

# **Transportation in China**

## **Travel by air**

There are two categories of luggage in Chinese Domestic Flights. One is checked baggage, and the other is hand luggage or carry-on luggage, refers to the smaller bags and personal bags and personal items you are

(110 pounds) and 40×60×100 centimeters (16×24 ×39 inches) in size.

Only passengers who hold an adult or children ticket are allowed to take a certain amount of checked luggage for free. No free luggage allowance for people who hold infant tickets.

The excess amount will incur an additional charge reckoned by distance and weight. Generally, 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds) costs 1.5% of a full economy-class airfare (one way, adult ticket).

Travelers should consult your travel agent for detailed information about your airlines if you have any doubt. You can also check information from your airline website or call them for additional assistance.

If your internal flight is cancelled, the airline company usually will arrange an airport hotel for you to stay overnight and help you board another flight for you the next day. If your flight is delayed for some reason such as weather or



mechanical problems the airline company usually will provide compensation to the travelers, but how much is the compensation is vary in different airline companies.

Airline usually stops checking-in 30 to 45 minutes before scheduled departure of the flights. Thus you need to arrive at least one to two hours before the departure time.

The seat assignment on flights cannot be booked when purchasing the tickets. However, your seat can be assigned when you receive your boarding pass at the airport. Please ask your tour guide or the airport staff to help you.

By Western standards, domestic air fares in China are relatively inexpensive especially if you are not traveling during Golden Week holidays or Spring Festival. There appears to be no advantage in price to booking your flight well in advance and most Chinese airlines will not accept reservations more than 45 to 60 days in advance of your departure. Generally speaking, booking a seat about a week or two in advance is sufficient for ensuring both availability and the best price.

## **Guide in airport**

Beijing Capital Airport is a modern, medium sized airport. After leaving the aircraft you proceed to the health and immigration counters. Depending on the arrival bridge, this takes approx. 3 to 7 minutes.

On board of your arriving flight the crew distributes 3 forms to each passenger:

- a) a health declaration
- b) the immigration form
- c) customs declaration form.

Before arriving at the immigration counter you have to hand over the health declaration form to an officer and then proceed to immigration. Beijing airport has a huge immigration area with at least 30 or more counters, separated into counters for Chinese and for foreigners. If there's a huge crowd at the foreigner's counters the friendly immigration officers from the Chinese - only counters wave people to their boots in order to speed up the immigration process.

After immigration you have to go downstairs to the conveyor belts where you'll pick up your checked-in baggage. Then go to customs, hand over the customs declaration form (usually customs doesn't check arriving foreigners as long as the flights are from North America or Europe).



After you have left the customs area you enter the arrival lobby of Beijing Capital Airport. There you find several banks that change your money. All well-known Western currencies are accepted as well as Japanese Yen, Hongkong \$, Thai Bath, Singapore \$ etc.

All signs at the airport are bilingual (Chinese and English) Official services at the airport are all available in English.

Beware of touts or people who offer you their service. Don't accept any assistance from those people. Their 'service' is illegal and always more expensive than the official services. Be kind, never rude and tell them that you don't need any help.

When you leave the airport, cross the first car lane and you will see several taxi stops.

There is always a crowd waiting for taxis. Go over there and you will be driven by an

officially licensed taxi to the hotel. It is really helpful if you have a name card or address of the hotel where everything is written in Chinese. This

avoids confusion.

## **Travel by train**

Train travel is an interesting, inexpensive and safe way of getting around China. It offers you more chances to get to know Chinese people.

In China, the accommodations on the train are divided into four categories: soft-sleeper, soft-seat, hard-sleeper and hard-seat. Most of the carriages are air-conditioned. However, if you have to take a long journey, it's better for you to take a sleeper carriage. If the journey is no more than 8 hours, and a day trip, you can take a seat carriage.

Please be aware that each carriage has only two washrooms, on each end of the carriage, and there is hot-water supply for free in the carriage, but without shower or tub. Meals and drinks can be purchased in the dining carriage, but they are not so delicious and always expensive.

During national holidays, spring festivals, and student's vacations, there are many people at the train station and on the train so that you'd better stagger these congestion periods.

You should book a train ticket through travel agency or ticket agent ahead of time to guarantee that you can buy the tickets you want.

## **How to get a driver's license in China**

If you want to drive in China, you will have to get a Chinese driver's license. Foreigners from any country who want to drive in China must apply for a driver's license. International driver's licenses are not recognized. Licenses are valid in the Chinese mainland only. Residents from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan also need to apply for a driver's license to drive in the Chinese mainland. If you have a residence permit for China, you are entitled to apply for a Chinese driver's license.

Holder of foreign driver's license applying for a driver's license

I. Applicants go to the motor vehicle administration to apply. Holder of a valid foreign driver's license can apply for a license to drive the same type of vehicle(s) listed on his/her foreign driver's license. 'International driver's license' will not be accepted.

II. Required documentation:

- (1) Driver's license application form
- (2) Applicant's original and photo copy identification documents
- (3) Original health certificate issued by hospital of county level or above.

Holder of a valid foreign driver's license from foreign embassies, consulates and international organizations China's office needs not to provide health certificate.

(4) Original foreign drivers license and photo copy. Driver's license in non-Chinese language must attach a Chinese translation.

(5) 5 1-inch color photos with a white background

### III. Testing

(1) After the Motor Vehicle Administration accepts the application, the applicant may reserve a time for the Course 1 test. If applying to drive large-size passenger vehicles, tractor, mid-size passenger vehicles, mid or large-size freight vehicles, the applicant must also reserve a time to take the Course 3 test

(2) Course 1 and 3 test can be taken one time, and may be re-taken one time. If the applicant fails the exam twice, the tests are over. He/she has to re-apply for the tests. But the test for Course 3 must be reserved 20 days later. Note, within validity period of 'Driving Test Permit', any test that was passed serves as the applicant's current status.

(3) Applicant who exhibits inappropriate or fraudulent behavior during the exam process will have his/her qualification for the test will be nullified, and all previous results will be invalidated.

### IV. License issuance

After the applicant has passed all exams, the Motor Vehicle Administration will issue the driver's license within five business days.

V. For employees of foreign embassies, consulates and international organizations China's office, driver's license will be issued by the administration within 5 working days after acceptance in accordance with the principle of diplomatic reciprocity.

Computer test, language choices: Chinese, English, Russian, German, French, Japanese, Korean, Arabic and Spanish 100 questions, each question score 1 point, 90 points or above to pass.

Location for the physical examination in Tianjin: