiKorea · four-month stay-extension window
  https://www.hikorea.go.kr/info/InfoDatail.pt?CAT_SEQ=181&PARENT_ID=140
- Immigration Act · Article 19 employer reports
  https://www.law.go.kr/법령/출입국관리법/제19조
- MOEL · final wages and the 14-day rule
  https://www.moel.go.kr/faq/faqView.do?seqRepeat=118
- MOEL · severance at termination, not annual payout
  https://www.moel.go.kr/minwon/fastcounsel/fastcounselView.do?inetDcssMngId=20210106091107943100O
- EPIK · eligibility and teaching-certificate exemption
  https://www.epik.go.kr/web/epik/contents/Eligibility

Read online · https://www.settleseoul.com/articles/e2-teaching-visa-first-year-and-renewal

Immigration 1345 · Labour 1350 · Immediate danger 112



Settle. Seoul

DISCOVER SEOUL · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

A Night in a Hanok: The Complete Seoul Stay Guide.

Stay in traditional Korea, without leaving modern Seoul. Choose your neighbourhood, understand the comforts and compromises, and book with confidence.

Online guide · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/hanok-stays-in-seoul

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

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> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- A hanok stay is accommodation, not a guarantee of a whole house, a Western bed or a private bathroom.
- Prices below are broad planning estimates, not quotes. Confirm the actual property, dates and total in writing.
- Residential lanes are home to neighbours. In Bukchon's designated Red Zone, sightseeing restrictions also matter.

Official routes: Seoul Stay · Visit Seoul · Visit Korea · Seoul Metropolitan Government.

THE EXPERIENCE

A different rhythm, still in Seoul

A hanok (한옥, hanok) is a traditional Korean house, associated with timber framing, tiled roofs and a close relationship between rooms and outdoor space. Staying overnight gives you time to notice the courtyard light, the grain of the wood and the quiet between busy city outings. Some stays preserve a simple domestic feel; others are extensively renovated. The label alone does not tell you how comfortable, accessible or private a particular room will be.

Warm floors, different sleeping

- Ondol (온돌, ondol) means underfloor heating; a modern system may replace the traditional heat source. Ask how guests control it.
- Floor bedding may include a yo (요, yo), a padded sleeping mattress, and a duvet. Some properties instead offer Western beds. If getting down to the floor is difficult, confirm the actual bed before paying.

Stay, rather than rush

- Choose one nearby market, gallery or palace outing and leave time for the house itself.
- A hanok can be a memorable short break for visitors or Seoul residents, but suitability and eligibility depend on the accommodation's registration and house rules.

FOUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

Choose the area before the room

These are general neighbourhood planning notes, not a ranking of accommodation quality. Check the exact address and door-to-door route: a district name can hide a steep final walk or an extra bus connection.

Bukchon · palaces and heritage

- Suits first-time visitors who want palace visits and traditional streets around their stay.
- The appeal: proximity to Gyeongbokgung and Changdeokgung, with heritage lanes and cultural stops nearby.
- The trade-offs: hills, steps, visitor crowds and sensitive residential streets. Parts of Bukchon have specific sightseeing restrictions; read the Red Zone guidance below.

Seochon · a slower city break

- Suits couples, gallery browsers and travellers who prefer a neighbourhood-led weekend west of Gyeongbokgung.
- The appeal: small galleries, cafés, local streets and Tongin Market as an easy anchor for exploring.
- The trade-offs: narrow lanes and mixed residential/commercial surroundings. A quiet-looking exterior does not guarantee soundproof rooms or step-free access.

Eunpyeong Hanok Village · nature nearby

- Suits families and nature-minded travellers who prioritise Bukhansan scenery and a visit to Jingwansa over central nightlife.
- The appeal: a village setting at Seoul's mountain edge, with space to make a slower itinerary.
- The trade-offs: farther from many central sights by public transport. Check the bus connection, last return options and each property's child policy; being in a family-friendly area does not mean every stay accepts children.

Ikseon-dong · cafés and evening energy

- Suits restaurant and café explorers who want the Jongno area close at hand.
- The appeal: compact lanes, food and lively evenings, with modern city connections nearby.
- The trade-offs: many hanok buildings here are cafés or restaurants, not accommodation. True overnight options are fewer; confirm the address, registration and whether nightlife noise reaches the room.

BUDGET PLANNING

What might a night cost?

Indicative, non-binding planning bands in Korean won, per night—not live quoted rates, a market survey or offers from the example properties. Room size, whole-house use, occupancy, season, weekends and inclusions can change the total substantially. Lower and higher prices are possible.

Simple room · approx. KRW 70,000–150,000

- A starting planning range for simpler room-based accommodation. Do not assume a private bathroom, breakfast or a Western bed.

Boutique stay · approx. KRW 150,000–300,000

- A planning range for more design-led or upgraded stays; the word boutique does not establish any particular amenity.

Premium / private · approx. KRW 300,000–600,000+

- Private-house and premium stays can cost considerably more. Ask whether the displayed price is per room or for the entire property.

Not a price promise
Confirm the final total for your dates and number of guests, including taxes, platform charges, extra bedding and any optional services. No availability, rate or discount is quoted here.

COMFORT & CHARACTER

What to expect inside

A courtyard (마당, madang), timber details and paper-covered doors can be part of the pleasure. They also make this different from a standard hotel. Renovations vary widely, so inspect the current room description and ask direct questions.

Space, sound and privacy

- Hanji (한지, hanji) paper doors and timber partitions may transmit sound and light. A closed door is not a promise of hotel-style sound insulation.
- Courtyards may be shared. Confirm whether you book one room, a building or exclusive use of the whole house.
- Check bathroom location and whether it is private, shared or reached across an outdoor space.

Seasonal practicalities

- Wi-Fi, air conditioning, heating controls and modern bathrooms depend on the property; do not infer them from attractive photographs.
- Older buildings can have winter draughts even with warm floors. Ask about room heating and bathroom warmth.
- Summer brings humidity and insects, particularly around open courtyards. Ask about screens and air conditioning, and follow the host's door instructions.
- Thresholds, uneven floors and floor sleeping can be difficult with mobility needs. Request photographs and a precise access description, not simply 'easy access'.

INDEPENDENT EXAMPLES

Four stays to start your research

These are example properties, not affiliated recommendations, paid placements or verified offers. Official tourism and operator links are starting points; confirm the current property name, location, guest eligibility, amenities and terms directly. No vacancies or fixed rates are asserted.

Rakkojae Bukchon

- A hanok accommodation listed by Visit Seoul in Bukchon. A useful starting point for a heritage-focused central Seoul stay.
- Use the tourism listing to identify the property, then confirm the specific room and booking conditions with the operator.

Rakkojae · Visit Seoul listing →

Seochon Hanok Guesthouse

- The operator lists this traditional-house guesthouse at 28-3 Jahamun-ro 7-gil, Jongno-gu, with a traditional Korean housing experience business registration. Consider it when researching the Seochon side of Gyeongbokgung.
- Ask which room is being offered and whether sleeping, bathrooms and shared areas suit your party. The operator link identifies this property; do not confuse it with similarly named Seochon stays.

Seochon Hanok Guesthouse · official operator →

Eungjeongheon · Eunpyeong

- A hanok stay listed by Visit Seoul, relevant to an Eunpyeong Hanok Village itinerary.
- Confirm the address, transit route and guest policies before building a family or mountain-focused weekend around it.

Eungjeongheon · Visit Seoul listing →

The Chae · Seochon

- An operator with an official English reservation page. Check the named Seochon property rather than assuming every listing has the same layout or facilities.
- Read the individual stay's rules and cancellation terms, and confirm what is included in exclusive use, if offered. Automated access to the operator site was blocked during review; current booking details remain unconfirmed.

The Chae · official reservations →

BOOKING ROUTES

Book the actual stay, not just the photograph

Begin with registered accommodation and a clear written confirmation. A platform listing is not, by itself, proof that every traveller is eligible to stay under that property's registration. In particular, domestic residents should ask whether their booking can be accepted; some accommodation categories have guest restrictions. Let the host confirm your case rather than guessing from your nationality or a platform's checkout screen.

Seoul Stay

- The official Seoul accommodation directory is a useful place to identify stays and find their contact information. Check the listing's category and current operator details.

Browse Seoul Stay in English →

STAYFOLIO

- An English-language route for researching design-led accommodation. Confirm the individual stay's facilities, guest capacity and policies; availability belongs to the booking platform, not this guide.

Explore STAYFOLIO →

Airbnb

- Many hanok homes appear on Airbnb. Message the host before booking to confirm the property is registered accommodation, whether your guest type can be accepted, and the sleeping, bathroom and heating arrangements.
- Read house rules and the cancellation policy for the exact listing; photos and reviews are not proof of current facilities.

Search hanok stays on Airbnb →

Naver Booking / direct operator

- Local operators may use Naver Booking or their own reservation site. Korean-language messages, a local account or payment verification may be needed; ask about alternatives if you cannot complete the process.
- Obtain a confirmation showing the exact address, dates, guest count, amount paid and arrival contact. Read refund and cancellation terms before paying, including late arrival and no-show rules.

Open Naver Booking →

BEFORE YOU PAY

Your eight-point booking checklist

Tick each point once the host or listing has answered it for the exact room and dates you intend to book. Keep the answers with your confirmation; these ticks are only held during this page visit.

1. **Whole house or one room?** — Establish exclusive use, shared courtyard or lounge access, maximum occupancy and any other guests on site.
2. **Western bed or floor sleeping?** — Confirm bed type, bedding thickness and arrangements for every guest; request a photograph if needed.
3. **Private bathroom?** — Check whether it is ensuite, elsewhere indoors, shared or across the courtyard.
4. **Heating and air conditioning?** — Ask about ondol controls, summer cooling and whether bathrooms and sleeping areas are heated.
5. **What is included?** — Check towels, toiletries, Wi-Fi, bedding, breakfast if offered, and any extra charges. Never assume.
6. **Children, pets and cooking?** — Confirm age limits, pet permission, kitchen access and whether food preparation is allowed.
7. **Can everyone get in and move around?** — Ask about hills, entrance steps, thresholds, uneven floors and the bathroom route; confirm mobility needs directly.
8. **Full price, cancellation and check-in?** — Save the total, payment/refund conditions, arrival window, late check-in arrangement and host contact.

Tick each point before you pay

- ☐ **Whole house or one room?** — Establish exclusive use, shared courtyard or lounge access, maximum occupancy and any other guests on site.
- ☐ **Western bed or floor sleeping?** — Confirm bed type, bedding thickness and arrangements for every guest; request a photograph if needed.
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- ☐ **Full price, cancellation and check-in?** — Save the total, payment/refund conditions, arrival window, late check-in arrangement and host contact.

BE A GOOD GUEST

A home, not a film set

The best hanok stay is considerate of the building, the host and the people next door. A beautiful residential lane is still somebody's everyday home.

Inside the house

- Remove shoes wherever the host asks; keep outdoor shoes off sleeping floors.
- Handle fragile paper doors and timber fittings gently. Ask before moving furniture or changing heating controls.
- Do not smoke or use candles, flames or fire equipment unless expressly permitted in a designated safe area. Follow all fire-safety instructions.

In the neighbourhood

- Keep conversations, luggage noise and courtyard gatherings quiet, especially at night. Follow the host's quiet hours.
- Do not photograph residents, peer through doors or enter private courtyards without permission.
- Ask where rubbish and recycling go; do not leave bags in the lane. Follow the property and district's sorting instructions.

IMPORTANT · BUKCHON

The Red Zone is not an all-night sightseeing pass

Seoul's published notice sets restricted tourist sightseeing hours of 10:00–17:00 in the designated Bukchon Special Management Area Red Zone. This is not a ban across all of Bukchon. The notice provides for a KRW 100,000 (₩100,000) fine for breaches of the sightseeing restriction; enforcement began in March 2025. Guest-access guidance is also informed by Jongno-gu's local rules and exceptions (linked in the sources); follow the current signs and local instructions.

If you are staying there

- Properly booked accommodation guests have a limited exception to reach their lodging. Keep your reservation confirmation and ask the host which route and identification or proof are needed.
- That access exception is not blanket permission for unrestricted nighttime sightseeing, photography walks or visits to other residential lanes.

Before arrival

- Ask whether the property is within the designated Red Zone and how check-in, late arrival and departure should be handled.
- Use the city's notice, current on-street signs and host/local guidance. This is practical planning guidance, not a legal determination about your individual journey.

Plan around residents
Sightseeing in the designated restricted area: 10:00–17:00. Lodging access: follow the limited guest exception and your host's instructions, not a general nighttime sightseeing assumption.

Read Seoul's official Bukchon restriction notice →

ANOTHER TRIP

Beyond Seoul, when you have more time

If a night in Seoul makes you curious, consider a separate heritage-focused trip. These are onward-trip ideas, not accommodation recommendations or promises of stays inside protected villages.

Build a slower itinerary

- Jeonju Hanok Village for a larger hanok-focused city break.
- Gyeongju's Gyochon area alongside a wider historic-city visit.
- Andong Hahoe for a living heritage-village experience; verify visitor rules and lodging locations.
- Jeollanam-do for a broader regional itinerary with traditional villages and individual hanok stays—check distances before booking.

Keep the first stay simple
For a first Seoul weekend, choose one neighbourhood, confirm the eight booking essentials and leave breathing room in your itinerary.

SOURCES

Sources & verification · A Night in a Hanok: The Complete Seoul Stay Guide

Reviewed October 2026. Check the official links before relying on dates, fees or rules.

- Visit Seoul · Rakkojae
  https://english.visitseoul.net/area/Rakkojae/ENP001183
- Seochon Hanok Guesthouse · official operator
  http://www.seochonguesthouse.com/?act=info.page&pcode=english_main
- Visit Seoul · Eungjeongheon
  https://english.visitseoul.net/area/Eungjeongheon/ENP042849
- The Chae · official reservations
  https://en.thechae.kr/RESERVATION

- Seoul Stay · official accommodation directory
  https://stay.visitseoul.net/seoul-stay?lang=en
- STAYFOLIO · English booking platform
  https://www.stayfolio.com/en/
- Naver Booking
  https://booking.naver.com/
- Booking.com · international booking platform
  https://www.booking.com/
- Seoul Metropolitan Government · Bukchon sightseeing restrictions
  https://english.seoul.go.kr/notice-on-restrictions-for-tourist-visits-to-bukchon-special-management-area-effective-from-november-2024/
- Jongno-gu · Bukchon visitor rules and exceptions (Korean)
  https://culture.jongno.go.kr/media/ko/conts/111/web.do

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Settle. Seoul

DISCOVER SEOUL · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Read Your Way Into Korea: The Settle Seoul Bookshelf.

Before you arrive, discover the stories. Once you're here, discover the places behind them.

Online guide · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/settle-seoul-bookshelf

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

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6. How to get the right edition
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> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Ten books: a featured introduction, three to read before you fly and six for once you live here.
- Use the reading selector below to find your next book by mood.
- No prices, stock or ratings are claimed — check the retailer or library before you travel.

Official routes: Kyobo Book Centre · Seoul Metropolitan Library · LTI Korea.

WHY READ

The best reading changes once you move

Before you land, books give you context: the history, the habits and a few words of the language. Once you live here, the same books become maps — a novel's neighbourhood bookshop, a museum room, a baseball stadium. This shelf mixes practical non-fiction, cultural essays, beginner Korean, strong literary fiction and ideas for bookish days out. Fiction is a window into lives and debates, not a literal guide to how every Korean person lives.

FEATURED BOOK

Presenting K! — All The Korea You May Not See

Our pick for the first week. Jaeyoung Park (박재영) wrote this English edition, published by Nanda in 2024, as a cheerful explainer for foreigners curious about Korea. (Some listings misspell the author's name; publisher and retailer records give Jaeyoung Park.) Kyobo lists both a print edition and an ebook — check which format you are buying.

Presenting K! — All The Korea You May Not See — Jaeyoung Park (박재영)

- A Korean writer's playful, twenty-chapter explanation of the country foreigners find most curious — food, transport, K-pop, Hangul, baseball and plenty in between.
- Why read it? It is written for visitors and newcomers, so it answers the small "why do people do that?" questions guidebooks skip. Dip in by chapter.
- Suits: Anyone in the first weeks, especially if you prefer light, funny non-fiction to history.

