



# **THE ENGLISH TEACHER'S GUIDE TO KOREA**

**Living, Working, and Thriving in Korea Sparkling**

**By**  
**Tony Hellmann, M.Ed.**  
**Tom Rainey-Smith**  
**Jason Thomas, M.App.Ling.**  
**Matt Henderson**

**Chapter 7**

ATEK Press

**The Association for Teachers of English in Korea provides the following services to the general public, members and non-members alike:**

- Monitoring of proposed legislation and regulations which may affect non-citizen English teachers in Korea.
- Translation of proposed and existing legislation and regulations (domestic and international) and analysis of their possible effects on non-citizen English teachers in Korea.
- Advocacy for English teacher concerns at the national and local levels.
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# CHAPTER 7: TRAVEL INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF KOREA

## KOREAN IMMIGRATION

### *IMPORTANT INTRODUCTORY NOTES*

Korean Immigration advises that all non-citizens carry a form of identification on their person such as a passport or alien registration card at all times.

All services can be acquired by visiting your local immigration office in person. If you are unsure of the contact details of your local immigration office, please check the list in this chapter or call the free Immigration Contact Center phone service provided by the Korean government (see below). All the following services except for Foreigner Registration and Reissuance of Foreigner Registration Card can be applied for via e-application. In many cases an appointed agent (which could include your employer) can carry out the process for these services on your behalf. It is also useful to schedule an appointment at your local immigration office in advance to avoid long waiting times. E-applications are accepted until three business days before the expiration of the applicant's status. An appointment for visitation can be reserved until a day before the desired date of appointment as long as it's within your permitted term of stay.

Visit [http://www.hikorea.go.kr/pt/CvlapplInfoPageR\\_en.pt?locale=en](http://www.hikorea.go.kr/pt/CvlapplInfoPageR_en.pt?locale=en) to fill out an e-application form or to book an in-person appointment over the Internet.

### *IMMIGRATION CONTACT CENTER*

This free government service is available from 9am~6pm on weekdays only. Dial 1345 anywhere, from a local or cellular phone to access this service and follow the automated voice prompts (3 for English), as follows: Press 0 to speak directly to a counselor. Press 1 for immigration office locations, jurisdiction and service hours. Press 2 to inquire about the result of a pending visa application.

## **SERVICES**

### **FOREIGNER REGISTRATION**

#### Necessary Documents

##### **Professorship (E-1)**

- A Copy of Business registration certificate Foreign Language
- Passport
- Application form for foreigner registration
- One color photo (3cm x 4cm)
- KRW 10,000 (Government Revenue Stamp)

##### **Instructor (E-2)**

- A Copy of Business registration certificate
- Original copy of Health Examination for Employment obtained in Korea (includes TBPE drug test and HIV test) issued by a Public Health Center, General Hospital, National Hospital or Public Hospital.
- Passport
- Application form for foreigner registration
- One color photo (3cm x 4cm)
- KRW 10,000 (Government Revenue Stamp)

### **REISSUANCE OF FOREIGNER REGISTRATION CARD**

Alien registration cards are issued at the Immigration Office appropriate to you. See our list of Immigration Offices on page 9 to discover which one you should visit. Application for re-issuance must be made within 14 days and cards will be reissued for the following reasons: registration card was lost or stolen, damaged, lack of space for necessary items to be displayed, changes in details on the existing card (name, sex and nationality).

#### Necessary Documents

- Passport
- Application form for re-issuance of Foreigner Registration card
- Document stating reason for re-issuance application (where lost)
- One color photo (3cm x 4cm)

- Old registration card (if existing card is rendered useless from wear/tear, lack of space, or change of details arise as per Article 35 Section 1 of the Immigration Act)
- KRW 10,000 (Government Revenue Stamp)

### **REPORTING CHANGE OF ALIEN REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

The following changes must be reported to your local immigration office within 14 days of being made or you will be considered in breach of Immigration Act Article 35, and liable to be fined:

- Name, sex, date of birth or nationality
- Passport number, date of issuance or expiration date

#### Necessary Documents

- Passport and Foreigner Registration card
- Application form of Report on changes of particulars of Foreigner Registration card

### **EXTENSION OF STAY**

Note: E-2 visa holders must visit their local immigration office in person to complete this process, whereas E-1 visa holders are able to apply via e-application.

Permission for Extension of Stay must be acquired before expiry of current permission of stay. Therefore, it is important to check the expiration date of your alien registration card, which usually expires before your actual teaching contract ends. Even if you have decided to leave the country, in order to extend your stay legally for up to 30 days and avoid fines, you will need to visit your local immigration office before the date of expiry. It is advisable to do this a couple of weeks before to avoid any last-minute rush. For those who plan to extend their stay for longer periods, Korean Immigration states that you must apply before 2 months from the date of expiration. When applying for the extension after the expiration date, you will pay the penalty according to Article 25 of Immigration Act.

#### Necessary documents

#### **Instructor (E-2)**

- Passport and foreigner registration card
- Application forms for the extension of stay
- An employment contract

- Original copy of Health Examination for Employment obtained in Korea (includes TBPE (drug) test and HIV test) issued by a Public Health Center, General Hospital, National Hospital or Public Hospital
- Issuance of proof of (lack of) criminal records (the records must be affixed with the relevant nation's Apostille)
  - ※ Nationals of countries that have not signed the Apostille treaty, (Canada, China, etc) must get their records verified by their local Korean consulate or their consulates in Korea, and those already in Korea who were issued their criminal records from their consulates in Korea have no need for an Apostille
  - ※ The Korea Immigration Service will not recognize criminal records issued by online web services or E-mail and notarized by a consulate in Korea as valid
  - ※ Canadian citizens applying for a visa from within Canada must submit a criminal background check which includes a "Vulnerable Sector Screening"
  - ※ Exempt: Native instructors invited by the Ministry of Education
- A copy of registration of educational institute establishment and operation
- A copy of business registration
- A reference
- KRW 30,000 (Government Revenue Stamp)

#### *STANDARD OF THE REVIEW OF PERMISSION FOR EXTENSION OF STAY*

1. Reasonableness of continuous activity to teach foreign language
2. Foreigners that fit the descriptions listed below shall be limited:
  - ※ A foreigner with no qualification;
  - ※ A foreigner personally teaching foreign language in the place other than educational institute or educational organization;
  - ※ A foreigner with unsteady domestic stay status such as frequent change/addition of place of employment or duplicated employment.



## ***SINGLE RE-ENTRY PERMIT***

Single re-entry permit may be applied for at the airport immigration offices on the date of departure. This can be used for a single re-entry and is valid for up to one year.

### Necessary Documents

1. Passport and Foreigner Registration Card
2. Application for Re-entry Permit
3. KRW 30,000 (Government Revenue Stamp)

## ***MULTIPLE RE-ENTRY PERMIT***

Multiple re-entry permits are valid for multiple re-entries and are valid for up to two years.

### Necessary Documents

1. Passport and Foreigner Registration Card
2. Application for Re-entry Permit
3. KRW 50,000 (Government Revenue Stamp)

## ***SOURCES***

**Hi Korea: e-Government for Foreigners,**

[http://www.hikorea.go.kr/pt/main\\_en.pt](http://www.hikorea.go.kr/pt/main_en.pt) (retrieved 10 Nov 2008).

**Korea Immigration Service,** <http://immigration.go.kr/HP/IMM80>  
(retrieved 10 Nov 2008).

## ***IMMIGRATION OFFICES NATIONWIDE***

### **HEAD OFFICE**

**Immigration Bureau,** Government Complex, 1, Jungangdong,  
Gwacheon, Gyeonggi-do, Ph: 02-2110-3433

### **REGIONAL OFFICES**

**Busan Immigration Office,** 17-26, **Busan Immigration Office,**  
Jungangdong 4-ga, Jung-gu, Busan **Gamcheon Branch Office,** Busan  
Ph: 051-461-3021 International Fish Market, 761,  
Amnamdong, Seo-gu, Busan  
Ph: 051-254-3917~8

**Busan Immigration Office, Ulsan Cheongju Immigration**

**Branch Office**, 139-16,

Maeamdong, Nam-gu, Ulsan

Ph: 052-261-7545

**Cheongju Immigration Office,**

791 Bihadong, Heungdeok-gu,

Cheongju, Chungcheongbukdo Ph: 043-236-4901

043-236-4901

**Processing Center**, 148

Mipyongdong, Heungdeok-gu,

Cheongju, Chungcheongbukdo

Ph: 043-290-7511

**Chuncheon Immigration Office,**

709-10, Hyoja 2 dong, Chuncheon,

Gangwondo

Ph: 033-244-7351

**Chuncheon Immigration Office,**

**Donghae Branch Office**, Dongin

Bldg. 4F, 847 Cheongokdong,

Donghae, Gangwondo

Ph. 033-535-5721

**Chuncheon Immigration Office,  
Goseong Branch Office,**  
Sacheonri, Hyunnaemyeon,  
Goseonggun, Gangwondo.  
Ph: 033-680-5100

**Gwangju Immigration Office,  
Mokpo Branch Office,** 982-2,  
Ogamdong, Mokpo, Jeollanamdo  
Ph: 061-282-7294

**Chuncheon Immigration Office,  
Sokcho Branch Office,** 53-3,  
Dongmyeongdong, Sokcho,  
Gangwondo. Ph: 033-636-8613

**Gwangju Immigration Office,**  
366-1, Hwajeong 3 dong, Seo-gu,  
Gwangju  
Ph: 062-381-0015

**Daegu Immigration Office,** 1012-  
1, Geomsadong, Dong-gu, Daegu  
Ph: 053-980-3511

**Hwaseong Immigration  
Processing Center,** 238-7,  
Madomyeon, Hwaseong,  
Gyeonggido Ph: 031-355-2016

**Daegu Immigration Office,  
Pohang Branch Office,** 58-13,  
Hanggudong, Buk-gu, Pohang,  
Gyeongsangbukdo  
Ph: 054-247-2971

