

Beijing's essential international family resource

beijingkids

May 2017

Home & Relocation Guide

2017/18



Helping you feel at home:

- Neighborhoods and play
- Rights and common scams
- Apps and shopping tricks





THE INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF BEIJING

北京蒙台梭利国际学校

The International Montessori School of Beijing has been committed to bringing out the best in each and every child, from Nursery through Grade 6, since 1990.

Here you will find some of Beijing's most experienced and long-tenured international school teachers. Many have been with our school for over 20 years!

Each staff member is dedicated to providing students with a strong academic foundation, while instilling a life-long enthusiasm for learning and a sense of responsibility, integrity and confidence.

At MSB, we provide students with a strong foundation for future learning. Our tailored approach to education allows children to work at their own pace, and often above grade level, while meeting international curriculum standards.

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Our curriculum builds upon the core principles of Montessori, adapting them for an international setting. MSB is Beijing's first, fully qualified international Montessori school. We are a proud affiliate member of the American Montessori Society (AMS) and are registered with the Chinese Ministry of Education.

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WOMEN OF CHINA



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The *beijingkids* Board

AJ Warner

When AJ Warner is not with his two sons, he's coaching Chinese students on how to get admitted to the top 30 US universities. He also guides Chinese families through the process of sending their child to the US for high school and related homestays. Contact him at ajwarner@touchdown.org.cn.



Mike Signorelli

Mike Signorelli arrived in Beijing in 1994 as a student and has called China home ever since. He has held several senior management roles over the past 20+ years, including his last corporate job with NBA China. Mike is the founder of Signature Wine, China's first independent subscription wine club. Contact him at mike@sigwine.com.



Sara Wramner-Wang

Over the past 20 years, Sara Wramner-Wang has worked in various senior management positions at companies like Ericsson, Ikea, and Oriflame. She is currently the director of sales and marketing and head of admissions for EF Academy International Boarding Schools' Asia operations. Contact her at sarawramner@hotmail.com.



Eyee Hsu

When former CGTN talk show host and mom-preneur Eyee Hsu is not chasing after her two kids or the family dog, you might catch her at a Pilates studio or on TV. She formerly owned Counting Sheep boutiques and will be returning to the US this year. We'll miss her but wish her well!



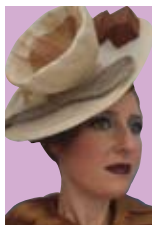
Caroline Nath

Caroline Nath moved to Beijing as a teenager after having grown up in the US, Canada, France, and India. She is a filmmaker, radio host, Parent Effectiveness Training teacher, founder of Bonne Nani Jams, and an organic food promoter. She has two multi-ethnic and multi-lingual children. Contact her at kulfidoll@gmail.com.



Elisabeth Koch

China's milliner, Elisabeth Koch, arrived in 2007 and hit the ground running with her hats. This TCK has two children who were born in Beijing. While her creations adorn famous heads on the covers of international glossies, Koch gives hat-making workshops in her studio and is kept busy by the kids. Find out more information at www.ElisabethKoch.net



Samantha Zhang

Samantha spent the past decade working for international corporations but in 2015 she founded JZ-Atelier Jewelry studio. The studio focuses on teaching systematic skills training so students are able to design, select materials, and fabricate their very own artistic jewelry from beading necklaces to handcrafting silver jewelry. When Samantha is not working, she enjoys spending time outdoors with her family. You can reach her at legendaryzhang@yahoo.com.



Camilla Simoni

Originally from Denmark, Camilla Simoni has lived in Beijing for the last 4 years with her husband and their 3 boys (4, 10 and 12 years old). Before moving to China, she worked as a health visitor, conducting in-house check ups, breastfeeding counseling, and other issues related to having a newborn. After she moved to Beijing, she finished her Master's in Sociology and took part in the start up business "Challet Baby."



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ON THE COVER:

Two-year-old Lorelei Veitch kindly allowed us to picture her and her dollhouse together for this perfectly pink cover. Lorelei loves the "Trolls" soundtrack and can almost entirely recite her most beloved book, *Room on the Broom*. Of Lorelei, her mother Tess said, "She's a cheeky little monkey and incredibly headstrong but she is gentle and caring, and adores her little brother, Kiefer."

Photography by Dave's Studio



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地点：北京市鼎石学校表演艺术中心

Classical Ballet Performance by the Russian State Ballet
7:00pm, May 4 (Thursday) @PAC



请扫二维码报名活动

Please scan the QR code to register for the event



Rough Start

When we moved here in 2013 with my 8-month-old son and 20-month-old daughter, we were coming out of a desperate financial situation in the US. My husband had been let go of his new carpentry dream job since work had abruptly dried up. We had to borrow money from brand new Beijing friends because our finances were so tight. But I went from one survival mode to another kind, as I grappled with the sights and smells around me that caused culture shock. I was not a fun person to be around, and that first year was very hard for me as I struggled with motherhood to culture shocked toddlers in a neighborhood where no one could even speak my language.

But life got easier financially and emotionally. Beijing has its ups and downs, but for me, this has been the place where I learned to be myself, where I learned to love being a mom, and where I learned I'm actually more comfortable as a city-loving foreigner than as a small town girl stuck in the South. If the pollution clears up as expected in a

few years, I could easily see myself calling Beijing home for the rest of my life. I love the people, the culture, the food, the community, and the language.