Presenting K! — All The Korea You May Not See — Jaeyoung Park (박재영)

Non-fiction · Nanda · English edition, December 2024 (ISBN 9791194171300) · separate Korean edition exists

Kyobo Book Centre · print listing →

A first-week reading list

- Presenting K! — dip into the chapters on food, transport and Hangul.
- Korea: A Very Short Introduction — the history in an evening or two.
- Five basic Korean phrases, from TTMIK Level 1 or our Korean-learning guide.

Presenting K! ebook · Kyobo →

BEFORE ARRIVAL

Three books to pack (or download)

Context, history and survival Korean. If you only have a week, read the short list at the end.

Korea: The Impossible Country — Daniel Tudor

- A former Seoul correspondent's portrait of modern South Korea: its rapid development, education pressure, religion, work and social life.
- Why read it? Readable context for the speed and intensity of Korean life. Treat it as a 2012 snapshot — some details have moved on.
- Suits: Readers who want one broad overview before landing.

Korea: A Very Short Introduction — Michael J. Seth

- A compact history of the peninsula from early kingdoms through Joseon, colonial rule, division and the two modern Koreas.
- Why read it? The quickest reliable way to understand what you are looking at in a palace, museum or history drama.
- Suits: Short-on-time readers who want history without a doorstop.

Talk To Me In Korean · Level 1 — Talk To Me In Korean

- The first textbook in TTMIK's grammar series: Hangul, greetings, basic sentence patterns and numbers.
- Why read it? Even a few lessons make menus, signs and delivery messages less intimidating on arrival.
- Suits: Complete beginners. Pair it with our Korean-learning guide.

Korea: The Impossible Country — Daniel Tudor

Non-fiction · first published 2012

Korea: A Very Short Introduction — Michael J. Seth

Non-fiction · Oxford University Press, Very Short Introductions

Oxford Academic · book page →

Talk To Me In Korean · Level 1 — Talk To Me In Korean

Beginner textbook · print edition

TTMIK store · Level 1 textbook →

> **Only one week before you fly?**
> Presenting K! — dip into the chapters on food, transport and Hangul. · Korea: A Very Short Introduction — the history in an evening or two. · Five basic Korean phrases, from TTMIK Level 1 or our Korean-learning guide.

WHILE LIVING HERE

Six Korean stories for life in Seoul

Modern Korean fiction (and one diaspora epic) to read once the city starts to feel familiar. All are widely available in English translation.

Welcome to the Hyunam-dong Bookshop — Hwang Bo-reum

- After burning out, Yeongju opens a small neighbourhood bookshop in Seoul, and a loose community of regulars, a barista and visiting writers forms around it.
- Why read it? A gentle novel about rest, work and finding your people — very easy to read after a demanding week.
- Suits: Readers who want warmth rather than plot twists.

Kim Jiyoung, Born 1982 — Cho Nam-joo

- The life of an ordinary Seoul woman, from childhood to motherhood, told in a deliberately clinical voice.
- Why read it? A widely discussed novel about gender, work and family expectation. It is fiction and sparked debate, not a survey of every Korean family.
- Suits: Readers interested in workplace and family culture; short enough for a weekend.

Love in the Big City — Sang Young Park

- Young, a gay man in Seoul, moves through friendship, love affairs, family and illness across his twenties and thirties.
- Why read it? Funny, sad and very contemporary — clubs, studio flats and late-night conversations in the city you now live in.
- Suits: Adult readers who like voice-driven, urban fiction. Includes sex and illness themes.

Pachinko — Min Jin Lee

- Four generations of a Korean family who move from Busan to Japan, facing poverty, discrimination and impossible choices across the twentieth century.
- Why read it? A gripping, long family saga about the Korean diaspora in Japan and the colonial era's long shadow.
- Suits: Readers ready for a big book on long flights or winter evenings.

Human Acts — Han Kang

- Linked voices circle the 1980 Gwangju Uprising and its violent suppression, and what survivors carry afterwards.
- Why read it? A powerful literary way into a turning point in Korea's democratisation, from the 2024 Nobel laureate in Literature.
- Suits: Readers prepared for difficult material.
- Emotionally intense: depicts violence, torture and grief.

Please Look After Mom — Kyung-sook Shin

- When their mother goes missing in a Seoul subway station, her family realise how little they knew about her.
- Why read it? A moving novel about family, sacrifice and the countryside-to-city generation — tissues recommended.
- Suits: Anyone missing family back home, or wanting to understand parents' generations here.

Welcome to the Hyunam-dong Bookshop — Hwang Bo-reum

Novel · translated from Korean

Kim Jiyoung, Born 1982 — Cho Nam-joo

Novel · translated by Jamie Chang

Love in the Big City — Sang Young Park

Novel · translated by Anton Hur

Pachinko — Min Jin Lee

Novel · written in English

Human Acts — Han Kang

Novel · translated by Deborah Smith

Please Look After Mom — Kyung-sook Shin

Novel · translated by Chi-Young Kim

WHERE TO FIND BOOKS

Bookshops, libraries and a reading space

Big chains carry the most English titles; second-hand shops and libraries are mostly Korean. We list official websites rather than map pins because we have not independently verified every branch address — check opening hours and the current location before you go.

Kyobo Book Centre · Gwanghwamun · Bookshop

- Large foreign-language section plus Korean books
- Kyobo's flagship central-Seoul store; use the website to check branch details and store stock before you go.

Youngpoong Bookstore · COEX · Bookshop

- Mostly Korean, with some foreign-language titles
- A large bookshop inside COEX Mall, close to Starfield Library.

Starfield Library · COEX · Reading space

- Browse-only, mostly Korean and magazines
- A free, open reading space with towering shelves — not a bookshop and not a lending library.

Seoul Selection · Bookshop

- English-language books about Korea
- Publisher and bookseller specialising in Korea in English, near Jongno. Check its contact page for the current shop location and hours before visiting.

Aladin used bookstores · Bookshop

- Second-hand, Korean and some English
- Affordable used-book chain; foreign-language stock varies a lot by branch.

Seoul Book Bogo · Bookshop

- Second-hand, predominantly Korean
- Seoul's public used-book market, bringing together independent second-hand dealers.

Seoul Metropolitan Library · Library

- Korean collection with some foreign-language material
- The city's main public library. Check current membership and borrowing rules for foreign residents.

Place	Type	Books	Good to know
Kyobo Book Centre · Gwanghwamun	Bookshop	Large foreign-language section plus Korean books	Kyobo's flagship central-Seoul store; use the website to check branch details and store stock before you go.
Youngpoong Bookstore · COEX	Bookshop	Mostly Korean, with some foreign-language titles	A large bookshop inside COEX Mall, close to Starfield Library.
Starfield Library · COEX	Reading space	Browse-only, mostly Korean and magazines	A free, open reading space with towering shelves — not a bookshop and not a lending library.
Seoul Selection	Bookshop	English-language books about Korea	Publisher and bookseller specialising in Korea in English, near Jongno. Check its contact page for the current shop location and hours before visiting.
Aladin used bookstores	Bookshop	Second-hand, Korean and some English	Affordable used-book chain; foreign-language stock varies a lot by branch.
Seoul Book Bogo	Bookshop	Second-hand, predominantly Korean	Seoul's public used-book market, bringing together independent second-hand dealers.

Place	Type	Books	Good to know
Seoul Metropolitan Library	Library	Korean collection with some foreign-language material	The city's main public library. Check current membership and borrowing rules for foreign residents.

Kyobo Book Centre · Gwanghwamun →

Youngpoong Bookstore · COEX →

Starfield Library · COEX →

Seoul Selection →

Aladin used bookstores →

Seoul Book Bogo →

Seoul Metropolitan Library →

BUY AND BORROW

How to get the right edition

Korean online bookstores are fast and deliver nationwide, but are mostly in Korean. A little search know-how goes a long way.

Buying online

- Kyobo, YES24 and Aladin all sell English-language and imported books.
- Search by ISBN to get the exact translation and edition — many classics have several translations and Korean titles that look nothing like the English.
- Stock, delivery dates and prices change; confirm on the product page before paying. Identity verification may be needed to create an account.

YES24 →

Borrowing

- Public libraries are free to visit. Membership and borrowing rules for foreign residents vary by library — check current policy and bring your residence card.
- LTI Korea's library specialises in Korean literature in translation; check its site for access and visiting conditions.
- Your district library may be closer than the central one — ask at your community centre.

LTI Korea Library →

READ & EXPLORE

Pair a book with a day out

Ideas for letting your reading lead you somewhere. These are inspirations — we are not suggesting any novel is set in these exact places.

Welcome to the Hyunam-dong Bookshop → an independent bookshop afternoon

- Find a small neighbourhood bookshop or book café, buy one thing and stay for a drink. Seochon and the streets around Hongdae are good places to wander.

Hanok stays and Seochon →

Korea: A Very Short Introduction → Gyeongbokgung and modern history

- Read the Joseon and twentieth-century chapters, then visit Gyeongbokgung and the National Museum of Korean Contemporary History on Gwanghwamun Square — then browse Kyobo across the road.

Explore Seoul by theme →

Presenting K! → food, markets and baseball

- Take the food and baseball chapters out with you: a traditional market lunch, then a KBO game in season with fried chicken in the stands.

What's on in Seoul →

USEFUL KOREAN

A bookshop glossary

Romanisation follows the Revised Romanisation of Korean.

Words to know

- 서점 (seojeom) — bookshop
- 도서관 (doseogwan) — library
- 중고책 (junggochaek) — used books
- 영어책 (yeongeochaek) — English books
- 번역 (beonyeok) — translation

Phrases to use

- 영어책 어디 있어요? (Yeongeochaek eodi isseoyo?) — Where are the English books?
- 이 책 있어요? (I chaek isseoyo?) — Do you have this book? (show the ISBN)
- 회원 가입할 수 있어요? (Hoewon gaipal su isseoyo?) — Can I sign up as a member?

Interested in a Settle Seoul book club?
We're considering a reader book club. It doesn't exist yet — tell us through the contact page if you'd join.

SOURCES

Sources & verification · Read Your Way Into Korea: The Settle Seoul Bookshelf

Reviewed October 2026. Check the official links before relying on dates, fees or rules.

- Kyobo Book Centre · Presenting K! (print)
  https://product.kyobobook.co.kr/detail/S000215063604
- Kyobo · Presenting K! (ebook)
  https://ebook-product.kyobobook.co.kr/dig/epd/ebook/E000011424389
- Oxford Academic · Korea: A Very Short Introduction
  https://academic.oup.com/book/28408
- Talk To Me In Korean · Level 1 textbook
  https://store.talktomeinkorean.com/products/talk-to-me-in-korean-textbook-level-1
- Kyobo Book Centre · Gwanghwamun
  https://www.kyobobook.co.kr/
- Youngpoong Bookstore · COEX
  https://www.starfield.co.kr/coexmall/entertainment/ypBooks.do
- Starfield Library · COEX
  https://www.coexmall.com/coexmall/starfieldLibrary/library.do
- Seoul Selection
  https://www.seoulselection.com/bookstore/default/contact_us.php
- Aladin used bookstores
  https://www.aladin.co.kr/
- Seoul Book Bogo
  https://www.seoulbookbogo.kr/front/
- Seoul Metropolitan Library
  https://lib.seoul.go.kr/
- YES24 · online bookstore
  https://www.yes24.com/

- LTI Korea Library · Korean literature in translation
  https://library.ltikorea.or.kr/

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DISCOVER SEOUL · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Coffee in Korea: From Dabang to Iced Americano.

One country. Thousands of cafés. A whole culture in a cup.

Online guide · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/coffee-culture-in-seoul

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

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2. From a meeting room to a cup on the move
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7. Coffeehouses worth building a day around
8. What might a cup cost?
9. The small rules that make a café work
10. Follow a coffee trail
11. A tiny café glossary
12. Sources & verification

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- A coffee can be a quick commute ritual or an afternoon destination.
- Learn one order; ask before adding milk alternatives or decaf.
- Use official café links to check the branch before you travel.

A DAILY RITUAL

More than a caffeine stop

In Seoul, ‘shall we get coffee?’ can mean a catch-up, a study session, a date, a pause between errands or simply five minutes to yourself. A tiny takeaway counter and a destination roastery are part of the same story: one values speed, the other invites you to linger. Neither is the ‘correct’ way to drink coffee.

106,452 coffee shops · 2023

- Nationwide, not Seoul alone, and not an October 2026 count. The government’s 21 August 2026 release reports 2023 coffee-shop numbers, representing 13.4% of foodservice establishments.

₩3.74 trillion · 2024

- The same release estimates the domestic coffee products market in 2024. This is not a figure for café takings or the price of going out for coffee.

> **Find your own rhythm**
> Try a budget takeaway on an ordinary morning, then give one slow café visit a whole afternoon. The contrast tells you more than a list of fashionable addresses.

THEN & NOW

From a meeting room to a cup on the move

Coffee reached Korea in the late Joseon period. Emperor Gojong is often associated with its early court history, but the familiar royal story is not proof of a single first cup or the beginning of everyday café life. The social rooms, instant packets and espresso bars that followed each changed who coffee was for.

1. **Late Joseon · an unfamiliar drink** — Coffee initially circulated in limited diplomatic and elite settings. Avoid reducing a much longer cultural story to a royal anecdote.
2. **Mid-20th century · the dabang** — Tea and coffee rooms became places to meet, listen to records and exchange ideas. Hakrim’s 1956 beginnings and Dok-Dabang’s student and literary history are surviving examples, not a template for every dabang.
3. **1976 · the small sweet packet** — The Ministry of Culture dates Korean coffee mix to 1976: instant coffee, creamer and sugar made a warm cup quick to prepare in homes and workplaces.
4. **Late 1990s onward · espresso & craft** — International espresso chains expanded, followed by a specialty scene focused on roasting, beans and brewing. Today cheap takeaway and careful hand-drip thrive side by side.

OLD SEOUL, SLOWLY

What is a dabang?

다방 (dabang) literally points to a tea room, but its Korean cultural associations extend well beyond tea. Think of a room where the soundtrack and the conversation matter as much as the cup. In the literary and student venues described here, photographs, records and memories are part of the atmosphere. The term has varied across eras and settings; not every dabang is a historic music café.

Hakrim · a surviving classic

- Established in 1956 in Hyehwa/Daehak-ro, with a history tied to artists and university intellectuals. Visit Korea highlights Vienna coffee and cream cheesecake.
- Go for a deliberate pause around the theatre streets, not an assumption that every seat is a laptop workstation.

Coffee Hanyakbang · contemporary nostalgia

- Its operator describes a hidden Euljiro alley setting and coffee made with the care of a herbal prescription. This is a modern nostalgic coffeehouse, not a centuries-old dabang.
- Enjoy the mood without mistaking antique styling for a documented operating history.

Dok-Dabang · a continued story

- The Sinchon meeting place closed in 2005 and reopened in 2013, according to Visit Seoul. Old photos and a bulletin board connect the present café with its student and literary past.
- A reopened heritage venue is not the same thing as an unchanged interior operating continuously for decades.



A TASTING NOTEBOOK

Find your cup

Start with the everyday staples, then follow your taste toward cream, filter coffee or something without coffee at all. Korean menus borrow international names freely; the same drink can have a different recipe from one shop to the next.

Americano · 아메리카노 (amerikano)

- Everyday staple
- Espresso and water, usually without sugar. 아아 (aa) is shorthand for iced Americano; 얼죽아 (eoljuk-a) jokes about choosing it even in freezing weather.

Café latte · 카페라떼 (kaperatte)

- Everyday staple
- Espresso softened with milk. A plain latte is not automatically sweet; recipes and milk choices vary.

Vanilla latte · 바닐라라떼 (banillaratte)

- Sweet favourite
- A milky espresso drink with vanilla sweetness. Ask about reducing syrup rather than assuming the recipe can change.

Einspänner · 아인슈페너 (ainsyupeneo)

- Specialty menu
- Coffee under a thick cream layer. Vienna coffee and modern einspänner recipes differ; some contain milk, and many are iced-only.

Hand-drip coffee · 핸드드립 커피 (haendeudeurip keopi)

- Slow & specialty
- Filter coffee brewed to order. Ask which beans are available; an iced version may use a different brewing recipe.

Coffee mix · 믹스커피 (mikseukeopi)

- Everyday instant ritual
- Instant coffee, sugar and creamer in a small packet. Common in offices and homes, not a guaranteed café menu item; usually prepared hot.

Dalgona coffee · 달고나 커피 (dalgona keopi)

- Trend, not universal
- Whipped sweet coffee over milk, associated with the 2020 home-drink trend. Not every café serves it; it is distinct from the crunchy dalgona candy.

Matcha latte · 말차라떼 (malcharatte)

- Without coffee
- Green tea and milk, often sweetened. Contains tea caffeine even though there is no coffee; ask about the base mix and milk.