**Incheon Immigration Office,** 1-31,  
Hangdong 7-ga, Jung-gu, Incheon  
Ph: 032-890-6300

**Daejeon Immigration Office,** 16-8,  
Jungchondong, Jung-gu, Daejeon  
Ph: 042-254-8811

**Incheon Airport Immigration  
Office,** 2172-1, Unseodong, Jung-  
gu, Incheon..  
Ph: 032-740-7013

**Daejeon Immigration Office,  
Daesan Branch Office,** Hanseong  
Bldg. 3F, 197-8, Daesanri,  
Daesaneup, Seosan  
Chungcheongnamdo  
Ph: 041-681-6181

**Incheon Airport Immigration  
Office,** City Air Terminal, 159-6,  
Samseongdong, Gangnam-gu,  
Seoul Ph: 02-551-6922

**Gimhae Immigration Office,** 2350,  
Daejeo 2 dong, Gangseo-gu, Busan  
Ph: 051-979-1321

**Incheon Airport Immigration  
Office, Gimpo Branch Office,** 712-  
1, Bangwhadong, Gangseo-gu,  
Seoul Ph: 02-2664-6202

<b>Jeju Immigration Office</b> , 673-8, Geonipdong, Jeju Ph: 064-722-3494	<b>Seoul Immigration Office</b> , 319-2, Sinjeong 6 dong, Yangcheon-gu, Seoul Ph: 02-2650-6212
<b>Jeonju Immigration Office</b> , San27, Hoseongdong 1-ga, Deokjin-gu, Jeonju, Jeollabukdo Ph: 063-245-6161	<b>Seoul Immigration Office, Sejongno Branch Office</b> , SK Hub Bldg. 2F, 89-4, Gyeongundong, Jongno-gu, Seoul Ph: 02-732-6214
<b>Jeonju Immigration Office, Gunsan Branch Office</b> , 49-32, Jangmidong, Gunsan, Jeollabukdo Ph: 063-445-2581	<b>Suwon Immigration Office</b> , 919-6, Guundong, Gwonseon-gu, Suwon Ph: 031-278-3311
<b>Masan Immigration Office</b> , 2-6, Wolpodong, Masan, Gyeongsangnamdo Ph: 055-222-9272	<b>Suwon Immigration Office, Osan Branch Office</b> , Songtan, P.O. Box 3, Pyeongtaek, Gyeonggido Ph: 031-666-2677
<b>Masan Immigration Office, Geoje Branch Office</b> , 535-5, Majeondong, Geoje, Gyeongsangnamdo Ph: 055-681-2433	<b>Pyeongtaek Branch Office</b> , 570, Manhori, Poseung-myeon, Pyeongtaek, Gyeonggido Ph: 031-683-6937
<b>Masan Immigration Office, Sacheon Branch Office</b> , 44-5, Donggeumdong, Sacheon, Gyeongsangnamdo Ph: 055-835-4088	<b>Uijeongbu Immigration Office</b> , Seoyoung Bldg, 493-8, Uijeongbu 2 dong, Uijeongbu, Gyeonggido Ph: 031-828-9499
<b>Masan Immigration Office, Tongyeong Branch Office</b> , 171-10, Donghodong, Tongyeong, Gyeongsangnamdo Ph: 055-645-3494	<b>Yeosu Immigration Office</b> , 944, Hwajangdong, Yeosu, Jeollanamdo Ph: 061-684-6971
	<b>Yeosu Immigration Office, Gwangyang Branch Office</b> , 1359-5, Jungdong, Gwangyang, Jeollanamdo Ph: 061-792-1139

Adapted from: *Korea Immigration Service website*,  
<http://seoul.immigration.go.kr/>.

# FOREIGN EMBASSIES

## *AUSTRALIA*

**Seoul: Embassy**

Telephone: 02-2003-0100

Address: 11th Fl, Kyobo Building, 1 Jongno 1-Ga, Jongno-Gu, Seoul

Website: <http://www.southkorea.embassy.gov.au/>

## *CANADA*

**Seoul: Embassy**

Telephone: 02-3783-6000

Fax: 02-3783-6239 (General & Administration)

02-3783-6112 (Consular)

02-3783-6113 (Public & Cultural Affairs)

02-3783-6114 (Immigration)

Address: 16-1, Jeong-dong, Jung-gu, CPO Box 6299, Seoul, Korea 100-662

Website: <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/world/embassies/korea/>

## *IRELAND*

**Seoul: Embassy**

Telephone: 02-774-6455

Fax: 02-774-6458

Email: [seoulembassy@dfa.ie](mailto:seoulembassy@dfa.ie)

Address: 13F, Leema Building, 146-1 Soosong-dong, Chongro-gu, Seoul, Korea 110-140

Website: <http://www.irelandhouse-korea.com/>

## *NEW ZEALAND*

**Seoul: Embassy**

Telephone: 02-3701-7700

Fax: 02-3701-7701

Email: [nzembasel@kornet.net](mailto:nzembasel@kornet.net)

Website: <http://www.nzembassy.com/home.cfm?c=8>

St. Address: Kyobo Building, 15th Floor, 1 Jongno 1-ga, Jongno-gu, Seoul,  
Republic of Korea

Postal Address: KPO Box 2258, Seoul, 110-110, Republic of Korea

## *SOUTH AFRICA*

**Seoul: Embassy**

Tel: 02-792-4855

Fax: 02-792-4856

Address: 1-37 Hannam-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul 140-885, Seoul, South Korea

Website: <http://www.southafrica-embassy.or.kr/index.php>

## *UNITED KINGDOM*

**Seoul: Embassy**

Telephone: 02-3210-5500

Fax: 02-725-1738

Address: Taepyeongno 40, 4 Jeong-dong, Jung-gu 100-120, Seoul

Website: <http://ukinkorea.fco.gov.uk/en>

## ***UNITED STATES OF AMERICA***

### **Seoul: Embassy**

Tel: 02-397-4114

Fax: 02-397-4101

Website: <http://seoul.usembassy.gov/>

Korean: <http://korean.seoul.usembassy.gov/>

E-mail: [seoul\\_acs@state.gov](mailto:seoul_acs@state.gov)

Address: 32 Sejongno, Jongno-gu, Seoul 110-710, Republic of Korea

### **Busan: American Presence Post**

Tel: 051-863-0731

Fax: 051-863-0734

Website: <http://busan.usconsulate.gov/>

Korean: <http://korean.busan.usconsulate.gov/>

Address: 32 Sejongno, Jongno-gu, Seoul 110-710, Republic of Korea

# PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

## *INTRA-CITY TRAVEL/COMMUTING*

### SUBWAY

The Seoul subway system is one of the safest, cleanest and most efficient in the world. It is a great way to avoid the traffic congestion of such a busy city. The Seoul system currently consists of twelve lines which will take you just about anywhere inside and outside the greater Seoul metropolitan area. Some of these lines are still under construction, and will be completed within the next few years. Busan, Daejeon, Daegu, Gwangju also have two or three lines each.

Each line is color-coded and in Seoul the most common lines are numbered 1 to 8. All the subway stops are numbered, and have their name written in English. At your departure station you can either buy a ticket from the ticket office (shown below), which is usually manned, or you can use the ticket vending machine. The fare will vary depending on how far you want to travel, but there will usually be a large subway map up on the wall near the ticket office which will display all of the stations and the fare required to get there from your location.



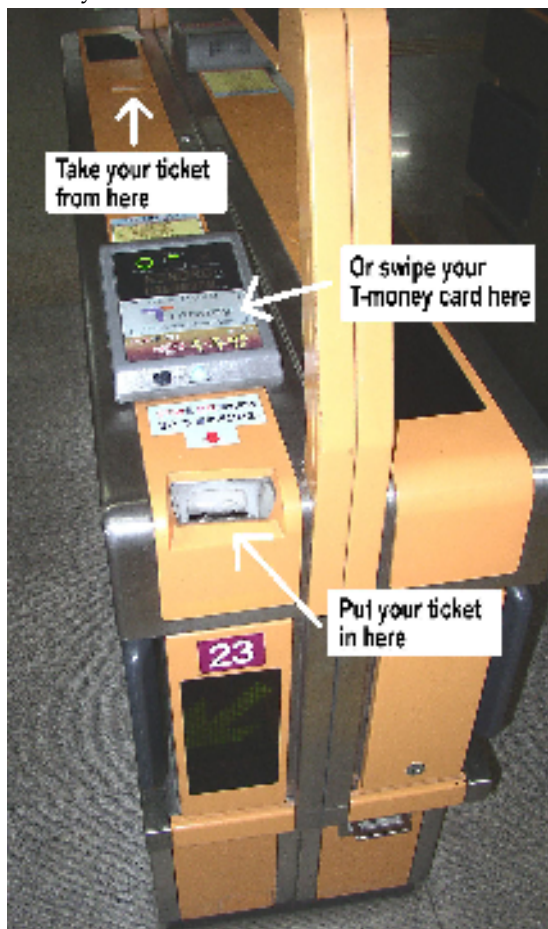
## PAYING WITH CASH



If the ticket office is manned, simply tell the office person your destination, and hand your money over. To use the vending machine, just press the button for the number of tickets you want, then press the button for the fare amount for your destination, and feed in the displayed amount of notes or coins. The ticket and any change will pop out of the bottom.