Life doesn't have to be hard here; in fact it can be awesome! We put together this guide to help you get over the first hard hurdles of life in Beijing. Whether you came here on the now elusive expat package, have plans to start a business, or now counting your fifth year here, we tried to fit something in for you. As a sum, our number one piece of advice is get involved so you've got something to do rain, snow, haze, or shine.

We also wanted to incorporate the city's bountiful school pride, and so asked students to submit artwork to illustrate our articles. For more tips about picking the right school, we suggest you look online at our School Choice Guide and our website for years of great advice.

Vanessa Jencks

Vanessa Jencks
Managing Editor



Celebrating 10 Years with *beijingkids*



Cate Conmy with her daughter

In March 2007, *tbjkids* went from a quarterly to a monthly magazine, marking the birth of *beijingkids*. Cate Conmy was managing editor at the time of this transition, and she told us she got to essentially dream up the whole publication! "I was exhausted and energized all at once. I think this was when I got my first gray hair." Conmy was young and childless while managing editor but is now in San Francisco with her "extremely loquacious two-year-old." Right now she is trying to decide whether to get back to working in the museum field or become a preschool teacher for the opportunity to constantly relive those lovely toddler days.



#LearnISB



The International School of Beijing is now accepting applications for the 2017/18 school year. Visit our website and find out the difference an education at ISB can mean for your child.

www.isb.bj.edu.cn



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May Events

May 5

1 Hope International School Open House (K3-G12)

Adults. Prospective parents are invited to Hope International School's (HIS) open house. Take a campus tour, meet parents, teachers, and students, and have a personal Q&A time. HIS is the only K3-G12 international school in Beijing that provides quality education with a total faith-based perspective. Free. 9-11am. Hope International School. (400 800 8781, kwan.sherry@hopeintlschool.org).

May 6

2 Spring in the City

All ages. Beijing City International School (BCIS) is hosting its annual Spring in the City fair, which will be held on the main campus soccer field. Under the marvelous theme of "The Festival of Arts," BCIS is staging a wonderful day that will surely hypnotize and amaze. Many performers will take the stage, while over 60 diverse booths will be set up, along with a raffle draw featuring amazing prizes. Free. 11am-3pm. Beijing City International School. (8771 7171, bciscommunications@bcis.cn).

Roundabout Open Weekend

All ages. Learn more about the work of Roundabout during this weekend event. Meet some of the children and their families whose lives you have touched and some of Roundabout's partner charities while enjoying some fantastic activities, shopping, eating, and catching up with friends. Free. 9.30am-4pm. Roundabout. (150 1018 7653, chowlilyzhou@yahoo.com).



May 9

Think & Paint Workshop

Adults. Examine the power of your thoughts while you paint through this enlightening workshop hosted by relationship life coach Carnisa Berry. She is leading a unique reflection session, merging painting and thought awareness to help attendees discover how their thoughts are affecting their relationships. RMB 150. 9.30-11.30am. YCIS Beijing. (8585 1820, info@bj.ycef.com).

May 10

Roundabout Volunteer Potluck

Ages 9+. Participants are asked to bring a dish to share to Roundabout's Volunteer Potluck. Roundabout is providing all drinks, plates, cups, and cutlery. Those wishing to learn more about Roundabout's work and volunteering opportunities are welcomed. Kindly RSVP by Monday, May 8 to roundaboutvolunteer@yahoo.co.uk. Free. 11am-2pm. Roundabout. (137 1877 7761).

May 12

3 Musical - Annie Jr.

Ages 8+. The Music Department of Hope International School (HIS) is presenting Annie, Jr. a classic family musical. Watch the extraordinary story of a little orphan who finds herself in the lap of luxury, and sing along to favorite musical numbers like "Tomorrow." Buy tickets online today for this wonderful family-friendly show. RMB 40 (students), RMB 50 (general admission), RMB 100 (VIP tickets). Begins at 7pm. Hope International School. (400 800 8781, kwan.sherry@hopeintlschool.org).

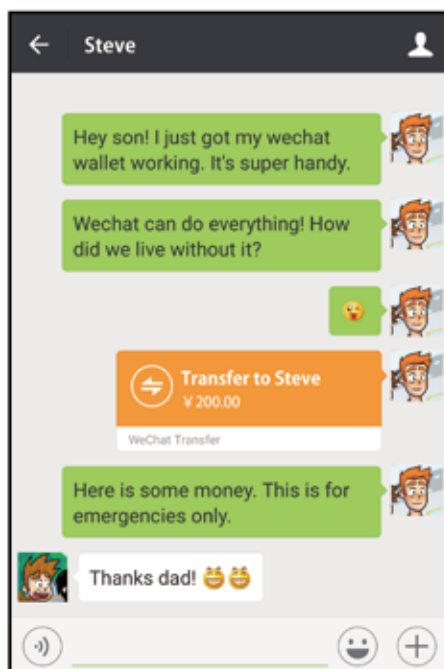
May 13

4 Global Community Day

Ages 8+. Yew Chung International School of Beijing's (YCIS Beijing) biggest annual school event, the Global Community Day, is a fun and exciting event that brings the whole YCIS Beijing community together, including teachers, students, parents, and school partners. The event celebrates community spirit and global cultural diversity and features delicious food, fun games, and wonderful gifts. All revenue from the event will be donated to the YCEF Seeds of Hope charity. Free. 10am-4pm. YCIS Beijing. (8585 1862, sophia.liu@bj.ycef.com).