Sweet potato latte · 고구마라떼 (gogumaratte)

- Without coffee
- A sweet, often thick milk drink made with sweet potato. Usually not an espresso latte; ingredients and seasonal availability vary.

Misutgaru · 미숫가루 (misutgaru)

- Grain drink
- Roasted mixed-grain powder blended with water or milk, often sweetened. Grain mixes can contain allergens; confirm ingredients rather than assuming it is gluten-free.

Yuja tea · 유자차 (yujacha)

- Without coffee
- Citrus preserve diluted with water, usually sweet. Some cafés offer an iced version; it is not the same as brewed black tea.

Ssanghwacha · 쌍화차 (ssanghwacha)

- Traditional tea
- A dark herbal-style tea associated with traditional tea rooms and some dabang. Ingredients and toppings vary; check allergies and do not treat it as medical advice.



Korean	Say it	Drink	Hot / iced	Good to know
아메리카노	amerikano	Americano	hot / iced	Espresso and water, usually without sugar. 아아 (aa) is shorthand for iced Americano; 얼죽아 (eoljuk-a) jokes about choosing it even in freezing weather.
카페라떼	kaperatte	Café latte	hot / iced	Espresso softened with milk. A plain latte is not automatically sweet; recipes and milk choices vary.
바닐라라떼	banillaratte	Vanilla latte	hot / iced	A milky espresso drink with vanilla sweetness. Ask about reducing syrup rather than assuming the recipe can change.
아인슈페너	ainsyupeneo	Einspänner	iced	Coffee under a thick cream layer. Vienna coffee and modern einspänner recipes differ; some contain milk, and many are iced-only.
핸드드립 커피	haendeudeurip keopi	Hand-drip coffee	hot / iced	Filter coffee brewed to order. Ask which beans are available; an iced version may use a different brewing recipe.
믹스커피	mikseukeopi	Coffee mix	hot	Instant coffee, sugar and creamer in a small packet. Common in offices and homes, not a guaranteed café menu item; usually prepared hot.
달고나 커피	dalgona keopi	Dalgona coffee	iced	Whipped sweet coffee over milk, associated with the 2020 home-drink trend. Not every café serves it; it is distinct from the crunchy dalgona candy.
말차라떼	malcharatte	Matcha latte	hot / iced	Green tea and milk, often sweetened. Contains tea caffeine even though there is no coffee; ask about the base mix and milk.
고구마라떼	gogumaratte	Sweet potato latte	hot / iced	A sweet, often thick milk drink made with sweet potato. Usually not an espresso latte; ingredients and seasonal availability vary.
미숫가루	misutgaru	Misutgaru	iced	Roasted mixed-grain powder blended with water or milk, often sweetened. Grain mixes can contain allergens; confirm ingredients rather than assuming it is gluten-free.
유자차	yujacha	Yuja tea	hot / iced	Citrus preserve diluted with water, usually sweet. Some cafés offer an iced version; it is not the same as brewed black tea.
쌍화차	ssanghwacha	Ssanghwacha	hot	A dark herbal-style tea associated with traditional tea rooms and some dabang. Ingredients and toppings vary; check allergies and do not treat it as medical advice.

YOUR FIRST CONFIDENT ORDER

Build your coffee order in Korean

One cup, the temperature you want and whether you are staying or taking it away. Optional additions are phrased as questions: decaf, alternative milk and recipe changes depend on the café and may cost extra. For an allergy, confirm ingredients and cross-contact directly; this order is not an allergy guarantee.

Ready-made orders

Say this	Romanisation	Meaning
따뜻한 아메리카노 한 잔 주세요. 포장해 주세요.	Ttatteuthan amerikano han jan juseyo. Pojanghae juseyo.	One hot americano, please. To take away, please.

Say this	Romanisation	Meaning
아이스 아메리카노 한 잔 주세요. 포장해 주세요.	Aiseu amerikano han jan juseyo. Pojanghae juseyo.	One iced americano, please. To take away, please.
따뜻한 카페라떼 한 잔 주세요. 포장해 주세요.	Ttatteuthan kaperatte han jan juseyo. Pojanghae juseyo.	One hot café latte, please. To take away, please.
아이스 카페라떼 한 잔 주세요. 포장해 주세요.	Aiseu kaperatte han jan juseyo. Pojanghae juseyo.	One iced café latte, please. To take away, please.
따뜻한 바닐라라떼 한 잔 주세요. 포장해 주세요.	Ttatteuthan banillaratte han jan juseyo. Pojanghae juseyo.	One hot vanilla latte, please. To take away, please.
아이스 바닐라라떼 한 잔 주세요. 포장해 주세요.	Aiseu banillaratte han jan juseyo. Pojanghae juseyo.	One iced vanilla latte, please. To take away, please.
아이스 아인슈페너 한 잔 주세요. 포장해 주세요.	Aiseu ainsyupeneo han jan juseyo. Pojanghae juseyo.	One iced einspänner, please. To take away, please.
따뜻한 핸드드립 커피 한 잔 주세요. 포장해 주세요.	Ttatteuthan haendeudeurip keopi han jan juseyo. Pojanghae juseyo.	One hot hand-drip coffee, please. To take away, please.
아이스 핸드드립 커피 한 잔 주세요. 포장해 주세요.	Aiseu haendeudeurip keopi han jan juseyo. Pojanghae juseyo.	One iced hand-drip coffee, please. To take away, please.
따뜻한 믹스커피 한 잔 주세요. 포장해 주세요.	Ttatteuthan mikseukeopi han jan juseyo. Pojanghae juseyo.	One hot coffee mix, please. To take away, please.

Add-on requests

Korean	Romanisation	Meaning
디카페인 되나요?	Dikapein doenayo?	Is decaf available?
우유를 오트밀크로 바꿀 수 있나요?	Uyureul oteumilkeuro bakkul su innayo?	Can you replace the milk with oat milk?
얼음을 적게 넣어 주실 수 있나요?	Eoreumeul jeokge neoeo jusil su innayo?	Could you use less ice?
시럽을 적게 넣어 주실 수 있나요?	Sireobeul jeokge neoeo jusil su innayo?	Could you use less syrup?
샷 추가 되나요?	Syat chuga doenayo?	Can I add an espresso shot?
포장해 주세요.	Pojanghae juseyo.	To take away, please.
매장에서 마실게요.	Maejangeseo masilgeyo.	I'll drink it here.

> The website builds these sentences interactively; this print table shows the same phrases. Ask politely — not every café offers every option.

SMALL PRACTICAL WINS

At the kiosk, one screen at a time

Kiosks differ, but the sequence is usually familiar. An English menu may help; if you cannot find it, show your Korean order to a staff member rather than guessing through paid options.

1. **Choose the menu** — Look for coffee or beverages, then your drink. Names may appear in Korean or English. Check the item picture, size and total rather than assuming the first tile is the basic version.
2. **Set temperature & options** — HOT / 따뜻한 (ttatteuthan) and ICE / 아이스 (aiseu) are common. Select extra shots or syrup only if wanted; some signature drinks have a fixed recipe.
3. **Here or takeaway, then pay** — 매장 (maejang) means in-store; 포장 (pojang) means takeaway. Check the final amount. Foreign cards do not work on every kiosk or domestic payment option; ask staff if your card is

rejected.

4. **Keep your number** — Take the receipt or order ticket, watch the collection screen or listen for your number. Some shops give a vibrating pager. Collect at the counter, then return reusable cups and trays where requested.

SEVEN STARTING POINTS

Coffeehouses worth building a day around

A curated starting list, not a ranking or a live opening-hours feed. Historic rooms, contemporary nostalgia, roasting craft and architecture each offer a different reason to go. Follow the operator or tourism listing to confirm the branch, menu and access before visiting.



Coffeehouse	Area & address	Why go	Pair it with
Hakrim Dabang · 학림다방	Hyehwa / Daehak-ro — 119 Daehak-ro, Jongno-gu · 2F	A café established in 1956, tied to artists and intellectuals. Visit Korea highlights Vienna coffee and cream cheesecake; listen to the room as well as ordering a cup.	Daehak-ro theatre streets and a book from your reading list.
Dok-Dabang / Doksuri Dabang · 독수리다방	Sinchon — 36 Yeonse-ro, Seodaemun-gu · 8F	A student and literary meeting place whose story continued with its 2013 reopening. Visit Seoul describes the photos and note-sharing bulletin board.	A look around Sinchon's university neighbourhood.
Coffee Hanyakbang · 커피한약방	Euljiro — 16-6 Samil-daero 12-gil, Jung-gu	A contemporary nostalgic coffeehouse hidden in older commercial alleys. The operator's herbal-prescription metaphor is about care in brewing, not medical benefits or centuries of café history.	A considerate wander through Euljiro's working streets.
Fritz Coffee Company · Dohwa · 프릳츠 도화점	Mapo / Dohwa — 17 Saechang-ro 2-gil, Mapo-gu	An independent roasting-and-bakery stop for comparing a crafted coffee with your everyday takeaway. Use the official directory to select Dohwa rather than another Fritz branch.	A neighbourhood stroll around Mapo and Gongdeok.

Coffeehouse	Area & address	Why go	Pair it with
Anthracite · Hapjeong · 앤트러사이트 합정	Hapjeong — 10 Tojeong-ro 5-gil, Mapo-gu	Visit Seoul describes a former shoe factory retaining industrial elements. Come for the conversation between a working building's past and a contemporary coffee space.	Hapjeong's smaller streets and nearby bookshops.
Onion · Anguk · 어니언 안국	Anguk — 5 Gyedong-gil, Jongno-gu	A hanok café and bakery described by Visit Korea. Traditional architectural surroundings do not make this a historic dabang; it is a contemporary café experience.	Anguk and a respectful daytime neighbourhood visit; follow Bukchon's visitor restrictions.
Center Coffee · Seoul Forest · 센터커피 서울숲	Seongsu / Seoul Forest — 28-11 Seoulsup 2-gil, Seongdong-gu	A specialty coffee stop beside Seoul Forest, with a park-facing setting described by Visit Korea. Check the current beans and brewing menu at the shop.	A Seoul Forest park break and Seongsu's contemporary streets.

Hakrim Dabang — official listing →

Dok-Dabang / Doksuri Dabang — official listing →

Coffee Hanyakbang — official listing →

Fritz Coffee Company · Dohwa — official listing →

Anthracite · Hapjeong — official listing →

Onion · Anguk — official listing →

Center Coffee · Seoul Forest — official listing →

> Venue details come from operator or official destination listings reviewed October 2026. Check current hours, closures and seating rules before you go.

BUDGET WITHOUT SURPRISES

What might a cup cost?

Illustrative planning estimates only, not live menus, guaranteed prices or quoted offers. Size, hot/iced versions, location, beans and additions all change the bill. Look at the displayed menu before ordering.

Budget takeaway · ₩1,500–3,000

- A rough Americano allowance. Mega Coffee, Compose Coffee and Paik's Coffee are examples of budget chains, not endorsements or promises of a particular current price.

Standard chain · ₩3,500–6,000

- A useful ballpark for a basic coffee; larger sizes, seasonal menus and milk drinks may fall outside it.

Specialty espresso · ₩5,000–8,000

- You may be paying for bean selection, roasting and an individual shop's setting as well as the drink. More expensive does not automatically mean better for your taste.

Cream signatures / hand-drip · ₩6,000–10,000+

- Rare beans and elaborate signature recipes can cost more. Ask about a hand-drip bean's price before choosing it.

> **Two different purchases**
> A budget coffee buys a convenient cup. A specialty visit can buy a little time, attention and discovery. Leave room for both, rather than treating one as a cheaper version of the other.

A GOOD GUEST

The small rules that make a café work

A comfortable seat does not mean an unlimited desk rental. Policies belong to the individual café; ask before settling in for a long reading or work session.

Seats & screens

- 1인 1음료 (irin il eumnyo) means one drink per person; some seated venues require it.
- Check laptop, outlet, photography and time-limit policies. Avoid occupying a large table alone when a small shop is busy.

Quiet & considerate

- Keep calls brief or step outside. Ask before photographing identifiable customers or staff; a beautiful room is still someone else's afternoon.
- Do not assume an atmospheric heritage café welcomes prolonged laptop work.

Pay & return

- Payment is commonly taken when ordering; follow the shop's process. Tipping is not usually expected in ordinary Korean cafés.
- 반납대 (bannapdae) is the return counter. Return trays, reusable cups and pagers where staff indicate.

Reading without rushing

- Pick an appropriate café and a quieter time, buy a drink, then check whether you may stay with your book. Libraries offer a different kind of long reading session.

Find a book on the Settle Seoul Bookshelf →

THREE AFTERNOONS

Follow a coffee trail

These are self-guided inspirations, not measured walking routes or guaranteed business itineraries. Check each venue first, adapt to weather and energy, and leave space for an unexpected bookshop or side street.

Euljiro · alleys & nostalgia

- Begin with Coffee Hanyakbang's operator link, then explore the surrounding working streets and retro storefronts. Respect workshops and deliveries; do not wander into private premises for a photograph.
- Pair the coffee pause with a look around central Seoul's older commercial neighbourhoods.

Coffee Hanyakbang →

Hyehwa · pages & performance

- Make Hakrim the coffee stop and Daehak-ro's theatre streets the backdrop. A book or a performance can turn a caffeine break into a cultural afternoon; check theatre language and booking details separately.

Choose something to read →

Seongsu / Seoul Forest · a newer scene

- Explore converted industrial spaces and contemporary café design, then take a park break around Seoul Forest. Choose the café from its current branch listing rather than treating an online photograph as a locator.
- This is an area to explore, not a claim that every roastery is in a former factory.

Explore Seoul's neighbourhoods →

WORDS WORTH KEEPING

A tiny café glossary

Romanisation is a pronunciation aid, not an exact substitute for listening. Showing the Korean text is often the clearest way to order.

The counter

- 커피 · keopi · coffee
- 다방 · dabang · tea/coffee room
- 한 잔 주세요 · han jan juseyo · one cup, please
- 추천해 주세요 · chucheonhae juseyo · please recommend something

Checking the menu

- 디카페인 되나요? · dikapein doenayo? · is decaf available?
- 달아요? · darayo? · is it sweet?
- 우유가 들어가나요? · uyuga deureoganayo? · does it contain milk?
- 포장 · pojang · takeaway / 매장 · maejang · in-store

A little Korean goes a long way →

SOURCES

Sources & verification · Coffee in Korea: From Dabang to Iced Americano

Reviewed October 2026. Prices in this guide are estimates, not live menu prices.

- MAFRA / Korea.net: coffee industry release, 21 August 2026
  https://www.korea.net/Government/Briefing-Room/Press-Releases/view?articleId=2018368&insttCode=A260109&type=N
- Ministry of Culture: The Dynamic Evolution of Korea's Coffee Scene, March 2026
  https://www.mcst.go.kr/english/useful/month202603.jsp
- Visit Korea: Hakrim
  https://english.visitkorea.or.kr/svc/contents/contentsView.do?vcontsId=47863
- Visit Seoul: Dok-Dabang (updated 28 September 2026)
  https://english.visitseoul.net/eat/doksuri-dabang_/28403
- Coffee Hanyakbang: operator website
  https://coffeehanyakbang.com
- Fritz: official store directory
  https://m.en.fritz.co.kr/contact.html
- Coffee Hanyakbang: official destination listing
  https://english.visitseoul.net/restaurants/coffeehanyakbang/ENPyiaqhs
- Anthracite · Hapjeong: official destination listing
  https://english.visitseoul.net/area/Anthracite-Coffee-Roasters-Hapjeong-Branch/ENP020585
- Onion · Anguk: official destination listing
  https://english.visitkorea.or.kr/svc/contents/contentsView.do?vcontsId=191156
- Center Coffee · Seoul Forest: official destination listing
  https://english.visitkorea.or.kr/svc/contents/contentsView.do?vcontsId=177422

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EVERYDAY LIFE · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Study Cafés in Seoul: Where to Study, Work & Concentrate.

A desk when you need one. Silence when you want it.

Online guide · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/study-cafes-in-seoul

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

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> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- A 스터디카페 is usually paid study space, not an ordinary coffee shop.
- Laptop permission is not phone-call permission. Check the actual zone.
- Test one session before committing to a bundle or monthly pass.

Official routes: PASSPLUS+ secondary listing · Official study-space brand sites · TOZ Meeting booking service · SparkPlus Lounge finder · Seoul Metropolitan Library.