To enter the subway, feed your ticket into the slot on the turnstile machine and walk through. Make sure that you collect your ticket when it pops out at the top of the machine, because you will

need it again when you get to your destination! Some turnstiles only accept T-money, but don't worry, at least one of the turnstiles at the entrance will take your ticket.



If you travel further than the amount allowed for on your ticket, an alarm will sound as you exit the turnstile at your destination. Don't panic! Just look around for a ticket office, and pay the extra 100 won or so. The staff are usually very cooperative and understanding, even if they don't speak English. Some stations have a machine near the turnstiles where you can "top-up" your ticket before you exit.

In Seoul, you can also buy a 30-day/60-trip pass which start at around 40,000 won, but these are limited to certain lines and may not be as flexible as you would like.

*PAYING BY T-MONEY IN SEOUL (AND SOON NATIONWIDE)*



The T-money card system is a very efficient and convenient way to pay for your public transport. You can buy a T-money card at any subway station ticket office, or any convenience store displaying the T-money logo. Simply say, "*Ti meo-ni ka-deu juseyo.*" (티 머니 카드 주세요). They cost about 2000 won. To load credit onto it, hand the card and cash to the person at the ticket office and say "*Ka-deu chung-jeon hae juseyo*" (카드 충전 해 주세요). They will recharge your card for you. Then you just have to wave your card over the sensor on top of the turnstile (the sensor has the T-money logo on it) and you're on your way. Because these cards use radio-frequency technology, the sensors can read the cards through a wallet or handbag, so you don't even have to take the cards out to use them.

As well as being very convenient, the T-money system has the added advantages of allowing you to get a 100 won discount per ride, and you can transfer between buses and the subway system and vice-versa up to four times (five rides) for no extra charge (as long as you do so within 30 minutes – or 60 minutes between 9pm and 7am). If you pay cash, you have to buy a new ticket when you transfer between the buses and subway.

Some taxis also have a T-money sensor, which is handy – but be aware that some drivers may not want to use this facility either because they don't know how to operate the machine or they want you to pay cash so that the tax man can't keep track of it.

One thing to watch out for with T-money cards is that they do seem to wear out after a few months. They can often still be read by the train turnstile sensors, but become unreliable with the bus sensors. The best bet would be to buy a new card, and get someone at a subway ticket office to transfer any remaining balance to your new

card. If you get stuck on a bus with a broken T-money card and no cash, the driver will probably take pity on you and let it slide. If he's in a bad mood, you'll need to bail out at the next stop.

Another small hassle with T-money is that sometimes the display on the turnstile gets a broken LED and displays what looks like an incorrect remaining balance on your card. You may think that the system has ripped you off, when actually everything is OK. Before you jump to conclusions, check your card on a different turnstile the next time you use the subway, or get someone at the ticket office to check your balance on their machine.

You may also want to be careful about how much money you load onto your T-money card at one time. Although it's a bit of a hassle to recharge your card too often, you'll be pretty upset if you lose or break your card and it's still got 50,000 won remaining on it. It might be a good idea to just put enough on it to last you a week or so. You should also write your phone number on it with a name-pen so that a good Samaritan can contact you if you lose your card. That Samaritan may be less tempted to keep the card if the balance is low, too!

A variation on the T-money theme is to get a Korean credit card with an integrated T-money chip. This has the added advantage of not wearing out, and never needing to be recharged; the accumulated fares are simply added to your monthly credit card bill. Most of the major credit cards in Korea have this facility.

### *FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND*

Every subway station has a large map near its ticket office where you can work out your location and find your destination. You should also find yourself a subway map and keep it with you. Many of the subway offices will have a free map in English (although it's pretty large!) Many of the free expat magazines have a smaller subway map that you can cut out and keep in your wallet or purse.

When you enter a station (or transfer between stations) make sure that you're going the right direction before you commit to going through a turnstile. Some of the older, poorly designed stations do not allow you to easily change to the other direction if you make a mistake. If this happens, you may have to re-swipe your card or buy another ticket. As a foreigner, you may get away with simply

jumping the turnstile, but don't count on it; it may be embarrassing to try and explain to a subway official why you appear to be trying to ride for free! The best plan will be to try and catch the attention of someone in the ticket office, and most of the time they will just let you through.

### *TIMETABLES*

The SMRT website can show you detailed timetables (<http://www.smrt.co.kr/Eng/index.jsp>) but in general the subway runs between 5.30-45 am and 12.30-45 am during the week, and closes around midnight on weekends and holidays unless there's a special event such as a big sports game. Be patient if stuck in a popular nightspot after midnight, because taxi drivers become very picky and you may have a difficult time getting home.

### *ESTIMATING TRAVEL TIME*

A good rule-of-thumb for estimating your traveling time is to allow roughly two minutes per stop, plus 5 to 10 minutes for a transfer. Many stations have a sign on the columns between the platforms which show how much time it will take to get you from your current location to every other station on that line. You can generally estimate your time very accurately this way.

### *KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS WHILE ON THE SUBWAY*

All of the subway lines have an announcement in Korean and English for each station, but the train is often pretty noisy, so you have to listen carefully for your stop. This is generally only a problem on the old lines where there is no visual display to back up the announcements. The newer lines have electronic displays in the subway cars which clearly show the upcoming stations and transfer points in Korean and English. The newest trains have a traveling light display which clearly highlights the train's position in relation to the other stations. If you are on an old train with small windows and no electronic signs you will have to pay careful attention to your surroundings if you don't want to miss your stop. Keep an eye out of the window as the train enters a station and try to spot the station name in English. The sign will usually show the next station on the line, too. Above every door on the subway is a map of either the line you are on or the whole subway network. You can look at this map

and count how many stations until your stop. This is a bit of a clunky solution, but if you pay attention you should have no problems.

### *TRANSFERS*

Getting to your destination may involve the need to transfer between subway lines, and this can sometimes be a little confusing, especially in Seoul. Try to plan your route before you go, rather than trying to work it out on-the-fly. There are some good route-planning tools listed below. A station with a transfer point will have large color-coded signs that clearly point the way to transfer to the other line. Some also have large color-coded stripes on the wall that you can follow. You will often need to climb up or down stairs to get to the new line and sometimes the signage is not very clear, so go carefully and pay attention. You can always transfer without having to get a new ticket, so if your way is blocked by a turnstile you'd better re-trace your steps and go back the way you came until you can see where you should have gone. Don't be afraid to ask someone if you get lost; most twenty or thirty-something Koreans will be able to understand you well enough to point you in the right direction.

### *EXITING THE SUBWAY*

Most stations have several exits, and some of the larger stations with one or more transfer points can be a bit confusing. When you exit the train onto the platform, look above for signs showing the exit number you need. On some older stations an exit can only be accessed from one end of the station, and if you come out on the wrong side you'll have to either pay to re-enter the station, or climb up to the surface and find your way at street-level. Every station should have a map of the local area on the platform and near the ticket office which will show you the exits and what is around their immediate vicinity. These maps also show bus numbers which may help you work out where to transfer to a bus. Be careful you don't end up taking a bus in the wrong direction, though!

### *LOST AND FOUND*

If you leave something behind on the subway and you notice as soon as you disembark, report to the station where the item was lost or at your arrival station.

**Lost and found office operating hours:**

Korail Lines and Seoul Lines 1~4 : Weekdays: 9:00 am ~ 6:00 pm (and until 5:00 pm in winter), Saturdays: 9:00 am ~ 1:00 pm. (Closed Sundays)

Seoul Lines 5~8 : Weekdays: 9:00 am ~ 6:00 pm (Closed Saturdays & Sundays)

Incheon Line: Weekdays/Holidays: 5:30 am ~ 12:30 am (7 days a week)

**Lost and found offices:**

Korail Lines

Guro Station (Suwon Line): 02-869-0089

Daegok Station (Ilsan Line): 031-965-8516

Seongbuk Station (Jungang and Gyeongchun Lines): 02-917-7445

Ansan Station (Gwacheon Line): 031-491-7790

Seolleung Station (Bundang Line): 02-568-7715

Byeongjeom Station (Cheonan Line): 031-234-7788

Seoul Lines 1 and 2

City Hall Station: 02-753-2408, 2409

Seoul Lines 3 and 4

Chungmuro Station: 02-2271-1170, 1171

Seoul Lines 5 and 8

Wangsimni Station: 02-6311-6765, 6768

Seoul Lines 6 and 7

Taereung Station: 02-6311-6766, 6767

Incheon Line

Bupyeong-gu Office Station (Within the station office): 032-451-3650

Airport Express Line

Gimpo Airport Station: 032-745-7777

*CROWDING TIPS, SAFETY AND ETIQUETTE*

If have to wait for the train at a busy platform, or you want to buy a ticket from a busy station office, it may be necessary to wait in line. Many Westerners are surprised to learn "queuing culture" is not the same in all countries. You may find yourself feeling upset if someone older than you cuts in front of you in the line. Elderly riders are allowed to take a free ticket from the ticket office counter, and will

often go straight to the window to help themselves to a ticket and be on their way – they won't hold you up, so don't worry!

When you are waiting on the platform for the train to arrive, make sure that you stay behind the yellow line. This will ensure that you're far enough away from the edge of the platform that you won't accidentally fall onto the tracks in front of an oncoming train, or fall between the cars as the train comes into the station. It is possible for someone to be pushed onto the track by someone else when things get crowded, so keep your wits about you. Some stations have been fitted with sliding doors which is helping to reduce the numbers of suicides and accidents, and is also improving the air quality and lowering the noise levels, but there are still many stations with open platforms and it's better to give the edge of the platform a wide berth.