Harmony and Steve

by Jin Chan Yum Wai





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Editor's Pick



Dining



Playing



Learning



Community



Living



Health



Parenting

Want your family-friendly event to appear in our June issue?

Upload it at www.beijing-kids.com/events by **May 10**.



May 13

5 Flux Film Festival Awards Ceremony



Adults. The Flux team is hosting an exclusive awards gala to be held at the Early Childhood Center (ECC) Gym of Beijing City International School (BCIS). RMB 100. 6-8.30pm. Beijing City International School. (8771 7171, mark.ellison@bcis.cn).

May 18

6 INN Shunyi Coffee Morning at BSB Chatterbox



Adults. The British School of Beijing, Shunyi (BSB, Shunyi) is hosting this month's International Newcomers Network (INN) Shunyi Coffee Morning. Join them for this great opportunity to meet other newcomers and old-timers in the Shunyi area. Free. 10am-noon. BSB, Shunyi. (8047 2539, brenda.leung@britishschool.org.cn).

May 19

7 3e Tea Talk: Mindfulness for Beginners



Adults. 3e International School's Tea Talk for May is providing an introductory session about mindfulness. Topics include the benefits and the reason why mindfulness works and how the body responds to stress. Attendees will learn four mindfulness practices and how to continue practicing on your own. Dalida Turkovic, executive coach and founder of the Beijing Mindfulness Centre, is presenting the event. Free. 9-11am. 3e International School. (call 6437 3344 for more information, email community@3einternationalschool.org to register).

8 Rock in the Park, Fun Fair & Identity Film Festival



All ages. Join Western Academy Beijing (WAB) for a jazz music festival and the annual film festival when the sun sets on Peace Park. Then on Saturday, WAB hosts the Rock in the Park music festival with Fun Fair for the younger children. Free. 3.30-8pm (Fri), 2-8.30pm (Sat). Western Academy of Beijing. (5986 5588, wabinfo@wab.edu).

May 20

9 Hyde Academy Spring Fair



All ages. Hyde Academy is hosting its annual Spring Fair with a great collection of crafts, treats, and games to entertain and inform visitors. Students, parents, and artists in the community are working hard to create a celebration of arts, music, and the environment this year. Free. 10am-4pm. Hyde Academy. (8046 7085, sharon.shao@hyde-education.com).





- Editor's Pick
 Dining
 Playing
 Learning
 Community
 Living
 Health
 Parenting



May 20

10 Unity Day



All ages. Join Ivy Education Group for a fabulous day of delicious food, exciting games, music and entertainment, and wonderful stalls with organic produce, items for sale, and more. The event is open to the public and gives participants a chance to have a fun-filled family outing at Daystar Academy's brand new, state of the art sports field while giving back to the community at the same time. Free. 3-8pm. Daystar Academy. (8446 4193 ext 875, jaw@daystarchina.cn).

11 Mothers Retreat Beijing



Adults. Mothers Retreat Beijing is on a mission to create a time and space for hardworking mothers to come together and support one another in a relaxing and inspiring retreat setting. Our attendees are international mothers from all walks of life who are busy creating a home away from home in a foreign country. The retreat is taking place at Four Seasons, a luxury five-star hotel in downtown Beijing. Register today as there are only 15 spots. RMB 2,500. Starts at 9am. Four Seasons, Beijing. (185 1394 8503, mothersretreatbeijing@gmail.com).

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Editor's Pick



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Dining



Living



Playing



Health



Learning



Parenting

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12



13



14

May 20

12 Roundabout Children's Flea Market



All ages. Roundabout is calling for children volunteers to help during the market. All profits will support the treatment of kids with leukemia. Free. 2-4pm. Roundabout. (137 1877 7761, roundaboutvolunteer@yahoo.co.uk).

13 Huge HOK 2017 Annual Community Yard Sale



All ages. The House of Knowledge (HOK) Yard is back and it's the perfect motivation to clear the clutter from your home. Book a free table today (events@hokschoools.com). Everyone is welcome. If you don't have anything to sell, swing by to get a bargain yourself, check out the books at the Roundabout book-nook and eat cake guilt free, as all cake money goes to migrant children. Free. All day. House of Knowledge. (6431 8452, events@hokschoools.com).

14 BIBA Family Fair "One Family, One Fair"



All ages. Beijing International Bilingual Academy's (BIBA) Family Fair is a premier family event in Shunyi, Houshayu for the whole community. The event has multiple activity parks, dozens of shops and food vendors, water slides, music, and more. Individuals and families alike are sure to have a memorable day. Sponsored by UNIQLO, this annual event gets better every year. Free Admission. 9.30am-1.30pm. Beijing International Bilingual Academy. (185 1083 6782, adam@bibachina.org).

May 21

15 ISB Spring Fair



All ages. The day promises to be packed with fun games and activities for the whole family. There is a food bazaar, excellent shopping opportunities, and a raffle with great prizes to bring home. The International School of Beijing (ISB) Fair is the biggest event in the school calendar, attracting over 5,000 people to the ISB campus each year. Free. 10am-4pm. International School of Beijing. (8149 2345 ext 2117, sbandel@isb.bj.edu.cn).