A ROOM FOR YOUR ROUTINE

Not a café with a laptop policy

A Korean 스터디카페 (seuteodi kape) is often a quiet, paid, self-service study venue: you buy time or access to a desk rather than order a latte and hope you can stay. Students, exam candidates, postgraduate researchers and Korean learners use these spaces to separate concentrated work from home. Some freelancers and remote workers can use laptop zones too—but a day full of calls belongs elsewhere unless the venue explicitly supports it.

Why the format works

- A dedicated desk, lighting and a shared expectation of concentration can turn an unfocused afternoon into a routine. Exam preparation is an important part of the culture, without making every user an exam candidate.
- Self-service access can be convenient, but not every venue is unstaffed, open 24 hours or easy to register for with a foreign phone.

Choose the right kind of room

- An ordinary café sells refreshments and social space. A study café sells a place to concentrate. A meeting room sells permission to gather and talk.
- Coworking is more work-oriented, but lounge access does not automatically include calls, a private office, meeting rooms or legal permission to work in Korea. Your visa conditions still apply.

AN INDEPENDENT EXAMPLE

PASSPLUS+ near Sinseol-dong: what is actually known

패스플러스노트북스터디카페 (Paeseu Peulleoseu noteubuk seuteodi kape) is presented here as a specific independently run site, not an established national franchise. A published secondary LocalPlace listing places it in Yongdu-dong, Dongdaemun-gu, near the Sinseol-dong area. We have not obtained current primary confirmation of operation, access, amenities or tariffs.

Listing-reported, not visit-ready confirmation

- The secondary listing gives 249-7 Yongdu-dong, building 4F, unit 401, and reports 24-hour operation. These details remain unverified with the current operator; do not plan a late-night trip on that basis.
- Laptop-friendly areas and quiet no-laptop areas are reported descriptions, not a verified floor plan. Confirm the exact seat's typing rules. No meeting rooms are claimed here.

Check before travelling

- Search the exact Korean business name, compare the current address and recent notices, and contact the venue about registration, foreign cards and access hours.
- No map pin is added: a secondary historical/listing address is not enough for a precise current location. No affiliation, booking availability or endorsement is implied.

Time	Published example
1 hour	₩3,000
2 hours	₩4,000
3 hours	₩5,000

Historical prices from a secondary listing (bizw.kr), shown only as published examples — confirm current prices and hours directly with the venue.

Published example prices—not live checkout
Only the 1-, 2- and 3-hour figures confirmed in the retrieved listing are reproduced below. Longer bundles and period prices supplied in the proposal are omitted because their complete terms were not verified.

KNOW YOUR ZONE

Six spaces, six different permissions

The room name is a clue, not a contract. Ask about the particular seat and activity before settling in; attractive partitions or a glass door do not establish soundproofing.

YOUR FIRST VISIT

From registration to checkout

A generalized access walkthrough, not documentation of PASSPLUS+ or any specific kiosk. Individual systems differ, and guest access, English menus and foreign-phone registration are not guaranteed. If blocked, use the branch's support contact and ask about a supported alternative before paying.

Choose the branch · 지점 확인 (jijeom hwagin)

- Check the exact business and entrance, access hours and permitted zone. A brand name alone does not establish the rules. Save the branch's support contact before arriving at an unstaffed entrance.

Register or ask about guest access · 회원가입 / 비회원 (hoewon-gaip / bihoewon)

- Registration (회원가입, hoewon-gaip) may require a Korean number and SMS verification (문자 인증, munja injeung). A foreign or tourist SIM may fail identity matching. Guest access is not universal: ask the operator for supported onboarding, never use somebody else's identity.

Choose the pass · 시간권 / 기간권 / 지정석 (sigangwon / gigangwon / jijeongseok)

- Select hours, an hour bundle, a calendar period or an assigned seat. Read expiry, refunds, outside-time counting and any locker fee before paying. A period pass may still require a free seat.

Choose the zone and seat · 좌석 선택 (jwaseok seontaek)

- Read the seat chart and check that keyboard typing is permitted. A quiet-looking seat may be a no-laptop zone. Check whether the seat is occupied, reserved or temporarily held before selecting it.

Pay and keep access details · 결제 (gyeolje)

- Confirm the total and keep the receipt. Entry may use a QR code, PIN, SMS or card, depending on the system. Foreign cards and domestic-only payment options vary. If payment fails, contact the operator instead of repeatedly purchasing tickets.

Enter and take breaks correctly · 입실 / 외출 (ipsil / oechul)

- 입실 records entry. 외출 may mark a temporary outing; it does not necessarily pause the clock or preserve your seat. Follow the displayed exit and re-entry process, and do not let strangers follow you through a controlled door.

Finish the session · 퇴실 / 이용종료 (toesil / iyong jongnyo)

- Clear and clean your desk, then complete checkout or end-use on the kiosk/app as required. Closing the door alone may not stop billing. Confirm the session ended and retain a receipt if there is a discrepancy.

Step	Kiosk label	Say it	What to do
Choose the branch	**지점 확인**	jijeom hwagin	Check the exact business and entrance, access hours and permitted zone. A brand name alone does not establish the rules. Save the branch's support contact before arriving at an unstaffed entrance.
Register or ask about guest access	**회원가입 / 비회원**	hoewon-gaip / bihoewon	Registration (회원가입, hoewon-gaip) may require a Korean number and SMS verification (문자 인증, munja injeung). A foreign or tourist SIM may fail identity matching. Guest access is not universal: ask the operator for supported onboarding, never use somebody else's identity.
Choose the pass	**시간권 / 기간권 / 지정석**	sigangwon / gigangwon / jijeongseok	Select hours, an hour bundle, a calendar period or an assigned seat. Read expiry, refunds, outside-time counting and any locker fee before paying. A period pass may still require a free seat.
Choose the zone and seat	**좌석 선택**	jwaseok seontaek	Read the seat chart and check that keyboard typing is permitted. A quiet-looking seat may be a no-laptop zone. Check whether the seat is occupied, reserved or temporarily held before selecting it.
Pay and keep access details	**결제**	gyeolje	Confirm the total and keep the receipt. Entry may use a QR code, PIN, SMS or card, depending on the system. Foreign cards and domestic-only payment options vary. If payment fails, contact the operator instead of repeatedly purchasing tickets.
Enter and take breaks correctly	**입실 / 외출**	ipsil / oechul	입실 records entry. 외출 may mark a temporary outing; it does not necessarily pause the clock or preserve your seat. Follow the displayed exit and re-entry process, and do not let strangers follow you through a controlled door.
Finish the session	**퇴실 / 이용종료**	toesil / iyong jongnyo	Clear and clean your desk, then complete checkout or end-use on the kiosk/app as required. Closing the door alone may not stop billing. Confirm the session ended and retain a receipt if there is a discrepancy.

CHOOSE A RHYTHM

Which pass suits me?

Start with how often you will actually use the space, not the biggest discount on the screen. These are decision prompts, not personalized financial advice or a live offer.

One-off: Start with a single-use time pass

- Buy only the hours you need, and test the seat, lighting and noise before committing.
- Check minimum time, overtime charges and whether a day pass is cheaper for a long visit. A first visit is not a reason to buy 50 hours.

2–3 visits a week: Compare a prepaid hour bundle

- Flexible hours can suit a changing class or work timetable without buying every calendar day.
- Estimate your actual hours and use them before expiry. Ask whether breaks consume time, unused hours roll over, and refunds or pauses are possible.

Daily: Compare a period / open-seat pass

- Regular attendance may make a calendar-period pass easier to budget than separate sessions.
- A four-week period does not guarantee an available or fixed desk. Check crowding, re-entry, access hours and holiday closures before paying.

Fixed desk: Ask for an assigned-seat agreement

- A designated desk can make sense for a sustained exam or research project if you need the same workstation.
- Confirm the exact desk, term, overnight storage, locker cost and cancellation rules in writing. A period pass alone is not an assigned-seat contract.

Group meeting: Book a talking-permitted room

- Discussion needs an explicitly permitted room, not several seats in a silent study zone.
- Check per-room versus per-person billing, group size, sound isolation, equipment and permission for calls, tutoring or filming. Book ahead; individual passes may not cover the room.

Which pass suits you?

If you go…	Consider	Why	Check first
One-off	Start with a single-use time pass	Buy only the hours you need, and test the seat, lighting and noise before committing.	Check minimum time, overtime charges and whether a day pass is cheaper for a long visit. A first visit is not a reason to buy 50 hours.
2–3 visits a week	Compare a prepaid hour bundle	Flexible hours can suit a changing class or work timetable without buying every calendar day.	Estimate your actual hours and use them before expiry. Ask whether breaks consume time, unused hours roll over, and refunds or pauses are possible.
Daily	Compare a period / open-seat pass	Regular attendance may make a calendar-period pass easier to budget than separate sessions.	A four-week period does not guarantee an available or fixed desk. Check crowding, re-entry, access hours and holiday closures before paying.
Fixed desk	Ask for an assigned-seat agreement	A designated desk can make sense for a sustained exam or research project if you need the same workstation.	Confirm the exact desk, term, overnight storage, locker cost and cancellation rules in writing. A period pass alone is not an assigned-seat contract.
Group meeting	Book a talking-permitted room	Discussion needs an explicitly permitted room, not several seats in a silent study zone.	Check per-room versus per-person billing, group size, sound isolation, equipment and permission for calls, tutoring or filming. Book ahead; individual passes may not cover the room.

Indicative budget bands

Use	Typical range	Note
Short visit · hourly rate for a 1–2h session	₩2,000–6,000 / hour	Check the minimum purchase and additional-time rate.

Use	Typical range	Note
4–6 hours	₩5,000–12,000 / session	Compare time limits and re-entry terms, not just the headline amount.
8–12 hours	₩8,000–16,000 / session	A long-session ticket may differ from a calendar-day pass.
Prepaid 50 hours	₩70,000–110,000 / bundle	Unused hours may expire; check the validity period.
Four-week open seat	₩100,000–200,000 / period	An open seat is not a guaranteed assigned desk.
Assigned premium seat	₩180,000–300,000+ / period	Confirm the period length and what storage is included.

On the website this is an interactive selector; every option is listed here. Ranges are estimates, not quoted prices.

READ THE SMALL PRINT

What the pass names mean

Look for the billing unit, expiry and seat entitlement together. A cheaper headline can be expensive if unused time expires or you buy the wrong kind of access.

Short sessions

- 시간권 (sigangwon), a time pass, or 1회권 (ilhoegwon), a single-use pass, buys a specified session. 일일권 (ir ilgwon), a day pass, may end at a fixed time rather than 24 hours after entry.
- Ask how overtime is charged and whether leaving requires a separate temporary-exit step.

Hours or calendar days?

- 시간정액권 (sigan jeongaekgwon) is a prepaid hour bundle with its own validity period. 기간권 (gigangwon) / 정기권 (jeonggigwon) grants access over a stated calendar period.
- Confirm expiry, pausing, refunds, re-entry and whether time is counted outside. Unused hours do not necessarily roll over.

Your desk—or any free desk

- 지정석 (jijeongseok) means assigned seat. 자유석 (jayuseok) means an unassigned/open seat. A monthly or four-week pass does not by itself guarantee a fixed or available desk.
- Check whether the same seat can be reserved, whether belongings can stay overnight and what happens during busy exam periods.

Storage is a separate question

- 사물함 (samulham) means locker. Ask about rental period, size, deposits and what may be stored.
- Keep valuables with you; neither a desk reservation nor a partition makes storage secure. Photograph the pass terms, not other readers.

A BUDGET, NOT A QUOTATION

Illustrative Seoul planning bands

The following are indicative budgeting bands supplied for planning—not representative verified market averages, operator quotations or live prices. Actual menus may fall outside them. Compare the branch's dated tariff and total before paying; no automatic savings calculation is made.

Short visit · hourly rate for a 1–2h session · ₩2,000–6,000 / hour

- Check the minimum purchase and additional-time rate.

4–6 hours · ₩5,000–12,000 / session

- Compare time limits and re-entry terms, not just the headline amount.

8–12 hours · ₩8,000–16,000 / session

- A long-session ticket may differ from a calendar-day pass.

Prepaid 50 hours · ₩70,000–110,000 / bundle

- Unused hours may expire; check the validity period.

Four-week open seat · ₩100,000–200,000 / period

- An open seat is not a guaranteed assigned desk.

Assigned premium seat · ₩180,000–300,000+ / period

- Confirm the period length and what storage is included.

Keep the three price categories separate
General budgeting bands are illustrative. PASSPLUS+ figures are published secondary-listing examples. A booking service's displayed room price applies only to that room and its current terms. None is a guaranteed checkout price here.

START WITH THE OPERATOR

Brands and alternatives to compare

Use official sites to find a branch, then verify the branch itself. These are different business models, not interchangeable recommendations or a guarantee of national uniformity. Links were reviewed on 17 October 2026; no study-café branch coordinates are invented.

Zaksim · 작심스터디카페

- Best for: Comparing study-focused environments and different seat styles.
- Use the brand site as a starting point; confirm the selected branch's laptop zones, desk types, passes and entry method. Brand imagery is not a promise of identical facilities everywhere.

Lehaim · 르하임스터디카페

- Best for: Looking for a neighbourhood study-café option.
- The brand domain responds but restricted automated access during our review. Confirm the branch through its current business listing; we have not verified branch facilities, hours or tariffs.

Chosim · 초심스터디카페

- Best for: Starting with an official branch finder rather than a generic map result.
- The official directory lists branch names and addresses. Ask your chosen branch about quiet versus laptop seating, refreshments, seat availability and registration before buying a bundle.

TOZ Study Center · 토즈 스터디센터

- Best for: Comparing an individual study-centre arrangement.
- The official site offers study-seat reservation and trial enquiries. Confirm the centre's conditions. This is separate from TOZ Meeting and does not imply meeting-room access.

TOZ Meeting Center · 토즈 모임센터

- Best for: A booked room for talking, group revision or an interview.
- Choose the actual centre, room, date and capacity in the booking service. Check the total, equipment and permitted use; room rental is not a general study-café pass.

SparkPlus Lounge Pass · 스파크플러스

- Best for: Comparing a work-oriented lounge subscription with study-space passes.
- The official Lounge Pass page and lounge finder describe access options. Check participating locations, subscription terms, calls and meeting-room charges; this is not automatically café-style walk-in access.

Brand	Best for	Check before you go
Zaksim · 작심스터디카페	Comparing study-focused environments and different seat styles.	Use the brand site as a starting point; confirm the selected branch's laptop zones, desk types, passes and entry method. Brand imagery is not a promise of identical facilities everywhere.
Lehaim · 르하임스터디카페	Looking for a neighbourhood study-café option.	The brand domain responds but restricted automated access during our review. Confirm the branch through its current business listing; we have not verified branch facilities, hours or tariffs.
Chosim · 초심스터디카페	Starting with an official branch finder rather than a generic map result.	The official directory lists branch names and addresses. Ask your chosen branch about quiet versus laptop seating, refreshments, seat availability and registration before buying a bundle.
TOZ Study Center · 토즈 스터디센터	Comparing an individual study-centre arrangement.	The official site offers study-seat reservation and trial enquiries. Confirm the centre's conditions. This is separate from TOZ Meeting and does not imply meeting-room access.
TOZ Meeting Center · 토즈 모임센터	A booked room for talking, group revision or an interview.	Choose the actual centre, room, date and capacity in the booking service. Check the total, equipment and permitted use; room rental is not a general study-café pass.
SparkPlus Lounge Pass · 스파크플러스	Comparing a work-oriented lounge subscription with study-space passes.	The official Lounge Pass page and lounge finder describe access options. Check participating locations, subscription terms, calls and meeting-room charges; this is not automatically café-style walk-in access.

Zaksim · 작심스터디카페 — official site →

Lehaim · 르하임스터디카페 — official site →

Chosim · 초심스터디카페 — official site →

TOZ Study Center · 토즈 스터디센터 — official site →

TOZ Meeting Center · 토즈 모임센터 — official site →

SparkPlus Lounge Pass · 스파크플러스 — official site →

WHEN YOUR WORK NEEDS A VOICE

Book a room, not a silent-zone seat

Group revision, interviews and meetings need a talking-permitted room. 스터디룸 (seuteodirum) / 회의실 (hoeuisil) is not automatic permission for paid tutoring, filming or a loud call—and not proof of soundproofing. Get permission for your intended activity.

Illustrative room budgets

- 2-person room: about ₩7,500–15,000/hour; 4–6-person room: ₩7,000–25,000/hour; 8–10-person room: ₩20,000–50,000/hour. Planning examples only, not verified averages or comparable like-for-like tariffs.
- Establish whether the price is per room or per person, the minimum duration, taxes, weekend premiums, setup time and cancellation charges.

