

Traveler's Essentials

Time Difference/Business Hours

Time Difference/Business Hours Korean time is 9hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time(GMT+9)/No daylight savings time



Business hours for banks are generally from 09:30 to 16:30 on weekdays only. Banks are closed on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. ATMs are widely available. Major department stores are open from 10:30 to 19:30, including Sundays, but smaller shops tend to open earlier and close later everyday.



International Call

International dialing code in Korea is +82. Please omit (0) when dialing from overseas.

Currency and Bank

1) Currency

Major foreign currencies that can be exchanged at banks, hotels, and the airport include the US Dollar, Japanese Yen, Euro, and UK Sterling. Most hotels, restaurants, and shops accept major international credit cards including Visa, American Express, Diners Club, Master Card, and JBC. Foreign-issued ATM cards may have limited use.

*About Won(KRW) Korea's currency is the won. There are 1,000, 5,000, 10,000, and 50,000 won bills. Coins come in 10, 50, 100 and 500 won.

New Bills



10,000won
(man won)



5,000won
(ocheon won)



1,000won
(cheon won)



50,000won
(oman won)

Coin



500won
(obaek won)



100won
(baek won)



50won
(osip won)



10won
(sip won)

2) Bank



Banks can offer some of the best exchange rates to travelers. Banking hours can vary, but most business hours are from 09:00 to 16:00. ATMs typically operate until 23:00, but many are open 24 hours. ATMs can also be found at convenient stores, but generally charge a higher transaction fee. ATMs that accept international cards are common, especially in areas frequented by foreigners; look for ATMs with a 'Global' sign or the logo of your bank. Global ATMs offer multi-languages.

3) Card



Diners Club, Visa, American Express and Master Card are widely accepted at major hotels, shops and restaurants in the larger cities. Check with your credit card company for details of merchant acceptability and other services which may be available.

4) Traveler's Check



Accepted, but may be difficult to change in smaller towns. To avoid additional exchange rate charges, travelers are advised to take Traveler's check in US Dollars. The exchange of foreign currencies may be made at Incheon International Airport.

5) Tax



Value-added tax(VAT) is levied on most goods and services at a standard rate of 10% and is included in the retail price. In tourist hotels, this 10% tax applies to meals and other services and is added into the bill.

6) Gratuities(Tipping)



Tipping is not a traditional custom in Korea. A 10% service charge will be added to your bill at all tourist restaurants and hotels. It is also not necessary to tip a taxi driver unless he assists you with luggage or provides an extra service.



7) Electricity

In Korea, electrical outlets are operated at 220 volt only. Overseas delegates bringing laptop computers and other electrical appliances are advised to check whether a transformer is required.

8) Language



Hangeul(한글), Korea's official alphabet, was first invented by King Sejong during the Joseon Dynasty. Originally called Hunminjeongeum(훈민정음), the language was conceived in 1443, and further promulgated by the King in 1446. At the time of its inception, the language consisted of 17 consonants and 11 vowels however, since then, 3 of the originally established consonants and 1 vowel have fallen into disuse bringing the total number of characters to 24. Syllables are formed by the selective combination of vowels and consonants to create words.

Emergency & Useful Contacts in Korea

Emergency calls (24 hours)

- Police : 112
- Fire & Ambulance : 119
- Emergency Medical Information Center : 1339
- Local Telephone Number Guide : 114



For visitors from overseas

- Seoul's Dasan 120 Call Center:120(for foreign language: 09:00-18:00)
 - Seoul Global Center: +82-02-2075-4180(09:00-18:00,weekdays only)
 - Korean Tourism Organization Information: 1330(24hours)
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