May 25

16 Open Day: Explore Our Learning Communities



Adults. Join Yew Chung International School of Beijing's (YCIS Beijing) open day on campus to meet its Senior Academic Team and learn more about the school's unique education model. Parents will have the opportunity to visit the newly renovated Learning Communities, a very different kind of flexible educational space to best accommodate 21st Century Learning. Free. Starts at 9.30am. YCIS Beijing. (8585 1820, info@bj.ycef.com).

May 27

Founder's Day



All ages. The Founder's Day is a celebration of the Dulwich College Beijing (DCB) community and values. It is DCB's biggest community event of the year. The day highlights diversity and includes performances and mini-events that showcase, academics, sports, performing arts, and community service, which are the four pillars of Dulwich College. Free. 2.45-9pm. Dulwich College Beijing.



15



16



Editor's Pick



Dining



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Living



Health



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May 27**17 Parkour Camp (Dragon Boat Festival)**

Ages 7-16. Experience leaping into foam pits, jumping on trampolines, balancing on a slack line, climbing on a bouldering wall, and so much more! Parkour is a great way to build foundation skills for all other freestyle action sports. The event takes place



17

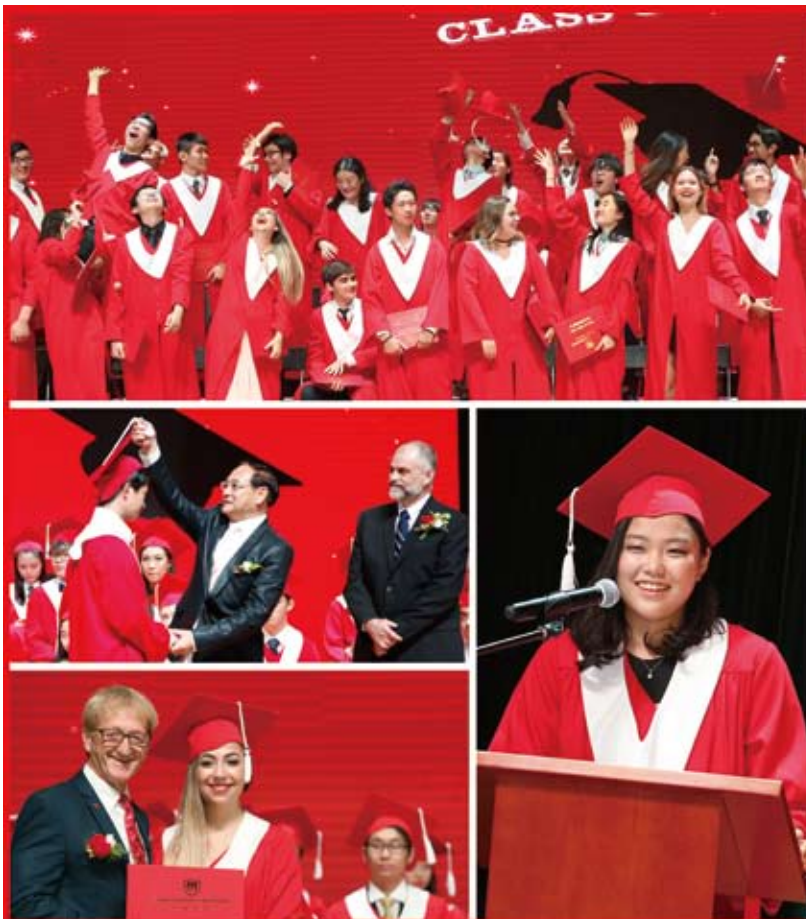
from May 27 to 30. RMB 700 per day; RMB 600/day/each (3 kids together); RMB 600/day/each (early bird). 8.30am-5pm. Imagine. (5739 4933, designer@imagine-china.com).

June 2**Beijing Runway**

Ages 9+. Beijing City International School (BCIS) is hosting its first Beijing Runway event. Student designers from across the Beijing international school community are invited to share their unique and extraordinary garments and walk the runway in a celebration of fashion, creativity, innovation, and design. RMB 40. 7-9pm. Beijing City International School. (8771 7171, philip.clarke@bcis.cn).

Ongoing**Every Thurs in May****Roundabout Weekly Bazaar**

All ages. At these bazaars, there will be food, clothing, jewelry, greeting cards, and many more gift items. There will be different vendors each week and plenty of refreshments available. Part of the profits will support the work of Roundabout. Bring friends and let Roundabout empty your pockets for a great cause. Free. 10am-3pm. Roundabout. (137 1877 7761, roundaboutvolunteer@yahoo.co.uk).



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Maryland Institute College of Art

Massachusetts College of Art and Design

Georgia State University

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California College of Arts

Savannah College of Arts and Design

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By Vanessa Jencks



Artwork provided by Cherry Xu, 16, Grade 11, Chinese, Beijing World Youth Academy (BWYA)

Beijing should be viewed as a “county” rather than a city as the municipality takes up a whopping 16,411 sqkm of land area, the majority of that land being rural. The whole “county” is broken up into districts, with the center districts considered to be part of the “city” of Beijing. Though comfortable accommodations can be found throughout these districts, most non-teaching expats with kids prefer to settle down in neighborhoods near reputable schools. We know that a good school is just one factor in where families choose to live., so we

covered the pros and cons of each area and nearby play areas on p18.