What an official example establishes

- TOZ Meeting's reviewed page displayed a Hongdae A-type room at ₩7,500/hour. It is a branch/room-specific displayed example—not a universal 2-person rate or a promise for your date.
- Check the selected room's capacity and current booking total. Advance reservations and recurring rentals have their own availability and conditions.

Equipment is not universal

- Ask about a whiteboard, monitor, projector, HDMI connections, Wi-Fi and power. Check included equipment versus extra charges.
- For a confidential interview or video call, ask about sound isolation and test connectivity. A fast Wi-Fi claim does not guarantee a reliable call.

Compare TOZ Meeting rooms and current terms →

A work-oriented alternative

- SparkPlus's validated Lounge Pass site and location finder offer a coworking-lounge comparison. Check plan-specific access and call rules.
- Meeting rooms may need a separate reservation and fee. A shared lounge is not automatically private or quiet enough for an interview.

MAKE THE DESK WORK FOR YOU

Facilities worth checking before buying

A beautiful photograph tells you little about a three-hour session. Confirm the facilities that matter to your body and work; no venue is promised every item on this list.

Work essentials

- Reliable Wi-Fi for your task, accessible power sockets, desk depth, chair adjustment, lamp position and glare.
- For calls: explicit permission, a suitable area and actual connectivity. Headphones do not make speaking acceptable in a silent zone.

Comfort and breaks

- Heating/cooling, drinking water, bathroom location and access, rest space and food rules. Coffee, tea and snacks may be absent or charged separately.
- Check stairs/lift access, step-free entry and bathroom accessibility directly if relevant. Do not infer them from a building floor number.

Useful extras

- Printers, scanning, paper fees, lockers and overnight storage are branch-specific. Do not upload confidential documents to a shared computer without understanding the risks.
- Ask where calls can be taken and whether a phone booth is available, bookable or chargeable.

Security and support

- Save the operator's support route for entry, payment or safety problems. Never share your access PIN or post a usable QR code.
- At an unstaffed venue, know the exit route. Do not assume the venue is monitored or that support is available all night.

QUIET IS A SHARED RESOURCE

Etiquette that keeps the room calm

Exam-focused rooms often set stricter noise expectations than cafés. Follow the posted rules even if your own task feels casual. There is no universal laptop, snack, phone or 24-hour policy.

Small sounds add up

- Keyboard typing, mouse clicks, snack wrappers and whispering can disturb a silent room. Choose a laptop zone and a quiet keyboard; move calls to a permitted area.
- Use headphones without audible leakage. Do not hold a video meeting from a quiet desk just because everyone else is studying.

Breaks and food

- Use the designated food/rest area and follow drink rules. Check whether outside time is deducted before taking a long meal break.
- Do not hold extra seats with bags. Follow the reservation and temporary-exit process, then clean your desk at the end.

Respect privacy

- Do not photograph, record or film other readers. A room reservation does not establish consent from neighbours or permission for commercial filming.
- Keep personal documents and login screens out of view; clear shared surfaces and remove rubbish.

A FEW WORDS REMOVE FRICTION

Korean phrases to ask before you pay

Copy a question to show the operator. Romanisation is a reading bridge, not an identity-verification workaround. The glossary below also helps decode the seat chart and access screens.

노트북 타이핑 가능한 좌석이 있나요? · Noteubuk taiping ganeunghan jwaseogi innayo?

- Is there a seat where laptop typing is allowed?

외국인도 회원가입할 수 있나요? · Oegugindo hoewon-gaiphal su innayo?

- Can foreign residents / foreigners register too?

스터디룸 예약할 수 있나요? · Seuteodirum yeyakhal su innayo?

- Can I reserve a study room?

외출 중에도 시간이 차감되나요? · Oechul jungedo sigani chagamdoenayo?

- Is time deducted while I am outside too?

해외 카드로 결제할 수 있나요? · Haeoe kadeuro gyeoljehal su innayo?

- Can I pay with a foreign-issued card?

전화 통화는 어디에서 할 수 있나요? · Jeonhwa tonghwaneun eodieseo hal su innayo?

- Where can I make a phone call?

이 이용권은 언제까지 쓸 수 있나요? · I iyonggwoneun eonjekkaji sseul su innayo?

- Until when can I use this pass?

Korean	Romanisation	Meaning
노트북 타이핑 가능한 좌석이 있나요?	Noteubuk taiping ganeunghan jwaseogi innayo?	Is there a seat where laptop typing is allowed?
외국인도 회원가입할 수 있나요?	Oegugindo hoewon-gaiphal su innayo?	Can foreign residents / foreigners register too?
스터디룸 예약할 수 있나요?	Seuteodirum yeyakhal su innayo?	Can I reserve a study room?
외출 중에도 시간이 차감되나요?	Oechul jungedo sigani chagamdoenayo?	Is time deducted while I am outside too?
해외 카드로 결제할 수 있나요?	Haeoe kadeuro gyeoljehal su innayo?	Can I pay with a foreign-issued card?
전화 통화는 어디에서 할 수 있나요?	Jeonhwa tonghwaneun eodieseo hal su innayo?	Where can I make a phone call?
이 이용권은 언제까지 쓸 수 있나요?	I iyonggwoneun eonjekkaji sseul su innayo?	Until when can I use this pass?

Screen glossary
정숙존 (jeongsukjon): silent zone · 노트북존 (noteubukjon): laptop zone · 입실 (ipsil): entry · 퇴실 (toesil): checkout · 시간권 (sigangwon): time pass · 기간권 (gigangwon): period pass · 지정석 (jijeongseok): assigned seat · 자유석 (jayuseok): open seat.

CHOOSE THE SPACE, NOT THE TREND

Which kind of place fits today?

For one chapter, a library or welcoming café may be enough. For concentrated daily revision, try a study venue. For discussion, reserve a room. Choose the permission and routine you need rather than the prettiest desk.

Study café

- Solo revision, research or quiet laptop work in a permitted zone
- Paid time or pass
- Typing, calls, registration and re-entry depend on the branch.

Public library

- Reading and study without buying a drink
- Often free reading access; check policy
- Opening days, seating, laptop areas and borrowing eligibility vary.

Ordinary café

- A relaxed short reading session or informal conversation
- Drinks / food
- A purchase is not an unlimited desk rental; check laptop and time policies.

Meeting room

- Group discussion, interviews or a permitted call
- Booked room or per-person tariff
- Check capacity, equipment, sound isolation and allowed activities.

Coworking lounge

- Work-oriented seating and a professional routine
- Day access / subscription where offered
- Calls and rooms may have separate rules and fees; access is plan-specific.

Option	Best for	Cost	Watch for
Study café	Solo revision, research or quiet laptop work in a permitted zone	Paid time or pass	Typing, calls, registration and re-entry depend on the branch.
Public library	Reading and study without buying a drink	Often free reading access; check policy	Opening days, seating, laptop areas and borrowing eligibility vary.
Ordinary café	A relaxed short reading session or informal conversation	Drinks / food	A purchase is not an unlimited desk rental; check laptop and time policies.
Meeting room	Group discussion, interviews or a permitted call	Booked room or per-person tariff	Check capacity, equipment, sound isolation and allowed activities.
Coworking lounge	Work-oriented seating and a professional routine	Day access / subscription where offered	Calls and rooms may have separate rules and fees; access is plan-specific.

SOURCES

Sources & verification · Study Cafés in Seoul: Where to Study, Work & Concentrate

Reviewed October 2026. Check the official links before relying on dates, fees or rules.

- PASSPLUS+ · secondary LocalPlace listing (not current primary confirmation)
  https://bizw.kr/new-open/301739
- Zaksim · 작심스터디카페 · brand / service site
  https://www.zaksim.co.kr/

- Lehaim · 르하임스터디카페 · brand / service site
  https://lchayimstudycafe.com/
- Chosim · 초심스터디카페 · brand / service site
  https://chosimstudy.co.kr/store/store.html
- TOZ Study Center · 토즈 스터디센터 · brand / service site
  https://tozstudy.kr/
- TOZ Meeting Center · 토즈 모임센터 · brand / service site
  https://moim.toz.co.kr/
- SparkPlus Lounge Pass · 스파크플러스 · brand / service site
  https://www.sparkplus.co/lounge
- SparkPlus · participating lounge finder
  https://www.sparkplus.co/place/lounge
- Seoul Metropolitan Library · official policies and facilities
  https://lib.seoul.go.kr/

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Settle. Seoul

TOPIC BOOKLET · TWO LINKED GUIDES

Hiking & Temples: Exploring Seoul’s Mountains and Buddhist Traditions.

From subway platform to granite summit — and how to visit a mountain temple respectfully.

Online guide · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/hiking-in-seoul-bukhansan-and-beyond

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

Emergencies
Call 119 for mountain rescue, fire or medical emergencies. State the mountain, trail and nearest numbered rescue marker. Interpretation: 1330 (Korea travel helpline).

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2. — A different Seoul, one train ride away
3. — The Ui–Sinseol approach, without the confusion
4. — Which hike fits today?
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6. — Five other mountains, five different days
7. — Six checks before you follow a blue dot
8. — One published itinerary, not every Baegundae hike
9. — Carry what the return journey needs
10. — Small courtesies make narrow paths work
11. — Gimbap on the trail; pajeon after the descent
12. — Combine a mountain with a little culture
13. Part two · Temples: Visiting Korean Temples: Etiquette, Bowing & Symbols
14. — You do not need to be Buddhist to visit thoughtfully
15. — Where to begin around Seoul
16. — Hapjang, then a small bow
17. — A few respectful Korean phrases
18. — Ten small acts of consideration
19. — Gates, halls and symbols: a visual field guide
20. — Dancheong and lantern light
21. — What a Templestay can include
22. — Casual visit, day programme or overnight?
23. — Three thoughtful combined outings

Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

Hiking in Seoul: Bukhansan & Beyond.

From subway platform to granite summit, quiet forest trails and mountain food.

- Choose the route, not just the mountain; exposed summits are advanced.
- Check KNPS closures, daylight and weather before every hike.
- The five-minute station walk reaches the centre, not the summit.

THE CITY HAS A MOUNTAIN SIDE

A different Seoul, one train ride away

On a weekend train you may find yourself beside older walkers with trekking poles, friends carrying lunch and hikers dressed for a much bigger day than yours. Mountains are woven into ordinary Seoul life. The pleasure is not only a summit photograph: it is a cool forest path, a greeting on the climb and a meal after your boots are back on safe ground.

One national park, two mountain areas

- Bukhansan National Park includes the Bukhansan and Dobongsan areas. Bukhansan is not a single uniform trail, and Dobongsan is not a gentle extension of it.
- Baegundae (백운대), roughly 836–837 metres high, is an exposed granite summit. Its handrails, queues and steep final approach require serious judgement.

There is no summit requirement

- A lower forest walk can be a complete day. Pick terrain that matches the least confident member of your group, not the strongest.
- General difficulty labels below are route-choice guidance, not a guarantee of accessibility, current opening or safety. Turn back without embarrassment.

Exposed granite
Chains do not remove fall risk.

Wet rock & ice
Choose lower paths or cancel.

Return before dark
A summit is always optional.

> **Granite is not a city pavement**
> Rain, ice and strong winds can make exposed rock dangerous. Do not treat Baegundae's chains as a beginner attraction; choose a lower outing when conditions or experience do not fit.

RAIL TO TRAIL

The Ui–Sinseol approach, without the confusion

The 우이신설선 (Ui–Sinseol Line) makes the Ui side practical from central Seoul. Transfer at Sinseol-dong, Bomun or Sungshin Women's University, then take the train north to Bukhansan Ui (북한산우이), the northern terminus. Exit 2 is the official starting hint for the tourism centre, not a claim that the mountain starts at the station.

Your first useful stop

- 5F, Gwangnim (Gwanglim) Building, 52 Samyang-ro 173-gil, Gangbuk-gu, Seoul. About 300 metres / five minutes from Exit 2, according to Visit Seoul. Look for the fifth-floor centre, not the separate KNPS Uiryeong support centre.
- Generally Tuesday–Sunday, 09:00–18:00; closed Mondays and on Seollal and Chuseok according to the newer visitor page. Call 1533-2608 to confirm holiday arrangements.

Advice before equipment

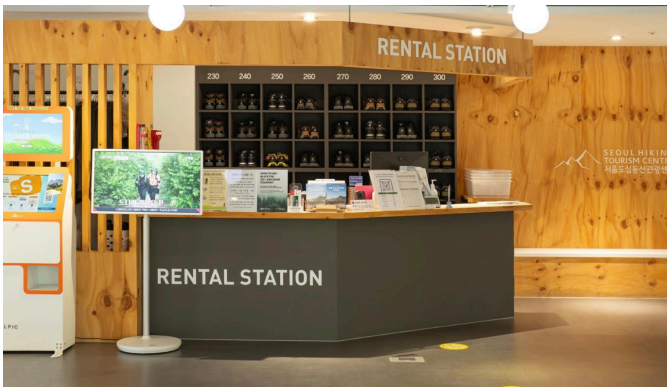
- Ask for route maps, multilingual advice, current trail conditions and the exact entrance and return route. The centre describes rental equipment, storage/lockers and a visitor lounge; availability and rental terms need checking.
- The official 2026 tourism listing says a small equipment-rental fee applies for foreigners. Do not rely on older “free rental” descriptions; confirm cost, deposit, ID, sizes and return deadline directly. Admission to the centre is listed as free.



Ui–Sinseol Line · transfer points → north. Schematic transfer sequence only; intervening stations omitted. Exit 2 → about 300 m / five minutes → fifth-floor hiking centre. Then plan the separate trailhead approach.



Light rail in the foothills.



Photograph: Benjamin Jeary · The rental station inside the Seoul Hiking Tourism Center (서울도심등산관광센터), about a five-minute walk from Bukhansan Ui Station Exit 2. Rental availability, sizes, deposits and fees must be confirmed with the centre directly.

Seoul Hiking Tourism Center	
Address	5F, Gwangnim (Gwanglim) Building, 52 Samyang-ro 173-gil, Gangbuk-gu, Seoul
Hours	09:00–18:00 (generally Tue–Sun; confirm holidays)
Phone	1533-2608

Five minutes is only the first connection
Allow substantial additional travel from the centre to your chosen trail entrance and summit. A taxi or walking approach can change the day; ask where the actual trail begins and what remains after the train.

Centre visitor information & current rental policy →

CHOOSE YOUR TERRAIN

Which hike fits today?

Select the kind of day you actually want. Every suggestion needs the current park notice, appropriate footwear and a realistic return plan. Route names in Korean help you compare signs and ask the centre for advice.

Lower Sogwicheon valley · 소귀천 · Beginner-oriented lower section

- Choose a short forest outing rather than committing to a summit. The lower valley still has uneven surfaces; agree a turnaround point with the hiking centre and check the current access notice. Do not continue uphill simply because other hikers do.

Yeongbong · 영봉 · Intermediate · steep sections

- A climbing day, not a gentle ridge stroll. The Haroojae–Yeongbong section can be steep and slippery. Match the route to your experience, use suitable footwear and keep time and energy for the descent.

Baegundae · 백운대 · Advanced · exposed granite

- Handrails and chains do not make the exposed summit easy. Wet or icy granite, queues and wind increase risk. Visit Seoul's particular Baegundae–Ui Gugok itinerary is 9.98 km with a 4 h 20 min average; that is not every route, your guaranteed time or a station-to-summit estimate.

Jingwansa & Eunpyeong · 진관사 · Cultural visit · choose gentle walking

- Give the temple and nearby hanok village time, then choose only an open lower forest path that suits you. This is a cultural day rather than a promised accessible trail or summit circuit. Respect private homes and temple-only areas.

Kind of day	Suggestion	Level	What to know
Easy nature	Lower Sogwicheon valley · 소귀천	Beginner-oriented lower section	Choose a short forest outing rather than committing to a summit. The lower valley still has uneven surfaces; agree a turnaround point with the hiking centre and check the current access notice. Do not continue uphill simply because other hikers do.
Medium climb	Yeongbong · 영봉	Intermediate · steep sections	A climbing day, not a gentle ridge stroll. The Haroojae–Yeongbong section can be steep and slippery. Match the route to your experience, use suitable footwear and keep time and energy for the descent.
Challenging summit	Baegundae · 백운대	Advanced · exposed granite	Handrails and chains do not make the exposed summit easy. Wet or icy granite, queues and wind increase risk. Visit Seoul's particular Baegundae–Ui Gugok itinerary is 9.98 km with a 4 h 20 min average; that is not every route, your guaranteed time or a station-to-summit estimate.
Temple & forest	Jingwansa & Eunpyeong · 진관사	Cultural visit · choose gentle walking	Give the temple and nearby hanok village time, then choose only an open lower forest path that suits you. This is a cultural day rather than a promised accessible trail or summit circuit. Respect private homes and temple-only areas.