When on an escalator please make sure that you stand on the right-hand side and leave the left side clear for people in a hurry to get past you. If you are with a friend, don't stand together. There has recently been a campaign to get people to stay-put on the escalators for safety reasons, (the campaign advertisement actually refers specifically to children, drunk or elderly people! If you are not in one of these categories, you can safely ignore those guidelines and walk up or down the escalators as long as you're careful). If someone is in your way, a polite "*Jam-kan man-yo*" (잠깐만요) (Excuse me, please) will usually get them out of your way. If not, a more assertive "*Bikyeo juseyo*!" (비켜 주세요) (Move, please!) will probably do the trick.

Don't be tempted to run in the subway station. If you miss your train, don't worry - there'll be another one along in a minute or two; it's not worth risking your life for. Subway stations are made of hard and sometimes slippery stone floors, stairs and sharp corners and if you fall down you may not be getting up again.

When you go through the turnstile, try not to follow too closely behind the person in front of you; sometimes the sensor will detect two people trying to slip through on one ticket and set off an embarrassing alarm.

Koreans often do not walk in a straight line, and you might find that people are cutting you off or barging into you as you try to make your way around the station. Try not to let this get to you; Korean people think nothing of this if it is done to them, so it isn't



personal. One way to minimize this if someone is coming towards you is to pretend that you're not looking where you are going. If you look as if you are glancing off to the side, the oncoming person will magically and mysteriously avoid you, whereas if you are looking ahead, you will somehow become a magnet for any and all comers. Try it, it really works!

Don't sit with your legs sticking out or with your knees splayed out to the sides - it takes up too much room, and is considered to be bad manners. Keep your knees together as much as possible and tuck your feet in so that the people standing won't trip over them.

If you're on the subway with a friend, it's often a good time to chat. Don't forget, however, that you are not alone on the subway, and some of your fellow passengers may be quite good at English, especially in Seoul. Don't say anything that you wouldn't want someone standing next to you to hear; that is, if you're a generally polite person and usually try not to offend strangers. Also, in Korea it is considered bad manners to speak loudly on public transportation, whether that be to a friend sitting next to you, or on your cellphone.

### *EMERGENCY EVACUATION AND FIRE*

In February 2003 an arsonist set fire to a subway car in Daegu resulting in the deaths of 198 people. 147 people were also injured,<sup>1</sup> but suffice it to say that if you find yourself in an emergency situation you need to take fast action to help yourself and others if you want to live.

Many changes were made to all of Korea's subway systems after this tragedy (such as removing foam cushions from the seats), so things are much improved today, but it's better to be safe than sorry, so here are some things you can do to improve the odds if you are faced with an emergency:

- There is an emergency intercom system at each end of every car on the front and back walls with a red call button and a microphone that can be used to communicate with the driver in an emergency. Unless your Korean is good enough you'd better delegate this task to a likely looking Korean passenger. Just say to them, "*Bisang imnida!*" (비상입니다!) (There's an

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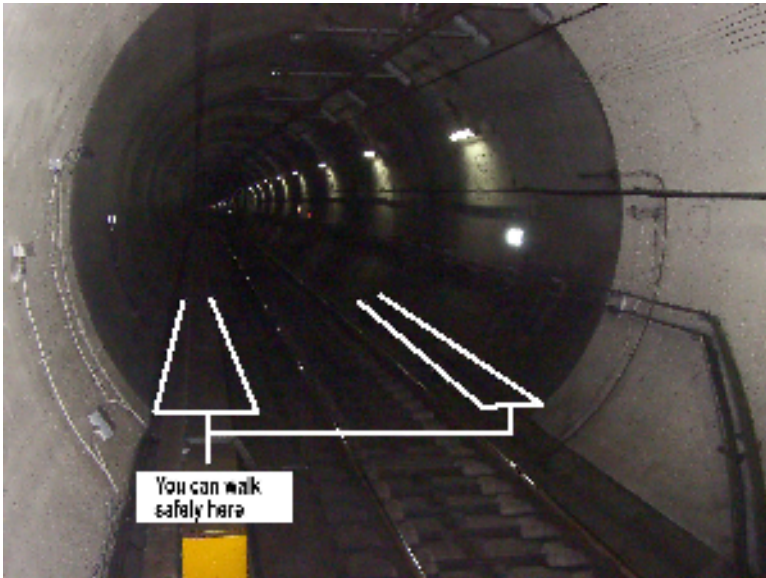
<sup>1</sup> "Daegu Subway Fire," *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*, retrieved 19 Feb 2009  
<[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daegu\\_subway\\_fire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daegu_subway_fire)>

emergency!) Then point to the end of the car and say, "*Kigwan sa bulleo juseyo*" (기관사 불러 주세요) (Call the driver!) If you prompt people around you this will usually snap them out of their state of torpor and they'll take action. If you do nothing, then they may not either, until it is too late.

- There is a fire extinguisher at each end of the subway car situated in a little recess on the front and back walls. You will need to detach the extinguisher from its retaining strap, remove the pin, point the extinguisher nozzle at the base of the fire (not the flames!) and squeeze the lever slowly. Using a sweeping motion, move the fire extinguisher back and forth until the fire is completely out. Operate the extinguisher from a safe distance, and then move towards the fire once it starts to diminish. Do not wait for someone else to take action! If you do, you may not survive.
- To operate the emergency door release once the car has stopped, look for a small box on the floor under the seats next to the car doors. It has a red flap. If you open the red flap on the box and turn the lever inside, the pressure system holding the doors closed will be released. You can then pry the doors apart by hand and exit the car. If you exit at a station with the double set of doors you will need to manually press the emergency release handles on the inside of the platform doors.



- If you exit the car in the middle of a tunnel there will be a large-ish drop down onto the rails, so don't be surprised by that. Make your way along the side of the tunnel until you get to a station. Don't worry about being hit by another train; as you can see from the picture below there is enough room for a train to pass you as long as you stick close to the side of the tunnel.



- If there is smoke in the tunnel try to stay as low as possible and take the shortest route to safety that the situation allows. Depending on the amount of crowding and resultant mayhem, it might be a good idea to make your way to the end of the train before you try to get out (as this may protect you from smoke or fire in the tunnel), but if it's too crowded then just get out any way and anywhere you can.

Here are some things you can do to minimize the problems caused by overcrowding on the subway:

1. Try to travel at a less busy time of day wherever possible. With the exception of the morning rush hour, the rest of Korea doesn't really get going until after mid-day (especially on

weekends) so if you get up early you can often beat the crowd. However, even at really busy times you can usually squeeze your way onto the train.

2. If you are with a group of friends and your destination is not far away, it may be just as economical for you to share a 3,000 won taxi ride than to shell out 1,000 won each for the subway.
3. Try to make your way to a door well before you get to your stop so that you don't have to crowd-surf your way through. Every time the train stops and someone gets out you should be able to wiggle your way a little further towards the door. Try to work out which side of the car the door will open on - the newer trains have computerized signs in English which tell you what side to disembark on, but on the older lines you'll need to listen carefully for the announcement and look out of the window as the train arrives at the platform.
4. If you're not planning to get off the train for a while, try to make your way to the middle of the car; that will make life easier for other people trying to get on and off the train.
5. If you're sitting down and you see a very elderly person or a pregnant woman standing up, please offer them your seat. It's an easy way to be a good ambassador for your culture and show the people on the train that Westerners are not so bad. You may also be able to set a good example for other people on the train who have no manners.
6. At very busy stations you may see people crowding the door trying to get in as you are trying to get out. If you are in a situation where you are not able to get out of the train because people are in your way trying to push their way on, say, "*Bi-kyeo juseyo!*" (비켜주세요!) (Move, please!) This should shame one or two of them enough to give you some room to squeeze out.

## *GET WITH THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY*

Of course there are a lot of high-tech ways to find your way around these days, and your first point of call will be the Internet. The Seoul Metropolitan Rapid Transit Corporation has a very helpful and informative website where you can view a subway map (and print it out):

<http://www.nsubway.co.kr/korea/seoul/seoulsubwaymapen.htm>

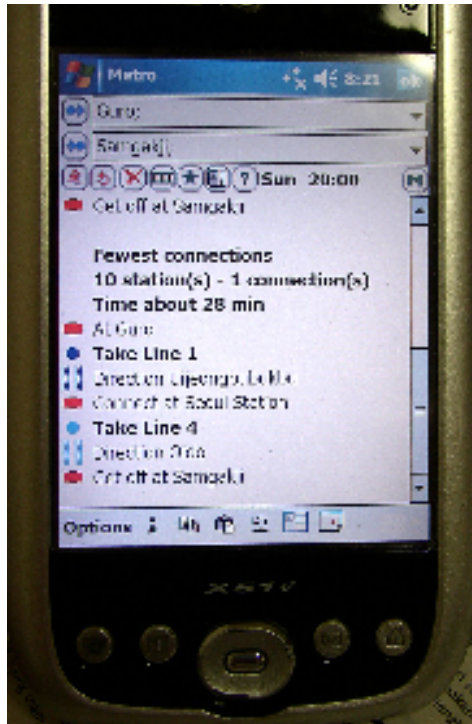
They also have an interactive map which allows you to click on the stations you want to go from and to, and it will automatically calculate your traveling time and your transfer points. You can also get it to calculate a route that will minimize the number of transfers, although that journey may take more time. The map also has information on what time the last train leaves, which could be vital if you don't want to take an expensive taxi home after a night of partying!