Note that we covered the most popular neighborhoods for expats, which can sometimes be expensive. For budget-friendly neighborhoods, look outside of these popular areas or for Chinese named apartment complexes and hutongs. Make sure to always bring a knowledgeable Chinese friend along to avoid confusion or possible housing scams. Also see p22 for a checklist on what to inspect before signing a rental agreement.

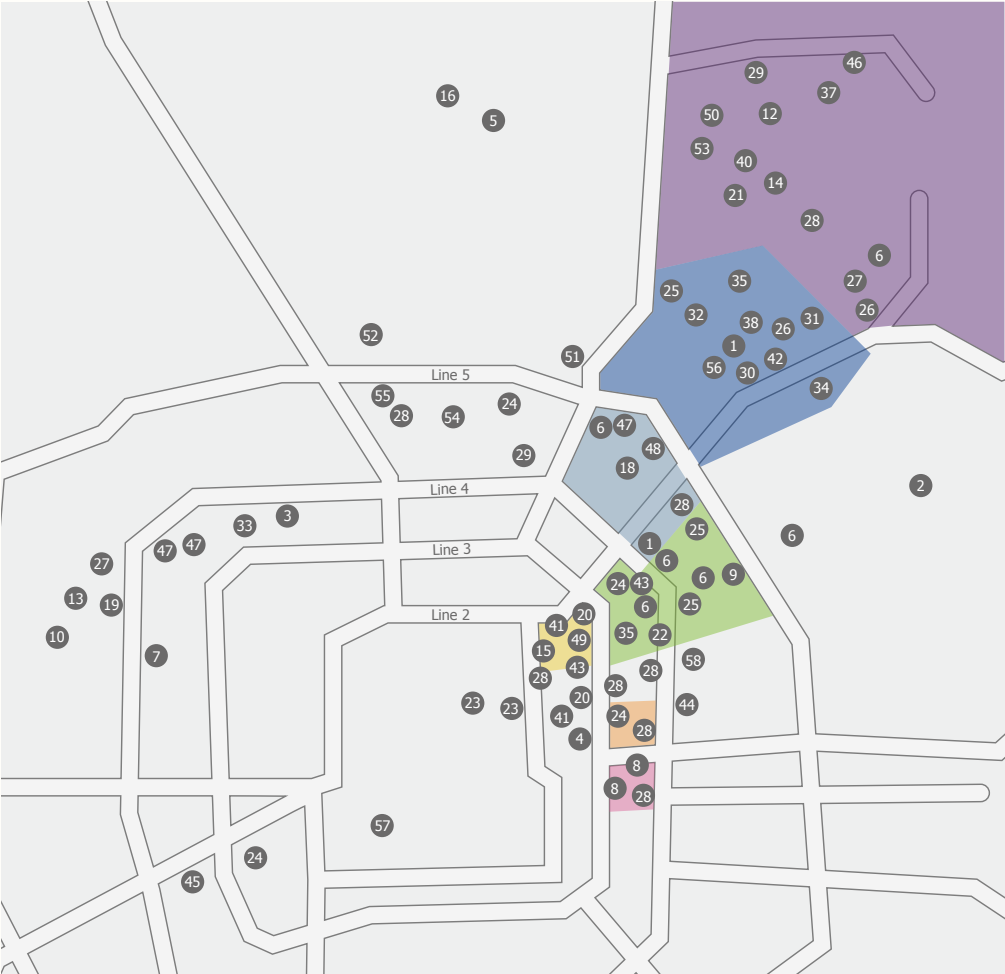
Below is a modified map from our School Choice Guide. Other areas not included are worth checking out if you're interested in a lower cost of living, university areas, or a more local experience. Most areas in Beijing do not allow expat children to enroll in public schools, but expat parents are allowed to homeschool. For more tips on picking a school, scan the QR code to get the full map, its key, links to school digital listings, and more.

SCAN ME



All You Need To Know About Schools

Our website is full of information, school listings, and larger map and key.



Before Picking an Area:

- How old will your eldest child be in your last year here? Are there appropriate schools in the area to match that age?
- Commuting more than thirty minutes is taxing on most families. Is everything within a reasonable distance (school, workplace, support community, groceries, shopping, and things to do)?
- Are you comfortable with the areas of green play space? Are parks within a reasonable distance?
- Do any family members have special medical needs? Are hospitals in the area equipped to treat these needs?
- Do you plan to have another baby in the future? Are hospitals within a reasonable distance for prenatal and delivery services?

Shuangjing 双井

With one of the highest concentrations of residential compounds in Chaoyang District, Shuangjing now has a diverse population of white-collar locals and expat families who have settled in the area due to its proximity to schools and CBD.

Pros	Cons	Popular Residential Compounds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Easy access to CBD + Relatively safe residential neighborhood + Close to shopping and entertainment facilities + An active expat community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moderate traffic - Not great for subway access - Lacks authentic Beijing culture - Most green space is within neighborhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pingod: Nicknamed "Apple Community," a large compound with a good selection of stores and shops • Fulicheng: Gym and health club, children's play areas, and clubhouse; adjacent to Viva Mall • Landgent International: Ten-year-old apartments with a man-made lake and central garden. Near Carrefour, cafes, florists, laundry services, post office, and banks.