Lower Sogwicheon valley · 소귀천 — official information →

Yeongbong · 영봉 — official information →

Baegundae · 백운대 — official information →

Jingwansa & Eunpyeong · 진관사 — official information →

> On the website this is an interactive selector; every option is listed here. No GPS track or guaranteed time is given.

A QUIETER ALTERNATIVE

Uiryeong: a forest walk with an entry system

우이령길 (Uiryeong-gil) offers a quieter forest-road style outing between the Ui and Gyohyeon sides. It is not an always-open shortcut through the park. Check the current KNPS service guide, the reservation calendar, weather closures and which entrance your booking or walk-in arrangement uses.

Check before travelling

- The October 2026 review of KNPS guidance distinguishes weekday walk-in access from reservation requirements on weekends and holidays. Operating arrangements and seasonal entry cutoffs can change; the live notice controls.
- Use the foreign-language reservation route when available. Save your confirmation and bring any identification required by the current system. Do not assume a same-day place.

Plan both ends

- A forest road still involves distance and an approach. Confirm whether you will return to the same entrance or finish at the opposite side, then save the bus or rail connection.
- The KNPS Ui Uiryeong support centre is a separate park facility, not the fifth-floor Seoul Hiking Tourism Center. Do not navigate to one expecting the other's rental desk.



A gentle lower forest walk.

KNPS Uiryeong current service guide →

BEYOND BUKHANSAN

Five other mountains, five different days

Seoul's smaller or more central hills can fit a shorter outing, but their names do not promise easy terrain. Choose a specific lower route when you want a modest day; summit paths can be rocky, steep and crowded.

Inwangsan · 인왕산

- City-wall scenery and a close-up view of Seoul's roofline. Start by comparing approaches around Gyeongbokgung or Dongnimmun stations; stairs and rocky upper sections still demand care.
- A wall-side walk and a summit ascent are different commitments. Check wall access and choose a descent before heading up.

Ansan Jarak-gil · 안산 자락길

- A forest/boardwalk option around Ansan, useful for a gentler outing. Search the official Jarak-gil entrance and compare access from Dongnimmun or the Seodaemun area.
- Boardwalk does not guarantee a step-free journey from every station, nor that every branch path is open. Check the approach if mobility is important.

Gwanaksan · 관악산

- Gwanaksan Station on the Sillim Line gives a useful southern-Seoul starting point; look up the Seoul Hiking Tourism Center Gwanaksan branch for local advice.
- The summit is challenging, not an automatic continuation of a lower valley walk. Verify the chosen entrance, course and return transport.

Official Seoul Trail routes and walking information →

Achasan · 아차산

- Han River viewpoints and lower walking options. Achasan Station on Line 5 is a useful starting search, not the trailhead itself.
- Ask for the park entrance and choose a lower turnaround if you do not want a longer ridge walk.

Dobongsan · 도봉산

- Dobongsan Station serves Lines 1 and 7. Save the actual park entrance separately from the station.
- The Sinseondae (신선대) summit approach is rugged and exposed; choose lower paths if a steep granite day is not suitable.

NAVIGATE DELIBERATELY

Six checks before you follow a blue dot

KNPS is the first stop for park regulations, courses, entry times and closures. Naver Map and Kakao Map are useful for the station, road approach and restaurant, but a suggested walking line is not permission to enter a trail. Tranggle and Ramblr can offer user-contributed tracks; these may be old, off-route or unsuitable for current weather.

1. **Pick a named course** — Read the official description. Check start and finish, direction, difficulty and whether the distance is one-way or for that specific whole itinerary.
2. **Check the live notice** — Look for closures, fire-prevention restrictions, weather warnings, reservations and seasonal entry cutoffs. Never bypass a barrier to match an app.
3. **Save Korean entry & exit names** — Save the ranger/support point or trail gate, not just "Bukhansan". In Naver/Kakao compare the Korean name and road approach with the official course.
4. **Separate rail from hiking** — Record station exit, local bus/taxi/walk and the true trailhead. The five-minute centre walk is not a mountain-route duration.
5. **Download & share** — Save a map or screenshot for offline use, with emergency markers and your planned return. Share the route and a check-in time with someone.
6. **Set a turnaround** — Leave time for descent, queues, rests and last transport. A published average is not your pace; change the plan if the slowest person, weather or daylight requires it.

KNPS official Bukhansan course directory →

THE HONEST NUMBERS

One published itinerary, not every Baegundae hike

Visit Seoul's "Baegundae–Ui Gugok Trail" is a specific advanced itinerary, including Yeongbong and a return via Yongammun and Doseonsa. Its published 9.98 km total and 4 hours 20 minutes average belong to that course alone. They are not a one-way station-to-summit distance, a universal round trip or an achievable target for every visitor.

Do not mix route figures

- A shorter course beginning at a higher support point excludes your journey there. A longer loop can add climbing and a different descent. Compare the same start, end and direction before comparing numbers.
- There is no generated GPS track or promised total time here. Use the official course map and ask for a current route suited to you.

See the exact 9.98 km advanced itinerary →

SAFETY & PACKING

Carry what the return journey needs

Call 119 for mountain rescue, fire or medical emergencies. State the mountain, trail, nearest numbered rescue marker or sign, your location and what has happened. Save a location offline, but do not rely on a phone alone. If thunder, strong wind, ice, slippery rock, fatigue or failing daylight changes the risk, abandon the summit goal.

Route & return

- Save the official open route, Korean trail entrance and exit, last transport and a daylight turnaround time.

Weather & closures

- Check KNPS notices and the forecast for rain, wind, ice, heat and air quality; choose a lower route or cancel when needed.

Grippy footwear & gloves

- Wear suitable hiking shoes; trekking gloves can help on permitted handrail sections but do not remove exposure risk.

Water & trail food

- Bring enough for your chosen day, with extra for delays. Do not depend on a summit shop or untreated stream water.

Warm layer & rain shell

- Carry a packable layer for wind and a weather-appropriate shell; summit conditions differ from the subway platform.

First aid & medication

- Take basic supplies, personal medicine and emergency contact details. Know when to stop and call 119.

Charged phone & power bank

- Download the map and carry spare power. Share the plan with someone; signal and GPS accuracy are not guaranteed.

Daylight backup & waste bag

- Carry a small light for unexpected delays, not as permission for an unplanned night hike. Pack out all litter.



Equipment for a prepared day; not a complete safety guarantee.

Hiking packing checklist — tick before you leave

- ☐ **Route & return** — Save the official open route, Korean trail entrance and exit, last transport and a daylight turnaround time.
- ☐ **Weather & closures** — Check KNPS notices and the forecast for rain, wind, ice, heat and air quality; choose a lower route or cancel when needed.
- ☐ **Grippy footwear & gloves** — Wear suitable hiking shoes; trekking gloves can help on permitted handrail sections but do not remove exposure risk.
- ☐ **Water & trail food** — Bring enough for your chosen day, with extra for delays. Do not depend on a summit shop or untreated stream water.
- ☐ **Warm layer & rain shell** — Carry a packable layer for wind and a weather-appropriate shell; summit conditions differ from the subway platform.
- ☐ **First aid & medication** — Take basic supplies, personal medicine and emergency contact details. Know when to stop and call 119.
- ☐ **Charged phone & power bank** — Download the map and carry spare power. Share the plan with someone; signal and GPS accuracy are not guaranteed.
- ☐ **Daylight backup & waste bag** — Carry a small light for unexpected delays, not as permission for an unplanned night hike. Pack out all litter.

> **No alcohol before or during the hike**
> Do not drink before or during an exposed ascent or descent. A meal and makgeolli belong only after the entire hike is safely finished, with a safe journey home. Alcohol is not appropriate on temple grounds.

Official weather forecasts and warnings →

SHARE THE MOUNTAIN

Small courtesies make narrow paths work

A quiet 안녕하세요 (annyeonghaseyo, hello) is enough when passing. 조심하세요 (josimhaseyo, please be careful) can be a kind warning. On narrow paths, communicate, pause at a safe wide point and let others pass without pushing toward an edge. Do not race a summit queue or overtake on chain sections.

Move with patience

- Keep voices and music low. Give climbing or descending hikers space; do not stop for photos where people need handrails or a safe foothold.
- Stay on marked open paths. Cutting corners damages vegetation and may lead to hazardous terrain. Follow ranger instructions and closure barriers.

Leave nothing behind

- Carry out food wrappers, tissues and fruit peel. Do not feed wildlife. Toilet access is limited; plan around official facilities.
- Fires and cooking are restricted in national parks; do not bring a stove or light a fire assuming a picnic spot permits it. Follow current park rules.



Packed trail lunch; ingredients vary.

LUNCH, THEN THE REWARD

Gimbap on the trail; pajeon after the descent

김밥 (gimbap), boiled eggs and fruit are practical packed food when you stop in a safe permitted place without blocking the path. Bring your own water. Mountain restaurants after the hike offer a different ritual: rest, share something warm and let the day settle.

What to look for on the menu

- 파전 (pajeon): scallion pancake; 감자전 (gamjajeon): potato pancake; 순두부 (sundubu): soft tofu, often in a stew; 도토리묵 (dotori-muk): acorn jelly. Recipes and ingredients vary.
- 막걸리 (makgeolli) is a milky alcoholic rice drink, not a sports recovery drink. It is optional, only after safely completing the hike, and never for someone driving or needing to continue on hazardous terrain.

A gentler finish

- Tea or coffee works just as well. Confirm ingredients for allergies and do not presume tofu dishes or side dishes are vegetarian.
- Use current Naver/Kakao listings for restaurants near your actual exit, not an unrelated entrance across the mountain. No named restaurant, live price or menu is promised here.



After-hike meal only; alcohol is optional and never for an unfinished descent.

THREE DAYS, NOT A RACE

Combine a mountain with a little culture

These are planning themes, not timed itineraries. Confirm the temple's permitted visitor areas, park opening and any programme reservation first. A cultural visit does not make a difficult approach easy.

Jingwansa + Eunpyeong Hanok Village

- Make the temple your anchor, enjoy the nearby hanok neighbourhood respectfully and choose only a modest open forest walk. A useful first mountain-culture day without a summit target.

A booked temple stay

- Reserve a suitable Geumsunsa or other official Templestay programme, confirm arrival instructions and let the programme shape the day. Do not bolt a strenuous summit onto a fixed check-in time.

Ui train + a chosen Bukhansan course

- Start with centre advice, then commit only to a confirmed route matching your ability and daylight. Doseonsa may be part of the chosen course, but its uphill approach is not a trivial five-minute add-on.

SOURCES

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Reviewed October 2026. Check KNPS notices, reservations and temple programme pages before every visit.

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  https://www.weather.go.kr/w/eng/index.do

Visiting Korean Temples: Etiquette, Bowing & Symbols.

A friendly visual guide to Seoul's mountain temples and Buddhist traditions.

- These are active religious communities, not open-access sets.
- A respectful secular visit is welcome in permitted areas; worship is optional.
- Book programmes and meals; do not assume casual visitors can join.

BEGIN WITH RESPECT

You do not need to be Buddhist to visit thoughtfully

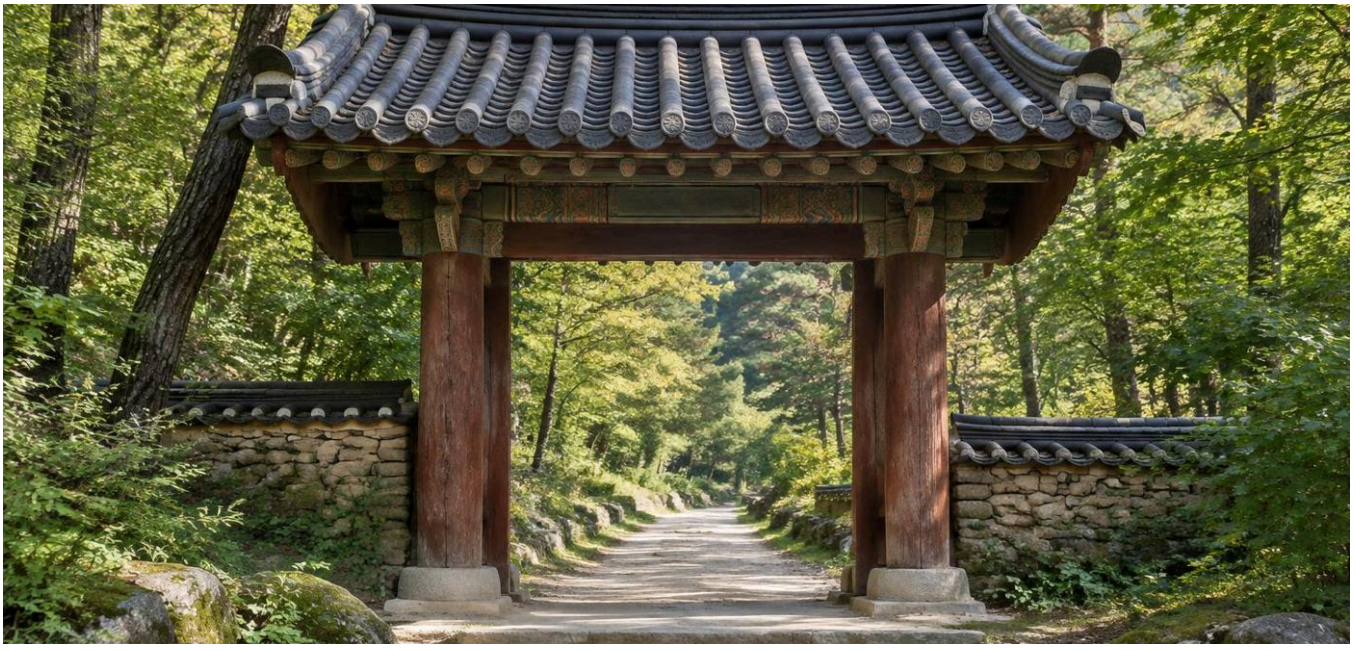
A temple can be a place to slow down, notice painted woodwork, listen from a respectful distance and meet a quieter side of Seoul. You do not have to adopt a belief or imitate worship to be a good visitor. What matters is remembering that people live, practise and pray here: a beautiful courtyard is also somebody's religious home.

Welcome has boundaries

- Visit only areas open to visitors. A door standing open is not permission to enter monastic accommodation, a kitchen, an office or a private meditation room.
- Read signs and follow staff or monastic guidance. Ceremonies, repairs and programme needs can change visitor access.

Observation is participation enough

- A quiet nod, a short bow or simply waiting respectfully is fine. Do not feel compelled to perform religious rituals, offer money or join chanting.
- Ask before photographing people or prayer spaces. Do not treat a monk or nun as a photo opportunity.



A temple entrance in the forest.

THREE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITIES

Where to begin around Seoul

Use the linked official tourism or programme information to check directions and current arrangements. No opening hours, guaranteed meal service or programme availability is invented here.

Jingwansa · 진관사

- In the Eunpyeong/Bukhansan setting near Eunpyeong Hanok Village; a rewarding first cultural visit with a mountain backdrop and a reputation for temple-food tradition.
- Make the temple and neighbourhood a calm day. Book any temple-food or Templestay experience through official information; casual admission does not include a meal.

Jingwansa · official tourism listing →

Geumsunsa · 금선사

- A mountain temple in the Gugi-dong area with official Templestay programmes. It suits a deliberately booked retreat rather than an improvised drop-in overnight stay.
- Confirm the walking approach, language, fee, dates and arrival deadline in the official booking listing. Programme content can change with weather and temple circumstances.

Geumsunsa · official programme finder →

Doseonsa · 도선사

- On the Ui side of Bukhansan. Visit Korea places it in the mountain landscape; a hiking itinerary may pass it, but reaching it from the train involves a substantial uphill approach.
- Use the actual official directions and your selected route. Do not confuse the short station-to-tourism-centre walk with temple access, and do not presume a shuttle or programme is operating.