<http://www.smrt.co.kr/Eng/index.jsp>

## *ROUTE INFORMATION ON YOUR MOBILE DEVICE*

If you have a PDA or PDA-style mobile phone or device, an excellent freeware program called "MetrO" is available. It has data on the public transport systems of 400 cities around the world (including Seoul, Busan and Daegu), and easily allows you to calculate journey times and transfer points:

<http://www.nanika.net/metro/>



Downloads are available for Palm, PocketPC, Smartphone, BlackBerry, iPhone and others. There's also an on-line version available for mobile devices capable of web access whilst on the move.

### *BUSAN, DAEGU, DAEJEON, & GWANGJU SUBWAY INFORMATION*

**Busan:** The Busan subway system has a good English-language website which should have most of the information you need at <http://www.subway.busan.kr/english/main/> There's also a Wikipedia entry for the Busan Subway at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Busan\\_Subway](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Busan_Subway)

**Daegu:** Daegu's subway system also has an English-language website at <http://www.dtro.or.kr/index.html?eng>.

**Daejeon:** Daejeon's subway system website appears to be only in Korean at this stage, at <http://www.djet.co.kr/index.do>. However Wikipedia comes to the rescue with a basic rundown of the facilities at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daejeon\\_Subway\\_Line\\_1](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daejeon_Subway_Line_1)

**Gwangju:** Gwangju's subway system has a website in English, however you have to go to the Korean-language site first at

<http://www.subway.gwangju.kr/> then click on the tiny "English" section at the very top, right of the page.

## BUSES

### GENERAL BUS INFORMATION

**Paying by Cash.** When you get on the bus, drop your money into the clear plastic hopper next to the driver. If you need change and the driver isn't paying attention to you, just politely remind him for the change. For example if you want 400 won change, you would say, "Jan don sa baek won juseyo" (잔돈 사백 원 주세요). Don't expect the driver to give you change for a 10,000 won note – that's a great way to make an enemy! If you don't have any change you can always break a 10,000 won bill by buying some gum or a bottle of water at a local kiosk or convenience store beforehand. If you don't know how much the fare should cost, simply tell the driver your destination, and he will tell you the fare (usually in Korean).

**Paying by T-money.** When you climb onto the bus you will see the T-money sensor mounted around waist-level near the driver. Just wave your card near the sensor and you will hear a single beep, and see the fare flash up briefly on the sensor's display. If the sensor can't read your card it will beep 2 or 3 times and play a recorded message in Korean. Try again. If it doesn't work after a few tries, then either your card has run out of credit, or it is not working properly (see the subway section above, "Problems with T-money" for more information). In this case you'll have to pay cash for your fare, (no 100-won discount today, sorry) plead for mercy to the driver, or get off at the next stop.

You can also pay for a friend with your T-money card. When you get on the bus say to the driver, "*Ajeossi/Adjummani, du saram innida*" (아저씨 두 사람입니다) (Mister/Ma'am, two people please.) then wait until the driver sets up the transaction before you swipe the sensor. It will beep and display the number of fares you requested when it's ready to go. Your friend probably won't be able to transfer to a subsequent mode of transport for free, however.

When you get off the bus just swipe your T-money card again (at the sensor by the back door), and the sensor will beep once. If you have traveled more than 10 km the sensor may display an additional

charge which has been automatically deducted. If you don't swipe your card you will not be able to transfer for free to another mode of transportation.

**Finding Your Way Around.** Each bus stop has a color-coded signboard which lists every bus that stops there, the routes and approximately how often they come. Most of the route will be in Korean only, however some major locations also have their names written in English. It would really help to learn to read Korean if you can't already – it only takes a few hours, and will drastically improve your ability to get along in Korea - especially since some stop names are "Konglish", such as the Hamilton Hotel in Itaewon.







*A bus stop sign for the little green neighborhood buses.*

**Timetables** - Bus timetables vary depending on the bus, the time of day, and whether it's a week-day, a weekend, or a holiday. Check on the sign board at your bus stop for the timings of each bus. Check the “Get with the 21st Century” section below for a more user-friendly way to get timetable information.

**Estimating Travel Time** - Unlike trains, buses are affected by traffic congestion problems so it's difficult to always accurately estimate how quickly a bus will get to it's destination. Although the introduction of bus-only lanes is making bus travel quicker and more efficient, there can always be delays – especially in areas where subway construction is being undertaken. A very rough rule-of-thumb might be to estimate 4 or 5 minutes per stop. Check the “Get with the 21st Century” section below for a more user-friendly way to estimate traveling time.

**Keeping Track of Your Progress While on the Bus** - Once you're on the bus, just like on the subway, most buses have an announcement

before each stop. They will usually also mention the next stop, which allows you enough time to prepare to disembark. Announcements for major centers are often made in Korean and English, but don't count on that. The buses always have a route map on the edges of the ceiling which you can use to check your progress as you go.

**Transfers** - Just to recap, you can transfer to or from the subway or another bus for no extra charge in Seoul if you use a T-money card. The only exception is that you cannot transfer to another bus with the same number - that will incur a new, full fare. Don't forget to swipe your T-money card when you disembark.

**Exiting the Bus** - When you want to get off the bus you need to press one of the red 'stop' buttons which are located in various positions around the interior of the bus. This will set off a buzzer and inform the driver that you want to get off. You should try to exit from the rear door of the bus unless it is so crowded that you cannot easily make your way to the back. Watch carefully for crazy motorcyclists when you exit the bus as they often overtake on the inside and show little consideration for the safety of others or themselves. Several people have been killed or injured being hit by motorcycles while getting off buses.

Every now and then you may be in the situation where either you forgot to press the button, or the driver is not paying attention, and the bus is just about to pull away from your stop without letting you out. In that case you can shout, "*Ajeossi! Nae ryeo juseyo.*" (아저씨 내려 주세요 요!) (Mister, open the door!).

### *CROWDING TIPS, SAFETY AND ETIQUETTE*

Korea is one of the more densely populated countries in the world and more often than not the buses get very crowded. Sometimes a bus gets so crowded that it is too full to let any more people on, and you have to wait for the next bus. Here are some things you can do to minimize the problems caused by overcrowding:

- Try to travel at a less busy time of day wherever possible. With the exception of the morning rush hour, the rest of Korea doesn't really get going until after mid-day (especially on weekends) so if you get up early you can often beat the crowd.

- Some stops are busier on a route than others. Sometimes the bus can be almost empty at the stop before or after your usual stop on a route. Planning to catch the bus down the road or around the corner from your regular stop can often make the difference between getting a seat or standing, or even getting on the bus at all.
- If you are with a group of friends, it may be just as economical for you to share a 3,000 won taxi ride than to shell out 1,000 won each for the bus. If time is of the essence, it may also be better to just bite the bullet and grab a taxi.
- Some buses take different routes, but end up at the same stop. You may be able to experiment with taking different buses to your destination and see which one is quicker. Check out the “Get with the 21st Century” section below for some suggestions on how to analyze your bus routes and maximize their efficiency.

Being on a crowded bus can try one's patience, and it's often very frustrating to be jammed into a crowded bus with a bunch of people. So how can you make the experience a bit less painful?

- Try to make your way to the back door well before you get to your stop so that you don't have to crowd-surf your way through. Every time the bus stops and someone gets out you should be able to wiggle your way a little further to the back. If the bus is so full that you can't move, then it's OK to stay near the front door and dive out there when you get to your stop. Everyone else does it.
- Even if you're not planning to get off the bus for a while, try to make your way to the back of the bus anyway. That will make life easier for other people trying to get onto the bus.
- Be careful with shoulder bags and backpacks on the bus. If you swing your bag around too quickly on a crowded bus you may take out some poor defenseless old grandfather, or a pregnant woman. It happened to one of the authors!
- If you have to stand on the bus try to hold on tightly to something. Bus drivers in Korea aren't renowned for their smooth driving skills, and you can quickly become a human

pinball if the driver suddenly brakes or accelerates and you're not prepared for it.

- If you're sitting down and you see a very elderly person or a pregnant woman standing, it is customary to offer them your seat. As mentioned before, it's an easy way to be a good ambassador for your culture. If there's nobody pregnant or over 60 on the bus, then it's every person for themselves!
- At busy bus stops you may see people trying to get on the bus through the back door as other people are trying to get out. You may even be tempted to do this yourself if there's a chance you won't make it on via the front door. Don't do it.
- If you are in a situation where you are not able to get off a bus or train because people are in your way trying to push their way on, say, "*Bi-kyeo juseyo!*" (비켜 주세요!) (Move, please!).

#### *AN OVERVIEW OF THE SEOUL BUS SYSTEM*

The Seoul Metropolitan Government introduced a new bus system in 2004. It was met with much public outcry, mainly from those who like to maintain the status-quo, although to be fair to them the changes did include a fare increase. These changes allowed the bus system to become much more efficient and easy to understand, as well as integrating the fare structure into the subway system. Additionally, the Seoul Metropolitan Government has been progressively introducing bus-only lanes into Seoul's city streets which have noticeably reduced traveling times, allowing buses to rival the subway system for reliability, simplicity and convenience.

The bus numbers go from 1 to 7 depending on their routes, and are color-coded to indicate their type.

- Red buses are for long-distance express travel, typically between Seoul and the outlying cities. Some express buses are also white. Fares start at 1,800 won.
- Blue buses are for medium-distance travel and link suburban areas to downtown Seoul. Their routes are fairly direct. Fares start at 1,000 won.
- Big Green buses link the blue bus routes and subway lines. These routes are generally more circuitous than blue bus routes. Fares start at 1,000 won.