Shopping and dining: Carrefour, Landgent International Center Mall (at the time of printing, the mall is undergoing renovation), and Viva Mall are within walking distance of the area's many residential compounds. There's a large Decathlon further south along the Fourth Ring Road. Shuangjing has Lily's American Diner, Gung-Ho Pizza, Plan B, The Brick, and Chinese and Asian Fusion restaurants nearby.

CBD (Central Business District) 北京商务中心

CBD is the city's financial center, encompassing the famous CCTV Tower ("The Big Pants"), one of Beijing's most recognizable landmarks.

Pros	Cons	Popular Residential Compounds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Affluent + Easy to get to other parts of the city due to subway lines and buses + Plenty of shopping + Attractions in areas nearby 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heaviest traffic of the city - Crowded - Pollution heavy - School options for older children requires a commute - One public park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Park: A large compound filled with restaurants, shops, and services. It has a swimming pool, sauna, squash court, and gym. • Gemdale International Garden: Located across from Gemdale Plaza shopping center, the compound has a supermarket, restaurants, cafes, a post office, a gym, a swimming pool, and a children's playground. • Blue Castle International Apartment: Close to the post office, banks, Shin Kong Place, and hospitals. Blue Castle allows pets, has a clubhouse, gym, and children's playground.
<p>Shopping and dining: CBD has a number of fancy shopping malls, such as Shin Kong Place, China World Shopping Mall, Kerry Center, and the LEED-certified Parkview Green. The Place, which has a huge LED screen, has mid-range stores such as Zara Home, H&M, and Uniqlo. Restaurants tend to be concentrated in malls or compounds.</p>		

Sanlitun, Xingfucun, and Dongzhimen 三里屯, 幸福村, 和东直门

The area around Sanlitun is a major expat hub, popular with international foodies and shoppers. Just west of Sanlitun lies the quieter Xingfucun, while to the north is Dongzhimen, which contains one of the city's embassy districts. Inner Dongzhimen, on the other hand, is a gateway to historical neighborhoods, such as Gulou, Andingmen, and Yonghegong.

Pros	Cons	Popular Residential Compounds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + A high concentration of international restaurants + Lots of events + Many other expat families + Hutongs and cultural areas + Airport Express stop in Dongzhimen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expat bubble - Frequent traffic - Seedier areas - Not as green as other neighborhoods - Inconvenient subway access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasons Park: Popular with expat families due to proximity to banks, restaurants, and western supermarkets. The compound has a playground. • Lianbao Garden: Located just behind the April Gourmet in Xingfucun, this compound's convenient location, spacious apartments, and children's playground and gym facilities make it popular with expat families. • Tayuan DRC: One of the five "diplomatic residence compounds" (DRC), contains western-style apartments and its own import market.
<p>Shopping and dining: The main shopping and dining hub is Taikoo Li, a sprawling village-style mall with popular brand stores. Most of the western restaurants are concentrated in Taikoo Li and the adjacent Nali Patio, including Element Fresh, Moka Bros, Blue Frog, Wagas, and Crêpanini. The Dongzhimen area is not only a gateway to the historic hutong neighborhoods (e.g. Gulou, Andingmen), but also has its own fair share of malls featuring a variety of restaurants and shops.</p>		

Chaoyang Park and Liangmaqiao 朝阳公园和亮马桥

With the largest park of the city lined with shops, restaurants and residential compounds, this area is especially attractive to families. Chaoyang Park connects to Liangmaqiao, an area with a significant expat community and many embassies.

Pros	Cons	Popular Residential Compounds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Events in the park (free yoga sessions, Heyrobics, HeyRunning, pick-up soccer games, and more) + Many western supermarkets and restaurants + Several embassies and schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some compounds farther from subway access - Inside the expat bubble - Higher cost of living compared to other areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Palm Springs: Overlooking Chaoyang Park with its own garden, clubhouse, indoor swimming pool, playground, sauna, and gym. • Park Avenue: Park Avenue has a shopping complex with imported groceries, cafes, and sporting good stores in addition to its children's playground, swimming pool, and gym. • Greenlake Place: Located east of Chaoyang Park overlooking the park's man-made lake, this compound has many stores, restaurants and even a Jenny Lou's.
<p>Shopping and dining: The popular, open-air Solana Lifestyle and Shopping Park next to Chaoyang Park hosts Zara, Uniqlo, Muji, H&M, American Eagle, Gap, and more. Across from Solana, a strip called Lucky Street has several Japanese restaurants and a South German Bakery, a popular brunch spot. Jenny Lou's, a popular grocery store chain among expats, is also in the area.</p>		

Wangjing and Lido 望京和丽都

Popular with expat families, Wangjing and Lido lie halfway between Shunyi and downtown. Both have significant Korean communities, with Wangjing being known as the Koreatown of Beijing.