Doseonsa · official tourism listing →

A SIMPLE GREETING

Hapjang, then a small bow

합장 (hapjang) means bringing the palms together. 반배 (banbae) is a half-bow. Official Templestay guidance describes hapjang banbae as a respectful greeting to a monk outdoors. It is a greeting you may choose, not a requirement to practise Buddhism. A discreet nod or bow is also a considerate way to acknowledge someone.

1 · Bring palms together

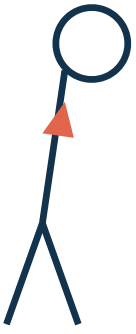
- Stand calmly with palms lightly together in front of your chest, fingers pointing upward. Relax your shoulders; do not turn the moment into a performance.

2 · Incline gently

- Keep the palms together and make a small forward bow from the upper body, then return upright. There is no need to kneel or do full prostrations for a greeting.



1 · 합장 Hapjang — palms together at chest



2 · 반배 Banbae — a small half-bow

A greeting, not a demand for conversation
Do not interrupt someone chanting, meditating, working or speaking with others. If a monastic is occupied, let them continue. Three full prostrations are optional religious devotion, not compulsory visitor etiquette.

Official explanation of hapjang & banbae →

WORDS, GENTLY OFFERED

A few respectful Korean phrases

스님 (seunim) is a respectful form of address for a Buddhist monk or nun. Speak softly, allow a response and accept that conversation may not be convenient. Romanisation is a pronunciation bridge, not a substitute for listening; showing the Hangul can help.

스님, 안녕하세요. · Seunim, annyeonghaseyo.

- Hello, Venerable / hello to a monk or nun.

감사합니다. · Gamsahamnida.

- Thank you.

여기에 들어가도 될까요? · Yeogie deureogado doelkkayo?

- May I enter here?

스님, 잠시 여쭤봐도 될까요? · Seunim, jamsi yeojjwobwado doelkkayo?

- Venerable, may I briefly ask a question?

사진을 찍어도 될까요? · Sajineul jjigeodo doelkkayo?

- May I take a photograph?

Korean	Romanisation	Meaning
스님, 안녕하세요.	Seunim, annyeonghaseyo.	Hello, Venerable / hello to a monk or nun.
스님, 잠시 여쭤봐도 될까요?	Seunim, jamsi yeojjwobwado doelkkayo?	Venerable, may I briefly ask a question?
감사합니다.	Gamsahamnida.	Thank you.
사진을 찍어도 될까요?	Sajineul jjigeodo doelkkayo?	May I take a photograph?
여기에 들어가도 될까요?	Yeogie deureogado doelkkayo?	May I enter here?

ENTERING A LIVING TEMPLE

Ten small acts of consideration

The temple's own signs and instructions take priority. General Templestay guidance recommends using side doors for Dharma halls instead of the central entrance. Where the hall is open to visitors, enter quietly, remove shoes and avoid disturbing people already practising.

At the hall door

- Remove shoes where required and leave them neatly; do not carry dirt across the floor. Wear socks when appropriate and follow the posted arrangement.
- Use a side door where appropriate; do not assume every building has the same entrance rule. Step over, not on, the raised threshold. If unsure or unsteady, ask for help instead of forcing entry.

Inside and around ceremonies

- Keep voices and phones quiet. Dress modestly and avoid blocking the altar, aisles or worshippers. Observe rather than copying gestures you do not understand.
- Do not interrupt chanting or meditation. Photograph only where permitted, especially inside prayer halls and during ceremonies; never presume no flash is the only restriction.

Outside the public courtyard

- Stay out of lodging and private quarters. Do not touch ritual objects, statues or instruments simply because they are visible.
- No alcohol or smoking on temple grounds. Keep food and litter contained; ask where any permitted eating area is rather than turning a courtyard into a picnic spot.

Rule	In practice
Shoes off	Where required at hall entry; leave them neatly.
Side door & threshold	Use the appropriate side door; step over the threshold.
Quiet presence	Silence phones; do not interrupt chants or meditation.
Ask before photos	Especially halls, ceremonies and people.
Private means private	No lodging, closed rooms or ritual objects without permission.
No alcohol	Keep temple grounds free of drinking.
No smoking	Follow the temple's boundaries and signs.
No compulsory prostrations	A secular visit can be respectful without worship.

Official Templestay etiquette guidance →

READ THE PLACE, NOT A CHECKLIST

Gates, halls and symbols: a visual field guide

A Korean temple does not always unfold in one standard order. Different traditions, terrain and rebuilding histories produce different layouts. Learn a few names so you can notice what is actually there, without assuming every temple must have every structure.

일주문 · Iljumun · First gate

- Often the first formal gateway: a transition from ordinary bustle to temple space. Its pillars appear in a single line from the side; not every entrance has one.

사천왕문 · Sacheonwangmun · Four Heavenly Kings gate

- Guardian figures protect the Buddhist teaching and the four directions. Their dramatic appearance is symbolic, not an invitation to climb or touch them.

대웅전 · Daeungjeon · Main Buddha hall

- A common name for a principal hall honouring Shakyamuni Buddha. Some temples use other hall names or arrangements; read the sign rather than assuming.

석탑 · Seoktap · Stone pagoda

- A monument associated with Buddhist relics and devotion. Observe from the path; do not climb it or place objects on historic stonework.

단청 · Dancheong · Painted woodwork

- Ornamental polychrome patterns protect and adorn timber, with repeated flowers and geometry. Look up at the eaves without entering closed buildings.

연등 · Yeondeung · Lotus lantern

- Lanterns express light and wisdom, especially around Buddha's Birthday. Do not assume a display marks a ceremony open to all visitors.

연꽃 · Yeonkkot · Lotus flower

- The flower rising from muddy water is associated with purity and awakening. It appears in painting, sculpture and lantern design.

만자 · Manja · An ancient Buddhist symbol

- The small 卍 sign has a long Buddhist history in Asia and may mark a temple on signs or maps. In this religious context it is not an endorsement of Nazi ideology. Interpret it sensitively and in context.

법륜 · Beomnyun · Dharma Wheel

- A wheel represents Buddhist teaching; eight spokes commonly evoke the Noble Eightfold Path. Designs and settings vary.

Korean	Romanisation	What it is	How to read it
일주문	Iljumun	First gate	Often the first formal gateway: a transition from ordinary bustle to temple space. Its pillars appear in a single line from the side; not every entrance has one.
사천왕문	Sacheonwangmun	Four Heavenly Kings gate	Guardian figures protect the Buddhist teaching and the four directions. Their dramatic appearance is symbolic, not an invitation to climb or touch them.
대웅전	Daeungjeon	Main Buddha hall	A common name for a principal hall honouring Shakyamuni Buddha. Some temples use other hall names or arrangements; read the sign rather than assuming.
석탑	Seoktap	Stone pagoda	A monument associated with Buddhist relics and devotion. Observe from the path; do not climb it or place objects on historic stonework.
단청	Dancheong	Painted woodwork	Ornamental polychrome patterns protect and adorn timber, with repeated flowers and geometry. Look up at the eaves without entering closed buildings.
연등	Yeondeung	Lotus lantern	Lanterns express light and wisdom, especially around Buddha's Birthday. Do not assume a display marks a ceremony open to all visitors.
연꽃	Yeonkkot	Lotus flower	The flower rising from muddy water is associated with purity and awakening. It appears in painting, sculpture and lantern design.
법륜	Beomnyun	Dharma Wheel	A wheel represents Buddhist teaching; eight spokes commonly evoke the Noble Eightfold Path. Designs and settings vary.
만자	Manja	An ancient Buddhist symbol	The small 卍 sign has a long Buddhist history in Asia and may mark a temple on signs or maps. In this religious context it is not an endorsement of Nazi ideology. Interpret it sensitively and in context.

COLOUR UNDER THE ROOF

Dancheong and lantern light

단청 (dancheong) draws the eye upward: repeated colours, flowers and geometric patterns give timber buildings a distinctive rhythm. 연등 (yeondeung), often lotus-shaped, evokes light and wisdom. These are meaningful parts of a living tradition, not simply a decorative photo backdrop.

Look without intruding

- Admire eaves from a public path. Avoid stepping into closed spaces for a better angle or leaning equipment against painted timber.
- Lantern displays and Buddha's Birthday celebrations can draw large crowds. Follow ceremony access and photography notices; a display does not promise public programme participation.

Symbols need context

- The lotus can suggest purity and awakening; the Dharma Wheel points to Buddhist teaching. Meaning is richer than a single caption.
- The small Buddhist manja sign has ancient Asian religious usage. Explain it sensitively in its temple context rather than confusing it with Nazi ideology or using it as gratuitous decorative art.



Dancheong woodwork.



Lotus-shaped lanterns.

BEYOND A CASUAL VISIT

What a Templestay can include

Templestay opens a structured window into monastic life. Depending on the programme, you might encounter meditation, 예불 (yebul, chanting ceremony), tea practice or 다선 (daseon), vegetarian temple food and sometimes 108 bows. None of these is universal or guaranteed: a rest-focused programme and an experiential programme may be quite different.

Check the actual programme

- Book through the official listing. Check the current fee, language, arrival time, schedule, cancellation policy, room arrangements and what is included.
- Ask about mobility, floor sitting, dietary needs and any ritual you may prefer to observe rather than perform. Vegetarian temple food is not automatically free from every allergen.

Let the temple set the rhythm

- Early starts, shared facilities and quiet periods may be part of the experience. Respect programme instructions and the community's working religious life.
- Do not expect hotel-style service, unlimited access or an unannounced walk-in meal. A photographed bowl of temple food here illustrates the idea, not a promised Geumsunsa or Jingwansa menu.



Temple food.



A quiet room for rest.

Official Templestay booking and temple finder →

CHOOSE YOUR DEPTH

Casual visit, day programme or overnight?

Choose the experience that fits your time, comfort and interest. Checking practical arrangements in advance is an act of respect, not an unnecessary formality.

Casual temple visit

- Public grounds and any permitted halls; observe architecture and religious life respectfully. No presumed meals, guided instruction or access to lodging.

Guided day programme

- A booked, time-limited activity with the listed language, fee and content. Confirm whether food or tea is included and how much participation is expected.

Overnight Templestay

- A reserved stay following the temple's schedule and facilities. Check rooms, meals, wake-up times, transport and cancellation before paying.

Temple visit checklist

- ☐ **Choose the right visit** — A casual visit, guided day programme and overnight Templestay have different access, booking and meal arrangements.
- ☐ **Confirm date, language & fee** — Use the official programme listing and ask about current availability, language, timing, cancellation and any mobility needs.
- ☐ **Ask about food & participation** — Confirm meals and dietary needs; vegetarian food is not an allergy guarantee. Ask what is optional and what the programme includes.
- ☐ **Arrive respectfully** — Bring modest comfortable clothing and easy-to-remove shoes. Keep voices low and follow the temple's posted visitor boundaries.

MOUNTAINS, WITH SPACE TO PAUSE

Three thoughtful combined outings

These are themes to plan, not guaranteed routes or timed packages. Save the actual temple approach and return transport; slopes, stairs and schedules remain part of the day.

Jingwansa + Eunpyeong Hanok Village

- An approachable cultural pairing: a respectful temple visit, residential hanok streets and a gentle open path if conditions suit. Keep voices low near homes and do not presume a temple-food lunch without booking.

Ui train + your chosen Bukhansan trek

- Seek hiking-centre advice first. Add Doseonsa only if its uphill approach and permitted visitor areas fit your confirmed course and daylight. It is not a trivial walk from the rail platform.

Geumsunsa, deliberately booked

- Let an official day or overnight Templestay be the anchor. Follow arrival instructions and allow a comfortable approach instead of squeezing it after an exposed summit.

SOURCES

Sources & verification · Visiting Korean Temples: Etiquette, Bowing & Symbols

Reviewed October 2026. Check KNPS notices, reservations and temple programme pages before every visit.

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Settle Seoul sample PDF · pilot design for editorial review. Editorial guidance, not legal, immigration or medical advice — confirm requirements with the responsible office (1345 Immigration Contact Center, HiKorea). Photographs credited by name are by the photographer named; other images are original Settle Seoul artwork. Corrections: support@settleseoul.com · www.settleseoul.com/downloads



Settle. Seoul

STUDYING IN SEOUL / STUDENT FUTURES · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Korea's International Student Boom: What Happens After Graduation?.

Korea has passed 300,000 international students ahead of its target. The next challenge is making sure studying here can lead to meaningful opportunities afterwards.

Online guide · Reviewed 22 October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/koreas-international-student-boom-after-graduation

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

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1. Korea has reached the number. What comes next?
2. Interest in staying is not the same as a clear route
3. The transition is practical as well as academic
4. Policy is beginning to address the gap
5. Five things students can do before the final semester
6. A graduation should open choices, not confusion
7. Sources & verification

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- South Korea-wide enrolment figures, not Seoul alone.
- Survey findings and graduate outcomes describe different groups.
- A longer potential D-10 stay is not an unrestricted right to work.

Official routes: HiKorea · Korea Visa Portal · University international office · Immigration Contact Center · 1345.

STUDENT FUTURES

Korea has reached the number. What comes next?

More than 300,000 international students are now enrolled in South Korea. For a country that set out to reach that number by 2027, surpassing the target in 2026 is a significant milestone. It also raises a more personal question for the students arriving in Seoul, Busan, Daejeon and university towns across the country: what happens once their studies are finished?

According to reporting published by *The Korea Times* on 22 October 2026, international enrolment reached 307,464 in 2026. In one graduate cohort, covering 36,271 international students who finished between August 2023 and February 2024, 42.9% left Korea and fewer than 5,000 found work in the country. These figures describe different periods, and they do not mean that everyone who remained was employed. But they illustrate a gap between welcoming students into higher education and helping graduates move into the next stage of life. [1]

For students, graduation is often presented as the finish line. In practice, it can be the point at which the difficult questions begin: Does my current residence status still cover me? Can I take an internship? Which jobs could qualify for a work visa? Will an employer help with the paperwork? How long can I stay while searching?

STUDENT FUTURES

Interest in staying is not the same as a clear route

The Korea Times cites a 2025 Korea Federation of SMEs survey in which 86.5% of surveyed international students said they wanted to work in Korea after graduation. That is a finding from a particular survey, not a measurement of every international student in Korea. Even with that qualification, it suggests that many students are not thinking of Korea as a temporary study destination alone. [1]

Their reasons will differ. Some want experience in technology, research, design or business. Some have developed professional networks, a relationship or a life in Korea. Others hope to develop their Korean-language skills through work before deciding where to settle. There is no single ideal outcome: returning home, moving to another country and remaining in Korea can all be sensible choices.

The important point is that students should be able to make those choices with clear information rather than discover the rules when their status is close to expiring.

STUDENT FUTURES

The transition is practical as well as academic

A degree does not by itself create permission to work in any job. Korea's immigration system distinguishes between studying, job-seeking and employment. A student who finds an employer may need to change to an appropriate work-related status; another graduate may qualify for D-10 job-seeking status while looking for professional employment. Each route has conditions. [3][4]

Meanwhile, day-to-day arrangements do not stop mattering after the final exam. A graduate may be moving out of university housing, keeping a Korean phone contract active, arranging health-insurance coverage or needing a usable bank account before the first salary arrives. A job offer is more than a headline amount: job duties, employer identity, pay, hours, contract terms and the proposed immigration route all deserve scrutiny.

These are ordinary practical questions, but when several arrive at once they can make the transition unusually stressful.

STUDENT FUTURES

Policy is beginning to address the gap

In September 2026, the Ministry of Education set out a change of emphasis for international-student policy. Alongside recruitment, it highlighted education quality, stronger support through study and career planning, and closer connections between institutions and employers. Some university-focused measures are proposals or future initiatives rather than services every student can use immediately. [2]

There has also been a concrete change to the job-seeking route. In a December 2025 announcement, the Ministry of Justice described improved D-10 conditions for eligible graduates from Korean universities, including a maximum job-seeking period of three years rather than two, with possible extensions in one-year periods. It also announced more flexible internship-duration rules for the relevant group. Eligibility and permission must still be checked individually, and older online summaries have not all been updated. [3][4]

The distinction matters. A longer potential period to look for work is helpful, but it is not an automatic three-year visa, an unrestricted right to work or a promise of sponsorship from an employer.

STUDENT FUTURES

Five things students can do before the final semester

Start with your immigration timeline. Check the date on your residence record and ask your university's international office which routes may fit your course, expected graduation date and plans. Do this before the final weeks of the semester. A booked appointment and an approved change of status are not the same thing.

Understand the jobs available to you. Look at actual vacancies and the qualifications required, not only sector descriptions. A bachelor's or master's degree may be relevant to several professional categories, but an employer and position still have to meet the correct immigration rules. [4]

Build evidence of your work. Keep a concise CV, descriptions of internships and projects, a portfolio where relevant, transcripts, language certificates and references. Employers should be able to understand what you can contribute without guessing from your degree title alone.

Use the people already around you. Career centres, international offices, professors, alumni and student associations can help connect academic experience with potential employers. The government's Study in Korea employment resources also point students towards recruitment platforms and career services. [5]

Prepare for everyday continuity. Keep copies of your lease or accommodation confirmation, an accessible phone number, bank details, current identity documents and copies of immigration correspondence. A change of address has its own reporting obligations; it should not be lost in the move from campus to work. [4]

STUDENT FUTURES

A graduation should open choices, not confusion

International study is more than an enrolment figure. It is an investment of time, money and ambition, often made far from family and in another language. Students deserve to know what their options really are when that investment reaches graduation.

For anyone hoping to remain in Korea, the practical advice is simple: start early, verify your individual eligibility with immigration and your university, and treat the employment contract and residence status as connected decisions. For universities and employers, the challenge is to make those paths clearer well before graduation day.

Read next: After Graduation in Korea · Student Jobs · Other English-speaking Jobs

Editorial note: The total 307,464 applies to *South Korea*, not Seoul alone. The 42.9% departure figure applies to the specific 2023–24 graduate cohort identified by The Korea Times. This feature is original commentary informed by cited reporting, not a reproduction of the newspaper article.

Source notes for Article A: [1] Korea Times; [2] Ministry of Education 8 and 21 September 2026; [3] Ministry of Justice 2 December 2025; [4] Study in Korea employment/immigration guidance; [5] Study in Korea employment resources. Full URLs appear in Sources & verification below.

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Reviewed 22 October 2026. Check the official links before relying on dates, fees or rules.

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  https://www.studyinkorea.go.kr/ko/work/aboutForeignerEmploymentSystem.do
- [4] Study in Korea · Residence and stay
  https://www.studyinkorea.go.kr/ko/life/residenceAndStayInfo.do
- [5] Study in Korea · Finding employment
  https://www.studyinkorea.go.kr/ko/work/aboutKoreaEmployment.do
- [6] HiKorea · Verify your own status and permissions · 1345
  https://www.hikorea.go.kr
- [6] Korea Visa Portal
  https://www.visa.go.kr

Settle Seoul article PDF. Editorial guidance, not legal, immigration or medical advice — confirm requirements with the responsible office (1345 Immigration Contact Center, HiKorea). Photographs credited by name are by the photographer named. Corrections: support@settleseoul.com · Read online · www.settleseoul.com/downloads



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STUDYING IN SEOUL / VISAS & WORKING · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

After Graduation in Korea: From Student Visa to Your Next Step.

Finishing a degree in Korea is one milestone. Staying to find work, begin a job or change plans is another. Use this guide to understand the main routes and prepare before your permission to stay expires.

Online guide · Reviewed 22 October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/after-graduation-in-korea

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> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Primarily for D-2 degree students; D-4 conditions differ.
- Check your permitted stay date before your programme ends.
- Confirm permission before beginning any job or internship.

Official routes: HiKorea · Korea Visa Portal · University international office · Immigration Contact Center · 1345.

AFTER GRADUATION

Start here: graduation is not a visa category

You can be academically finished with a course and still have immigration paperwork to complete. Your degree, your university enrolment and your permitted period of stay are related, but they are not identical.

The first thing to check is the permitted stay date shown in your immigration record. Do not assume that graduation automatically extends it, that a university can extend it for you or that a job application gives you permission to remain in Korea. If your plans require a different status, ask about the procedure before your present permission expires. [4]

This guide gives you a practical framework, not a personal eligibility decision. Rules differ by nationality, degree, immigration history, job type and other factors. For the final answer, use HiKorea, the Korea Visa Portal, your university's international office and the immigration contact centre at **1345**.

AFTER GRADUATION

1. Choose your likely pathway

Most international degree graduates considering their next step fall into one of these situations.

Route A. You have an eligible professional job offer

If you meet the requirements for a work-related stay status, you may be able to apply to change directly from D-2 to the relevant employment category, rather than using D-10 first. The government's Study in Korea guidance identifies professional categories including E-1 (professor), E-3 (research), E-4 (technical guidance), E-5 (professional employment) and E-7 (specific activities), along with other qualifying categories. You must have the right job, qualifications, employer documentation and employment contract. [4]

Important: An offer letter alone does not authorize you to start full-time work. Confirm that the necessary change or permission has been granted and when you may lawfully begin.

Route B. You want time to search for eligible work

D-10-1 is Korea's job-seeking route for qualifying applicants seeking professional employment or undertaking permitted job-seeking activities and internships. Eligible students who have completed or are approaching completion of a Korean associate degree or higher may be able to apply. It is not a general open work permit and does not cover unrestricted casual work. [4]

The Ministry of Justice announced expanded arrangements for eligible graduates from Korean universities in December 2025: a maximum of **three years**, with extensions of up to **one year at a time**, replacing the previously stated maximum of two years and six-month extensions. It also removed the overall internship-duration cap for the relevant group while increasing the permitted period with a single company to one year. The change does not mean that every applicant receives three years at once, or that any internship is permitted without checking its conditions. [3]

Check carefully: Some government information pages still describe the previous two-year/six-month rules. Confirm which rule applies to your exact application and whether any conditions or subsequent changes affect you before using the longer period in a financial or career plan. [3][4]

Route C. You are leaving Korea, continuing study or considering another status

You may decide to return home, study for another qualification, move abroad or explore a different residence category for which you independently qualify. These are different paths with different documentary and timing requirements. Do not treat D-10 as mandatory for every graduate, or assume that changing universities or enrolling on another course automatically solves immigration deadlines.

A note for D-4 students: Language-training status is not the same as D-2 degree-study status. The D-2 graduate pathways described here should not be assumed to apply to D-4 trainees. Ask immigration or your institution which change-of-status possibilities are open to you.

AFTER GRADUATION

2. Work backwards from your permission-to-stay date

Use this suggested planning schedule, adjusting it to your own academic calendar. These are organisational milestones, **not statutory deadlines**.

Six months before the expected finish: Identify likely occupations and the qualifications employers request. Review your Korean-language goals, finances and portfolio. Speak to your international office if you may need a status change.

Three months before: Prepare a Korean-style or international CV as appropriate, a short professional introduction, project examples and referee details. Ask your academic office when a completion letter, transcript or graduation certificate can be issued.

Six to eight weeks before: Check the immigration booking system and document requirements. Ask whether your prospective status change can be filed before graduation on the basis of expected completion; eligibility may differ by route. Gather the documents that are difficult to obtain quickly.

Before your current stay expires: Submit the appropriate, complete application in the permitted manner and timeframe. Keep evidence of submission. Merely booking a future appointment should not be treated as proof that your status was extended or changed.

After a decision: Keep your approval and updated immigration details, confirm when employment or internship activities are allowed and record any future extension or reporting dates.

AFTER GRADUATION

3. D-10: what it permits and what it does not

D-10 is intended for job-seeking in qualifying professional fields and certain permitted internships or preparation activities. It should not be confused with student part-time work permission or a general right to work in restaurants, cafés, delivery services or any other job you can find. The government's Study in Korea guidance explicitly distinguishes D-10 job-seeking activity from unskilled or manual work. [4]

If a company offers you an internship, check three things before accepting: whether the proposed activity falls within your approved D-10 conditions; whether any employer-specific or activity-specific filing or permission is needed; and what duration limits apply to you. Do not assume that an internship described as 'training' is automatically exempt from immigration rules.

If you receive a suitable full-time offer, you usually need to move into the appropriate employment status before taking up employment. Ask both the employer and immigration which documents are required and who will prepare them. [4]

AFTER GRADUATION

4. Prepare a document folder for immigration

The exact list depends on your status, application type and caseworker instructions. The following is a **preparation checklist**, not a definitive list that guarantees acceptance.

- **Identity and current status:** passport, current residence card where applicable, up-to-date contact information and application form.
- **Academic evidence:** graduation certificate or expected-graduation letter, transcript, and any additional educational documents requested.
- **Purpose of stay:** a realistic job-seeking activity plan for D-10, or the proposed employer's role and contract documents for work status.
- **Residence evidence:** lease, accommodation confirmation or other accepted proof showing where you live.
- **Qualifications:** language scores, career certificates, licences, professional portfolio or other evidence where relevant.
- **Financial evidence:** bank statements or proof of living expenses when required; check possible exemptions rather than assuming they apply.
- **Application logistics:** current fee, appointment or electronic-filing route, copies of submitted documents and confirmation of receipt.

The government Study in Korea guidance lists a job-seeking plan, academic proof and a range of standard documents for D-2-to-D-10 applicants, while noting that some documents may be waived or adjusted. It also describes a financial-proof exemption for some first-time D-2-to-D-10 changes, but because the page contains older D-10 duration information, verify the current financial evidence rule before applying. [4]

AFTER GRADUATION

5. Finding work: begin with the visa-eligible role

Searching only for 'English-speaking jobs' often creates a misleading shortlist. Some jobs are perfectly real but do not provide a suitable basis for the applicant's intended immigration status. Others may require qualifications, Korean ability or employer documents that are not obvious in the advert.

A stronger approach is to work in this order:

1. **Occupation:** What will you actually do, and which employment status might cover it?
2. **Your qualifications:** Does your degree, experience or licence meet the category requirements?
3. **Employer:** Is the business identifiable, and can it provide the necessary documentation?
4. **Working conditions:** Are the duties, workplace, salary, hours and contract terms clear?
5. **Timing:** Can a lawful change of status be completed before the intended start date?

Government guidance indicates that for qualifying bachelor's-degree graduates the job need not necessarily match their academic major, but the professional occupation and all other immigration requirements must still qualify. Do not read this as a promise that any degree leads to any E-7 job. [4]

Use your university's career office, professors, alumni, professional associations and official or established recruitment platforms. Study in Korea lists government-linked resources and platforms for foreign applicants. [5]

Settle Seoul's Other English-speaking Jobs board can also help you discover possibilities, but inclusion in a job listing never establishes your visa eligibility or guarantees employer sponsorship.

AFTER GRADUATION

6. CVs, interviews and Korean language

Your CV should help an employer assess your capabilities quickly. Start with a clear job title and a short summary. Include relevant degree details, projects, practical experience, tools, languages and achievements. If you have an online portfolio, make it easy to open.

For applications in Korea, some employers request a Korean-style resume and 자기소개서 (personal statement), while others accept an international English-language CV. Follow the employer's actual instructions rather than assuming a single template is universal. Do not include personal information that is unnecessary or that an employer has no legitimate reason to request.

During an interview, be ready to explain your current residence status accurately, whether you require an employer-supported change of status, and the earliest date you could legally begin work. You do not need to provide speculative legal assurances. It is reasonable to tell an employer that eligibility must be confirmed through the official process.

Korean proficiency may expand opportunities and help you navigate workplaces, but there is no one language score that guarantees a job or a visa in every category. Check the requirements of the occupation and employer, and consider practical workplace Korean alongside test preparation.

AFTER GRADUATION

7. How to examine an offer before signing

A promising offer is the beginning of due diligence, not the end of it. Before accepting, obtain the proposed contract and check:

- The legal employer name and business details, job title and specific duties.
- Work location, working hours, rest time, salary, pay date and any deductions.
- The length of the contract, probation arrangements and how termination works.
- Benefits and insurance arrangements that may apply to your employment.
- Whether the employer understands and can support the immigration process for the particular job.
- Whether the proposed start date gives enough time for legal permission to be resolved.

Keep the original advert and the final signed documents. Be cautious if an intermediary demands a substantial advance 'visa sponsorship' payment, avoids identifying the employer or pressures you to begin work before approval. If a proposal sounds inconsistent with your permission to stay, ask immigration or a qualified adviser before acting.

AFTER GRADUATION

8. What about part-time work, freelancing and remote clients?

While studying, permitted part-time work under D-2 or some D-4 statuses generally requires prior authorisation; conditions vary by programme, Korean-language proficiency, academic record and other factors. Some activities, including private tutoring, have special restrictions. [4]

After finishing studies or moving to D-10, do not assume that your former student part-time authorisation continues, that D-10 permits ordinary casual work or that remote work for overseas clients is automatically

exempt from Korean immigration and tax rules. The location of the client is not the only relevant issue. Confirm the proposed activity before accepting payment.

The safest question is specific: 'I hold [status] and have been offered [duties] by [employer/client], at [location], for [hours/pay]. Is that permitted, and is any prior permission required?' Record the answer and the date.

AFTER GRADUATION

9. Keep everyday life working during the transition

Housing. You may lose access to university accommodation after finishing your programme. Check your move-out date, deposit return terms and any documents you will need as proof of your new address. Registered foreign residents generally have 15 days to report an address change; check the procedure and accepted documents with HiKorea. [4]

Money. Plan for a job search that may take longer than expected. Budget for accommodation, food, transport, immigration fees and an emergency buffer. If evidence of funds is required for your application, verify the current rule and the form of proof accepted.

Phone and banking. Keep access to a working Korean number and essential account records while your identity and residence details are updated. If mobile verification stops working after a status change, check whether the carrier and other services hold your name and residence details consistently.

Healthcare. Review your National Health Insurance status or other appropriate coverage as your student or employment circumstances change. Do not assume that a university arrangement or student exemption continues indefinitely.

Travel. If you plan to leave and re-enter Korea while a status change or new residence card is being processed, obtain case-specific advice first. Do not assume a pending application gives unrestricted travel rights.

AFTER GRADUATION

10. Frequently asked questions

Can I stay in Korea just because I graduated here? Not automatically. Your permission to remain is tied to an approved stay status and period. Check your current expiry date and apply for any necessary change or extension through the proper process. [4]

Does the new D-10 rule give everyone three years? No. The Ministry of Justice described a maximum period of up to three years for a relevant group of Korean-university graduates, with one-year extensions. Individual eligibility, documents, extension decisions and other conditions still apply. [3]

Can I work in a café while on D-10? Do not assume so. D-10 is a professional job-seeking route, not an unrestricted permission for ordinary casual employment. Ask immigration about the exact duties and status before starting. [4]

Can I change directly from D-2 to E-7? Possibly, if you meet the relevant requirements and have a qualifying job and employer. D-10 is not a compulsory intermediate step in every case. [4]

What if I studied Korean on D-4 rather than completed a degree on D-2? Your possible change-of-status routes can be different. The graduate rules in this guide are aimed primarily at D-2 degree students. Seek advice specific to your D-4 subcategory.

What if the job offer is in a field different from my major? The degree-major relationship is only one part of the assessment. Some graduates may have flexibility, but the occupation, qualifications, employer and status criteria still matter. [4]

Can I work for overseas clients while living in Korea? Do not assume that overseas payment or remote delivery removes immigration or tax obligations. Get individual advice based on your status and the work.

Should I use an immigration agent? You can use university and official guidance directly. For complicated cases, consider a properly qualified professional, but verify credentials and never surrender original documents without understanding why.

AFTER GRADUATION

11. Your next-action checklist

Before the end of your programme, aim to be able to say:

- I know my current permitted stay date and where to verify it.
- I have asked my university which documents it can issue and when.
- I understand whether I am aiming for D-10, a qualifying work status or another route.
- I have checked whether a job or internship requires permission before I start.
- I have a CV, evidence of skills and an organised application record.
- I know where I will live and how to document that address.
- I have checked my budget and health coverage for the transition.
- I have saved the current official immigration guidance and know how to reach 1345.

Useful official starting points: HiKorea · Korea Visa Portal · Study in Korea — employment system · Study in Korea — residence and stay · Study in Korea — finding employment

Related Settle Seoul reading: Study in Seoul · Studying in Seoul · Part-time Work for Students · Jobs · Banking · Housing

Editorial and legal disclaimer: General information as at 22 October 2026. Immigration criteria, forms, processing practices and employment rules can change and may be different for each applicant. Verify your eligibility and permitted activities with the competent immigration authority before making decisions. This guide is not an official government publication or legal advice.

Source notes for Guide B: [3] Ministry of Justice D-10 update; [4] government Study in Korea immigration and employment guidance; [5] government Study in Korea recruitment guidance. Full URLs appear in Sources & verification below.

SOURCES

Sources & verification · After Graduation in Korea: From Student Visa to Your Next Step

Reviewed 22 October 2026. Check the official links before relying on dates, fees or rules.

- [3] Ministry of Justice · Job Seeker (D-10) Visa Scheme Improvements · 2 December 2025
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