- Small green buses called “town buses” have a single-digit number. They are for shorter-distance travel; they generally tootle around within a particular neighborhood. Fares start at 700 won.
- Yellow buses circle within the downtown area of cities taking in key sub-districts, business centers and shopping areas. Fares start at 800 won.

All fares are discounted by 100 won if a T-money card is used. 100 won is added to the fare for each additional 5km traveled. You can transfer up to 4 times (5 rides) if a T-money card is used, as long as you do so within 30 minutes. The districts around Seoul are numbered from 1 to 7 radiating around clockwise from the North:

Central Seoul	Incorporates Jongno, Jung-gu and Yongsan.
District 1	Incorporates Dobong, Gangbuk, Seongbuk and Nowon, and radiates out to Uijeongbu, Yangju and Pocheon.
District 2	Incorporates Dongdaemun, Jungnang, Seongdong and Gwangjin, and radiates out to Guri and Namyangju.
District 3	Incorporates Gangdong and Songpa, and radiates out to Hanam and Gwangju.
District 4	Incorporates Seocho and Gangnam, and radiates out to Seongnam and Yongin.
District 5	Incorporates Dongjak, Gwanak and Geumcheon, and radiates out to Anyang, Gwacheon, Ulwang, Ansan, Gunpo and Suwon.
District 6	Incorporates Gangseo, Yangcheon, Yeongdeungpo and Guro, and radiates out to Incheon, Bucheon, Kimpo (Gimpo), Gwangmyeong and Siheung.
District 7	Incorporates Eunpyeong, Mapo and Seodaemun, and radiates out to Paju and Goyang.

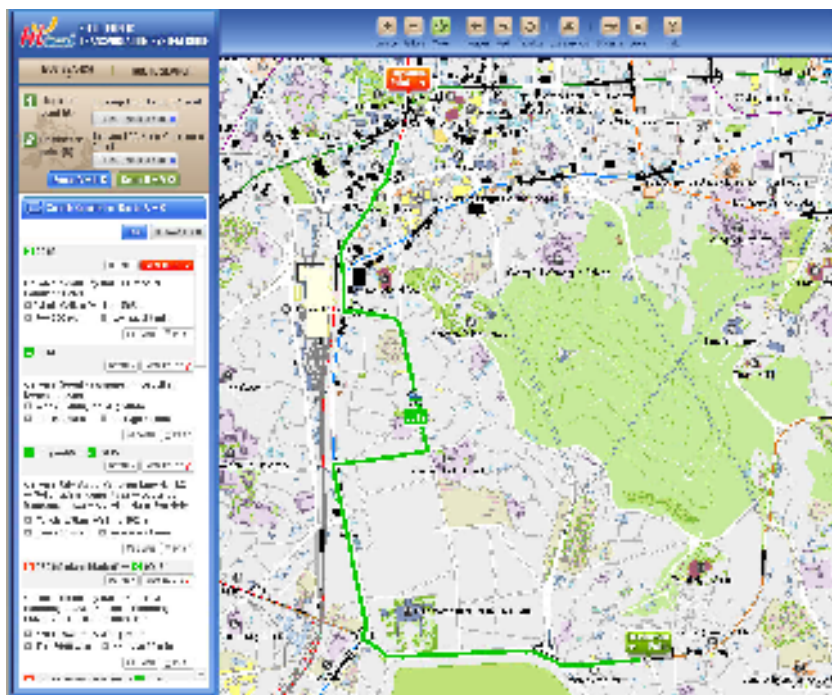


The number of a bus will generally be made up of three parts; it's starting zone, it's finishing zone, then a route number. So for example, blue bus number 263 starts in Majang-dong in Seongdong-gu (District 2) and finishes up in Yeouido in Yeongdeungpo-gu (District 6), and blue bus 110 starts and finishes in Jeongneung-dong in Seongbuk (District 1). This system is pretty consistent, but it's a little different for the red buses which have an extra number preceding the starting zone. (For more detailed information on bus routes see the links at the end of this section.)

### GET WITH THE 21ST CENTURY

Sponsored by the Seoul Metropolitan Government, the Seoul Public Transportation System Guide is an interactive map in English which can be used to calculate your traveling times and transfer points. It also tells you which buses you should take to get to your destination most efficiently. You can also get it to incorporate the subway so that it will give you information on a combined bus/subway journey. The beauty of this system is that you can click on your starting point on

the map, then click on the destination, and it will immediately show you the best way to go - something that would be extremely difficult to work out via conventional means. You may well find a bus or combination of buses that will take you from door-to-door faster than you imagined possible - remember that when you take the subway you have to clamber up and down several flights of stairs, as well as walking to and from the stations, and that time all adds up - whereas the bus you need may well be running right past your front door.



*Screenshot of the Seoul Public Transportation System Guide*

[http://bus.congnamul.com/SeoulRouteWebApp/view\\_english/map.jsp](http://bus.congnamul.com/SeoulRouteWebApp/view_english/map.jsp)

If you hover your mouse over a bus stop symbol near a station it may show the station name in a little pop-up control tip. In any case, this graphical representation of the city will help you to get your bearings and learn your way around very easily, so it is highly recommended!

There is an automated call system which utilizes GPS technology to let you know how far away the next bus is from your stop. At the top of the bus stop sign there's a number to call, then you

can enter the stop number. This system might be useful if you're running late and are tossing up whether or not to get a taxi.

The Korean tourist organization also has a website for calculating traveling times, etc. It has a very crisp and clear interactive map in English, as well as a whole raft of information on all kinds of transport both in Seoul and cities in other parts of Korea. This site is pretty-much one-stop shopping for all of your transportation questions.

<http://traffic.visitkorea.or.kr/Lang/en/>

### *GYEONGGI BUS SERVICE*

The Korea Tourism organization website has bus information for local buses in Gyeonggi province. Take a look at their website for more information:

<http://traffic.visitkorea.or.kr/Lang/en/Bus/index.asp?CID=1&SMenu=1>

### **Taxis**

Taxis are a very flexible and convenient mode of transport in Korea. A taxi can generally be found on almost any street at any time of the day or night. There are several kinds of taxis available out there, and they vary in price, comfort and level of service:

### *DELUXE (BLACK) TAXIS*

These cars cater mostly to the business market. Most of them are owner-operated and the drivers are courteous and professional. Their standard of driving and safety should be reasonably high. All this comes at a premium, however, as flagfall (known as "the drop" in the USA) starts at around 5,000 won, and after the first 3km it will cost you a further 200 won every 205 meters that you travel. The good news is that they do not charge a premium between midnight and 4am.





#### *GENERAL (REGULAR) TAXIS - PRIVATELY OWNED*

These are usually modern, mid-sized sedans with a good level of comfort. Like the black taxis, they are owner-operated. This means that the standard of driving and safety should be reasonably good. They are likely to be more courteous and cooperative than the lower-quality company taxis described below. Flagfall will start at around 1,900 won, and after 2km it will cost you a further 100 won every 168 meters that you travel. A premium of 20% is added between midnight and 4am. You can identify a privately owned taxi by the "Gaein" (개인) sticker on the side of the car.

#### *GENERAL (REGULAR) TAXIS - COMPANY OWNED*

These are often (but not always) older mid-sized sedans which are owned by a taxi company, not the drivers themselves. Because of this the level of comfort, safety and service can vary widely. A good rule-of-thumb would be to avoid any taxi that is too old, or looks beaten-up; good drivers will usually take care of a newer car and drive it (and you) around more carefully.

#### *"CALL" TAXIS*

These are handy if you live in a remote area and can't just hail a taxi outside your door. They may also be useful on cold or rainy days, or

if you need to get somewhere very early in the morning. Taxis will generally arrive within 10-15 minutes, however you will incur an extra 1,000 won charge over and above the normal rate. The fare may be higher if the taxi has had to travel a long way to pick you up.

Here are some Seoul call taxi company phone numbers:

- Green Call Taxi: (02) 555-5858
- Deluxe Call Center: (02) 3452-5830
- K.T. Deluxe Call Taxi: (011) 760-4041
- Power Call Taxi: (02) 555-5555
- Limousine Call Va Taxi: (010) 9869-0081

### *HAILING A TAXI*

To hail a taxi just step to the edge of the sidewalk and raise your arm. If the taxi is available it will pull over and stop for you. How can you tell whether it's available? There will usually be a little red sign lit up behind the front windshield which reads *bincha* (빈 차) (empty car). Sometimes the drivers forget to switch this off when they have a passenger, so it doesn't hurt to check the back seat of an oncoming taxi to see whether there's someone already in there.

If you know the direction you will be going, try to get on the correct side of the road before you hail the taxi. Sometimes a driver will have to go quite a long way in the opposite direction before they can find a place to turn around. This may cost you extra time and money. Of course, if the weather is bad you may want to ignore this so you can get out of the rain as quickly as possible.

### *NIGHT SPOTS*

Taxi drivers become very picky close to popular night spots after the trains have stopped running, and it can often become very difficult to get a driver to agree to pick you up; they're only interested in a long-distance fare, and they will keep cruising up and down the street, wasting gas and refusing the patrons crying desperately to them through the window until they find a worthy fare. In this kind of situation it may be better to try and take a bus anywhere away from that neighborhood and try to find some nicer taxis in the next neighborhood.

Another alternative may be to get your friends to chip in for a motel if the buses have stopped running, otherwise you might be

waiting a long time! Sometimes it may just be better to stay out until 6 am when the subways re-open.

### *BARGAINING*

If you have to travel a long distance it may be worth trying to bargain with the driver for a better deal. You can sometimes get the driver to agree on a set price, and he will take you to your destination without turning on the meter.

### *GETTING INTO A TAXI*

Be careful getting into a taxi - drivers may stop in a precarious position with scant regard for the road rules or safety, so do a quick scan of the area around the taxi before you get in to make sure that your taxi isn't about to get wiped out by a dump truck, or that you aren't about to be wiped out by a passing motorcycle.

You must get into the taxi from the curb side of the vehicle, and it's acceptable for passengers to use the front seat in Korea. Don't try to get in on the other side; that door is usually locked for safety reasons. If there are several of you, you may have to get in at the curb side one-by-one and then scoot across the back seat to make room for the others.

### *SEAT BELTS*

An advantage of using the front seat is that you can use the seatbelt (wearing your seat belt is actually is legally required for all passenger cars in South Korea, but not the rear), as there may not be a belt available in the back seat. You may sometimes be able to dig the belt out from between the cushions at the back of the seat, but don't count on it.

A driver may sometimes try to dissuade you from wearing a seatbelt ("I'm a good driver!") but don't let your concern for his feelings sway you; it's better to be safe than sorry.

### *DIRECTIONS*

Once you're settled in the driver will ask you where you want to go, "*Eodi ka se-yo?*" (어디 가세요?) Say your destination clearly, loudly and slowly, followed by "*ga juseyo*". (가 주세요.) (Take me to...). Downtown is "*Shi-nae*." (시내.) If you don't know how to say your destination in Korean it may be a good idea to call a Korean friend

and get them to talk to the driver. If you just want to get home, you can show the driver the back of your Korean ID card if it has your home address in Korean. When you get to your destination tell the driver, "*Yeogi immida*" (여기입니다.) ("Here") and he will pull over for you. See *Appendix One: Survival Phrases for Living and Working in Korea* on page Error: Reference source not found for more phrases of use with a taxi driver.

### *PAYING*

Taxi drivers prefer cash. Some taxis have T-money terminals fitted, however one can't always use them because some drivers may not know how (or are unwilling) to operate them. Cash always works.

### *GETTING A RECEIPT*

If you need to get a receipt for work, just say to the driver, "*Yeong sujeung juseyo*" (영 수증 주세요).

### *EXITING A TAXI*

Just like when the driver stopped to pick you up, when he goes to drop you off he may well stop in a precarious place, so be careful when you get out. Check over your shoulder to make sure that there are no kamikaze motorcyclists trying to pass on the inside or you may get your arm ripped off, or worse.

### *SMOKING*

It may be okay for you to smoke in the taxi, but please ask the driver for permission before you light up.

### *TRANSLATION SERVICE*

Some taxis have a translation service that will enable you to speak to an English-speaking operator, which can be helpful in a situation where a driver has no idea what you're saying. If there is a sign in the taxi indicating that a translation service is available, just say, "English translation" and the driver will call up his company's English-language operator and hand his phone over to you.

In the odd occasion where a driver is being particularly obtuse it may just be better to bail out of that car and try your luck with a different one.

## THINGS TO WATCH OUT FOR

**Crazy Driving** - You may find that your driver is goosing the throttle - making you feel sea-sick, or suddenly slamming on the brakes. He (or sometimes she) may also be veering wildly through the traffic at high speeds and running red lights. You may find this enjoyable, but if you're not comfortable with this style of driving you could try saying, "*Cheoncheonhi ga juseyo*" (천천히 가 주세요.) (Slow down, please).

**Being Taken to the Wrong Place** - From time to time a driver will misunderstand your directions and take you to the wrong place. This can be compounded if you aren't familiar with the destination yourself and don't realize until it's too late. He's probably not trying to rip you off; it's almost always due to an honest mistake, and drivers are usually very apologetic and try their best to rectify the situation. In fact, when they do finally deliver you to the correct destination they may only charge you what the original fare would have been - you can negotiate this with the driver. Even though it's frustrating, please try to keep calm and remain polite; you will get things resolved more smoothly if you keep your cool.

**Not Being Taken all the Way to Your Destination** - You may occasionally end up with a driver who will refuse to take you all the way to your door. This can sometimes happen if you live in an older neighborhood with crowded, narrow streets. The driver will stop on a main road near your destination and tell you to get out there. The reason for this may be that it difficult for him/her to navigate through your neighborhood, or the driver may think that he or she is less likely to pick up a new fare quickly at your destination. While this can be annoying, especially if it is raining or you have a lot of heavy groceries to carry, you have few options. You can argue with him, but the meter will continue to run. You can get his name and number from the ID card displayed on the dashboard, then complain to the company. Don't refuse to pay, as this could end up taking a lot of time to resolve, and the police may be called - which could go either way.

**Driver Trying to Pick up Extra Passengers** - A practice you may see is a driver stopping to pick up another fare with you already in the car. He will still expect you to pay your regular fare even though the other passenger will pay him, too. This can be pretty frustrating if you are in a hurry. You can try to dissuade the driver by saying, "*Hajimaseyo!*"

(하지 마세 요! Don't do that!) or "*Ppali ga juseyo*" (빨리 가 주세 요! Hurry, please!)

If you're not in a hurry just go with the flow. A Korean friend once scolded one of the authors when he complained about this practice; she told him that taxi drivers are very poor and he shouldn't be getting on his high horse about such a small thing. She was right.

**Criminal Behavior** - There have been some extremely rare cases of abduction and even murder perpetrated by taxi drivers in the past. The cases have mostly involved young women trying to get home from nightclubs and bars well after midnight. Common sense will always be the best way to prevent something like this happening to you, but keep these points in mind, too:

- Women should never travel alone after 10pm.
- Choose a reputable-looking owner-operated taxi.

**Chatterboxes and Inappropriate Questions** - You may sometimes get a driver who wants to chat with you, and usually it's a pleasant enough way to pass the time and improve understanding between two cultures. Sometimes, though, you may simply not be in the mood to chat, or perhaps the driver's questions are too rude or invasive. What can you do in this situation? You can tell the driver, "*Mal hago sipji anha yo*" (말하고 싶지 않아 요) (I don't want to talk), but a more Korean way to handle it is to just be silent and not answer questions. One of the authors likes to just pretend to fall asleep.

## **CROSS-COUNTRY (INTERCITY) TRAVEL**

### **INTERCITY AND EXPRESS BUSES**

If you live outside of the Seoul Metropolitan area or you want to travel between Korea's towns and cities you can take either an **Intercity** bus for traveling between regional centers, or an **Express** bus for traveling to main centers.

If your area isn't listed below, don't worry - almost every town and city has an **Express Bus terminal**, "*Go-sok teomineol*" (고속 터미널) and/or an **Intercity Bus terminal** "*Si-oe teomineol*" (시외.터미널). For example, if you lived in Pohang and wanted to go to Seoul, you'd catch a bus from the Express Bus Terminal, but if you wanted to pop

across to Gyeongju for a day's sight-seeing you'd go to the Intercity Bus terminal.

For more detailed information on bus schedules and pricing visit the Korean National Tourism Information Website: [http://english.visitkorea.or.kr/enu/1041\\_Transportation.jsp](http://english.visitkorea.or.kr/enu/1041_Transportation.jsp) They have an on-line route search function that should get you started.

## SEOUL

Seoul has several express bus terminals:

**Seoul Express Bus Terminal and Central City Terminal** - Located in Seocho-gu near Kangnam, the Seoul Express Bus Terminal runs services to Gyeongsang-do and Gangwon-do. Right next door is the Central City Terminal which runs services to Jeolla-do and the southern coastal area. An easy way to get to there would be via subway lines 3 and 7. Get off at the Express Bus Terminal station and take the underground walkway to the terminals. Line 3 has an easier route there than line 7.

**Nambu Bus Terminal** - Also located in Seocho-gu, this terminal is near Nambu Bus Terminal subway station on line 3, exit 5. It runs services to dozens of towns in Gyeongsang-do, Gyeongju, Buyeo, Nonsan, Dangjin, Seosan, Taean, Yongin, Anseong, Pyeongtaek, Incheon, Jeolla-do, Cheonan, Asan, Yesan, Daecheon, and Chungcheongbuk-do.

**Dong-Seoul Bus Terminal** - Is located in Guui-dong, Gwangjin-gu near Gangbyeon subway station on line 2, exit 4. It runs services to all the major cities as well as dozens of towns in Gyeonggi-do, Gangwon-do, Jeolla-do, Gyeongsang-do and Chungcheong-do.

**Sangbong Bus Terminal** - Is located in Sangbong-dong, Jungnang-gu near Sangbong subway station on line 7, exit 2. It runs services to Cheongju, Daejeon, Jeonju and Gwangju as well as dozens of towns in Gangneung, Uljin, Wonju, Gimhwa, Cheorwon, I-dong, Wasuri, Sokcho, Geoin, Hongcheon, Yanggu, Chuncheon, Hwacheon and Hyeolli.

## BUSAN

**Busan Bus Terminal Complex and Busan Dongbu Gyeongnam Intercity Bus Terminal** - This complex contains both the express and intercity bus terminals under the same roof, although they have

different ticket counters. It is located in Nopo-dong, Geumjeong-gu near Nopo-dong subway station line 1. An underground walkway leads to the terminals. The express bus terminal runs services to Seoul, Uijeongbu, Incheon, Seongnam, Gyeongju, Daegu, Daejeon, Cheongju, Jinju, Suncheon, Yeosu, Gwangju and Jeonju.

The intercity bus terminal runs services to just about everywhere else.