Pros	Cons	Popular Residential Compounds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Access to international schools + Proximity to the headquarters of foreign companies + Cheaper rent + Close to international hospitals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lacks authentic Beijing culture - Limited things to do for families, though the area is growing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wangjing Huayuan: Close to Wal-Mart, Jingkelong, banks, hospitals, post office, beauty salons, and more. • Upper East Side: Has its own gym, sauna, and swimming pool, with proximity to supermarkets, banks, restaurants, and more. • Chateau Regency: Clubhouse with a swimming pool, a fitness center, a convenience store, and a playground.

Shopping and dining: One of the city's Ikea is located in Wangjing, right by the new Carrefour shopping mall with built-in air purification and water recycling systems. Indigo Mall near 798 Art District offers good shopping and dining, with a cinema, restaurants, BHG Marketplace, frequent children's events, and a large outdoor playground. Next to Si'de Park, the Korean-owned CJ Foodworld houses a Tous les Jours bakery, Bibigo, and Twosome Coffee. There's also Element Fresh, Annie's, Taj Pavilion, and more.

Laiguangying and Beigao 来广营和北皋

This area is between the official Shunyi line and Wangjing. For years this area has been called Shunyi by expats, but technically it's still in Chaoyang District (the distinction is important for taxi drivers). School community and activities play a large part in the vibe of this and Shunyi area.

Pros	Cons	Popular Residential Compounds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Close access to the airport + Safe suburban-style neighborhoods + More options for things to do than in Shunyi + Largest access to area schools (39 schools in a reasonable distance) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Largest distances between interest points - Driver needed - Expat bubble - Cost of living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quanfa Garden: Located right across from Beijing Riviera, some homes kept up, others rundown. • Beijing Riviera: Bicycle track, large green spaces, artificial lake, clubhouse, cafe, swimming pool, gym, tennis and squash courts, massage room, bar, and supermarket. • Grand Hills: A popular residential choice for many expats because of its well kept grounds and relatively new villas. The surroundings include a swimming pool, sauna, and gym with plenty of green space.

Shopping and Dining: The Sci-Tech Outlet Mall at Maquanying on line 15 has popular brands like Gap, Polo Ralph Lauren, Burberry, Calvin Klein, Mont Blank, Lee, Valentino, Armani, Starbucks, Subway, Balmain Paris, among many others. The Orchard, Green T. House, Decathlon, Jenny Lou's, and Pinotage also can be found in this area. Beidong Flower Market is next door to Pinotage and has household decorations, some furniture, plants, and gardening supplies.

Shunyi 顺义

If you're looking for the suburban or a more rural experience, Shunyi is where you'll want to be. There are villa compounds resembling American suburbs, complete with quaint street names and two-car garages. Most families who choose to live here want a posh China experience, need quick access to the airport, or want to avoid the business of the city.

Pros	Cons	Popular Residential Compounds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Easy access to some of the oldest international schools in this area and in Laiguangying and Beigao area + Safe, quiet suburban style villa compounds + Many expat families + Close to the airport + Good base for day trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expat bubble, (expat mothers of young children often complain about feeling isolated when living in this area) - Inconvenient access to public transportation and taxis but larger distances (driver or car needed) - School communities make up the majority of things to do in the area as other entertainment is limited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital Paradise: Outdoor and indoor swimming pools, gym, squash, bowling, mini-golf, tennis courts, sauna, outdoor and indoor children's playgrounds, bars, cafes, and restaurants. • Yosemite: Clubhouse, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, hot springs, sauna, gym, restaurant, cafe, and children's activity center.

Shopping and dining: Malls include Cathay View, Euro Plaza, Pinnacle Plaza, and the recently-opened Shine City. Western restaurants and brands include Annie's, Avocado Tree, Ernest's French Bistro, Papa John's, Starbucks, Pie Squared, Cold Stone Creamery, and Dunkin Donuts. Malacca Legend offers up tasty Malaysian fusion. Mrs. Shanen's sells homemade bagels and dishes made with organic produce from the restaurant's farm, Green Cow. Roundabout is a great place to pick up needed toys and home items at a bargain.

Play Baby Play

When playing helps you forget the startup headaches

Text by Pauline van Hasselt, photos by Uni You, Ember Swift, Sui, and Kids Stream

Beijing is a true Aladdin's cave of parks and play areas for kids. One of the things I struggled with when we first arrived was entertaining my child. When my husband went to work, we were left in the hotel with nowhere to go. That was until we found the kids play area at Solana mall. Kid's areas in Beijing malls are truly amazing and created exclusively for families, with many surrounding toy stores,

play spaces, and kid-friendly restaurants. Here you can sit and watch your child play for hours, forgetting for a minute that you've moved to the other end of the world, and still need to find a home and school. Keep in mind, when looking for a place of residence that apartment compounds also usually have great playgrounds or parks nearby, which is a godsend if you have young children to entertain.



