



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.

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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

- 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.

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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