**Busan Seoubu Intercity Bus Terminal** - Is located in Gwaebeop-dong, Sasang-gu near Sasang subway station on line 1, exit 1. It runs services to Geoje, Masan, Jangmok, Jangseungpo, Jillye, Jinyeong, Jinhae, Changwon and Tongyeong as well as dozens of towns in Geochang, Hapcheon, Uiryeong, Namhae, Hadong, Honam, Jinju, Samcheonpo and Namwon,

#### *TIPS FOR USING INTERCITY AND EXPRESS BUSES*

- When you arrive at the terminal you can purchase a ticket at the counter. If you don't speak much Korean just say the name of your destination and hand over your money.
- The bigger terminals are pretty well signposted as to when and where your bus will leave from, and the smaller terminals are quite simply laid-out - just walk out the back where you'll see a row of buses lined up with their destination displayed on a sign inside the front windscreen. Simply walk onto the bus and the driver will collect your ticket, either as you walk in, or he will check your ticket just before departure. You will probably need to keep your ticket and hand it back at the end of the trip, so don't lose it! Some buses require you to sit in an assigned seat, so make sure you check for a seat number on your ticket before you sit down.
- Every hour or so on your journey the bus will probably stop at a service area (highway restaurant and bathroom facility) for 10 to 20 minutes where you can stretch your legs, grab a bite, get some air and freshen up.
- It may be hard to get a comfortable temperature on the bus - they're often stifling hot both in winter and summer. You can try getting the driver to turn the air conditioning up or the heater down - it sometimes works - but you'd better come



dressed for the occasion, and be prepared to add on or strip off layers of clothing as the situation demands.

### **SEOUL AIRPORT LIMOUSINE BUS**

These buses go to and from strategic points around the Seoul metropolitan area and Gimpo and/or Incheon airports. They are generally very comfortable, however there aren't many bus stops so you may have to take a taxi or a local bus to or from the limousine bus stop nearest your house. Fares range between 8,000 to 14,000 won and you can generally use T-money, although if you take the bus from the airport you will probably need to buy a ticket from the kiosk on the sidewalk outside the arrivals terminal. Take a look at the Korea Tourism Organization website (above) for detailed information on airport buses.

### **AIR AND SEA TRAVEL**

#### **AIR TRAVEL**

The following is a list of airports in Korea, by city. Be advised that this listing of destinations was current when this book was published, but routes may change. Please contact the airport directly (or your airline) for an updated list if you are planning to travel.

**Cheongju:** Cheongju Airport (CJJ)

Domestic Destinations: Jeju

International Destinations: China, Hong Kong

<http://cheongju.airport.co.kr/eng/info/information.jsp>

**Daegu (Taegu):** Daegu Airport (Taegu Airport) (TAE)

Domestic Destinations: Jeju and Incheon

International Destinations: Cambodia, China, Hong Kong,

Philippines, Taipei, Thailand, Vietnam

[http://daegu.airport.co.kr/eng/flight/fly\\_schedule.jsp](http://daegu.airport.co.kr/eng/flight/fly_schedule.jsp)

**Seoul:** Gimpo International Airport (GMP)

*Korea's largest domestic airport, serving Seoul and Incheon*

Domestic Destinations: Busan, Gwangju, Jeju, Jinju/Sacheon, Muan,

Pohang, Ulsan, Yeosu

International Destinations: China and Japan

<http://gimpo.airport.co.kr/eng/index.jsp>

**Gwangju (Kwangju):** Gwangju Airport (KWJ)

Domestic Destinations: Jeju, Seoul (Gimpo)

International Destinations: None

<http://gwangju.airport.co.kr/eng/info/information.jsp>

**Incheon:** Incheon International Airport (ICN)

*Korea's largest international airport, serving Seoul and Incheon*

Domestic Destinations: None scheduled at the time of publication.

International Destinations: Austria, Australia, Bali, Brazil, Canada, Cambodia, China, Czech Republic, Dubai (UAE), Egypt, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Macau, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Philippines, Qatar, Russia, Saipan, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, Taipei, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom, USA, Uzbekistan, Vietnam

<http://www.airport.kr/eng/airport/>

**Jeju (Cheju):** Jeju International Airport (CJU)

*Jeju serves the sub-tropical Jeju island off the south coast of Korea and is a popular holiday spot for Koreans.*

Domestic Destinations: Busan, Cheongju, Daegu, Gwangju, Gunsan, Jinju, Seoul-Gimpo & Incheon, Ulsan, Wonju, Yeosu

International Destinations: China, Japan, Taipei

<http://jeju.airport.co.kr/eng/index.jsp>

**Muan:** Muan International Airport (MWX)

*Muan airport serves Gwangju and Mokpo, and opened in 2007.*

Domestic Destinations: Daegu, Jeju, Seoul (Gimpo),

International Destinations: China, Hong Kong, Macao, Taipei

<http://muan.airport.co.kr/eng/intro/introduce.jsp>

**Busan (Pusan):** Gimhae International Airport (Kimhae Int'l) (PUS)

Domestic Destinations: Jeju, Seoul-Gimpo & Incheon, Yangyang

International Destinations: Cambodia, China, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, Philippines, Russia, Saipan, Taipei, Thailand, Vietnam

<http://gimhae.airport.co.kr/eng/info/information.jsp>

**Yangyang:** Yangyang International Airport (YNY)

*Yangyang services the Gangwon-do region and provides access to Seorak Mountain.*

Domestic Destinations: Busan

International Destinations: None scheduled. Occasional charters to

China, Japan, and Taipei.

<http://yangyang.airport.co.kr/eng/info/information.jsp>

The following is a list of civil airfields (smaller than airports) that serve just a couple domestic destinations. If you live close by, they might be convenient.

**Gunsan:** Gunsan Airport (KUV)

Destinations: Jeju

<http://gunsan.airport.co.kr/eng/info/information.jsp>

**Pohang:** Pohang Airport (KPO)

Destinations: Seoul (Gimpo)

<http://pohang.airport.co.kr/eng/info/information.jsp>

**Sacheon/Jinju:** Sacheon Airport (HIN)

Sacheon airport serves Sacheon, Jinju, and Jiri cities in Kyungsangnam-do.

Destinations: Jeju, Seoul (Gimpo)

<http://sacheon.airport.co.kr/eng/index.jsp>

**Ulsan:** Ulsan Airport (USN)

Destinations: Jeju, Seoul (Gimpo)

<http://ulsan.airport.co.kr/eng/info/information.jsp>

**Wonju:** Wonju Airport (WJU)

*Wonju airport services Wonju in Gangwon-do.*

Destinations: Jeju

<http://wonju.airport.co.kr/eng/info/information.jsp>

**Yeosu:** Yeosu Airport (RSU)

*Yeosu airport serves Jeollanam-do.*

Destinations: Jeju, Seoul (Gimpo)

<http://yeosu.airport.co.kr/eng/info/information.jsp>

### *TIPS FOR FLYING IN KOREA*

#### International Flights

- Make sure that you arrive at the airport two hours before your scheduled departure time. Although check in doesn't begin until 90 minutes before the flight, this will give you plenty of time to deal with any unexpected delays, such as those listed below.
- If you plan to travel abroad during your time in Korea and you're on an E-2 or F-2 visa, you will need to get a re-entry

permit from the Immigration Department before you leave Korea. This can either be done at your local Immigration Department office, or at the Immigration Department office at an international airport. Check out the airport websites listed above for information on the location of the airport Immigration offices. A single re-entry permit will cost you 30,000 won, and a multiple re-entry permit will cost you 50,000 won. If you leave Korea without getting a re-entry permit you may void your visa.

- If your old passport has expired during the term of your current visa make sure that you bring your expired passport with you to the airport. This will save you some delays at the airport Immigration office when they can't find your current visa in your new passport.
- If you are traveling internationally from a regional airport make sure that you go to the correct terminal. You are unlikely to find your international flight at the domestic terminal, and by the time you work this out you may have missed your plane!

### Domestic Flights

- Even if you're only flying domestically within Korea you will still need to show your passport. All domestic passengers both Korean and expatriate are required to show ID before they get on a plane, so don't get caught out.
- Some regional airports are also military airbases, so don't take pictures there, even if you see something cool out of the window. Remember, South Korea is still technically at war and they may not take too kindly to you snapping that Apache gunship sitting on the tarmac.

### **FERRIES**

Korea has a comprehensive domestic and international ferry network servicing most major coastal cities. Taking the ferry may be a good option for people who can't afford to fly, or those who want to experience something different. Ferries may also be a good backup in the event that your travel agent leaves you stranded somewhere as

happened to one of the authors and his pregnant wife one weekend in Jeju!

Ferries in Korea may not be the same as you are used to in the West, however - they're generally pretty basic; you may be required to share a floor with hordes of soju-drinking, shouting peasants, and cook your own ramyeon. Some ferries do have more comfortable motel-style cabins available and whilst they're a little expensive they may be a good option for an overnight trip... unless you want to experience the local culture up close and really personal!

Check out the Korean Tourism Organization website for information on domestic and international ferries in Korea: <http://traffic.visitkorea.or.kr/Lang/en/Ship/>

### *BUSAN*

The Port of Busan has a website in English that may be useful for you. It has links to the companies which operate ferries out of Busan, although they may not be in English: [http://www.busanferry.com/ja\\_service?id=en\\_index](http://www.busanferry.com/ja_service?id=en_index) The Panstar Ferry Line which operates between Busan and Osaka has an English-language website: <http://www.panstarline.com/EN/index.html>

### *INCHEON*

The port of Incheon has a website (mostly in Korean) which has links to the companies that operate ferries out of Incheon, although they may not be in English: <http://www.incheonferry.co.kr/>. Weidong Ferry which operates services from Incheon to Weihai and Qingdao in China has a website in English: <http://www.weidong.com/>