Shuangjing 双井

Qingfeng Park

Along the Tonghui River, with beautiful landscapes, a clear river, and relatively few tourists, the park is a quiet and ideal place for spring outings or just break from the madness of city life. 34 Qingfengzha Qianjie, Chaoyang. (Need Chinese address)

VIVA Beijing Plaza

This large mall serving the greater Shuangjing area, has a variety of stores, like Miniso, Select, C&A, and Mango. Its restaurants include McDonald's, Sanqianli Korean BBQ, Food Republic, Starbucks, Bread Talk, and more. (5903 7478) 65 East Third Ring Central Road, Chaoyang (Subway line 10, Shuangjing, exit A). 朝阳区东三环中路65号。

CBD (Central Business District)

北京商务中心

Ritan Park 日坛公园

Ritan Park is a green oasis in the middle of CBD's concrete jungle. It's a great place to let kids burn off their energy and learn about some Beijing history and culture. There are also some modern-day touches, like a climbing wall and a decent playground. (8562 2612) 6 Ritan Beilu, Chaoyang. 朝阳区 日坛北路6号

The Place

This landmark shopping mall has a Zara, Uniqlo, and other fashionable clothing stores. The Place is also home to a number of great kids play areas both inside and outside the facility and hosts the popular Monday morning Bumps2Babes baby and toddler play group at My Gym. (6587 1188) 9A Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang. 朝阳区光华路甲9号

Parkview Green Mall

A regular destination for mums and babies is visiting Little Oasis, a popular indoor play area. Moms would be glad to know that breastfeeding and baby changing rooms are particularly plentiful and clean at this fancy shopping mall. (8563 0400) 9 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang. 朝阳区东大桥路9号



PHOTO: COURTESY OF UNI YOU, AMBER SWIFT, SUI, KIDS STREAM

inKIDS with LINE FRIENDS

The inKIDS with LINE FRIENDS Playground, located on the third floor of the Yintai Centre in Guomao, features a ball pit as well as white netting running across the open space of the upper floor where kids can safely bounce around above their parents' heads. The space also has a café and sitting area for parents who want to relax while their children play. (6566 6060) 3rd floor of Yintai Centre, No.2 Jianguomenwai Dajie, Chaoyang. 朝阳区 建国门外大街2号

Ready Reading Library

This bilingual kids library offers an extensive selection of books catered towards children under the age of nine, and also sells an array of kid's toys, organizes arts and crafts classes, and often puts on fun live storytelling events. (5368 5569) Guanghualu Soho, Level 15, Block 1 no.22 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang. 朝阳区光华路SOHO一期一单元15层, 光华路南侧, 都是圈的那个楼



Sanlitun, Xingfucun, and Dongzhimen 三里屯, 幸福村, 和东直门

Tuanjiehu Park 团结湖公园

Tuanjiehu is home to downtown Beijing's best and most mindful water park, which is great fun on weekdays but can get very crowded on weekends. Tuanjiehu also features a roller-skating park, several rides, and boats. (8597 4677) 16 Tuanjiehu Nanli, Chaoyang. 朝阳区 团结湖南里16号

Taikoo Li Sanlitun 太古里三里屯

The area in and around Taikoo Li Sanlitun is an expat hub, with loads of international shops, restaurants, bars, beauty services, and more. In the summer, the fountains in front of the Apple Store attract lots of kids, who play and run through the water jets as their parents look on. Taikoo Li also has a Megabox Cinema that shows a handful of Hollywood. Bar Street also has two DVD stores where you can buy cheap international movies. A must for polluted days. (6536 0512) 19 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang. 朝阳区三里屯路19号三里屯Village

Blue Zoo Beijing 富国海底世界

Located at the south gate of Worker's Stadium, Blue Zoo Beijing is worth about half a day's visit. Visitors can spot parrot fish, nurse sharks, leopard sharks, stingrays, moray eels, daily mermaid shows, and the occasional underwater marriage ceremony. This is also where SinoScuba holds confined water sessions for the PADI Open Water certification. (6591 3397) Gongti Nanlu, Chaoyang. 朝阳区工人体育场南门

Bookworm

Bilingual bookstore and book lending library with regular story times and baby sing groups. Serving coffee and food, making it a welcome escape from the hustle and bustle of the Sanlitun area. (6586 9507) Courtyard 4, Gongti Beilu Chaoyang. 朝阳区工体北路4号院



Chaoyang Park and Liangmaqiao 朝阳公园和亮马桥

Chaoyang Park 朝阳公园

As the largest patch of green space in Beijing, Chaoyang Park is a no-brainer for families; entrance fees are cheap, and there are lots of areas to play. Young visitors can fly kites, rent a pedal boat for the lake, go on fairground rides (including a merry-go-round and bumper cars), or play on the bouncy castle. There's also a treetop obstacle course called Happy Gorilla with a network of bridges, swings, and zip lines. (6506 5409) 1 Nongzhan Nanlu, Chaoyang. 朝阳区农展馆南路1号

Solana Lifestyle Shopping Park 蓝色港湾

Located a stone's throw away from Chaoyang Park, this family favorite has been open since 2008 and carries brand names like Zara Home, H&M, Mothercare, and more. The village-style layout offers plenty of space for kids to run around in, including the popular central plaza, with its fountains and whimsical decorations. Indoors, there's an entire children's wing with play facilities and family-oriented shops. Solana also has a cinema, western restaurants, and an indoor ice rink. (5905 6565/68) 6 Chaoyang Gongyuan Lu, Chaoyang. 朝阳区 朝阳公园路6号蓝色港湾国际商业区

Wangjing and Lido 望京和丽都

Indigo Mall 颐堤港

Located just south of 798, the mall hosts regular kids' events in its airy atrium space. In the warmer months, families can access the Indigo Playground out back, which features a fountain and two play areas connected by a garden. Indigo Mall also has numerous restaurants, children's brands, and play centers. (8426 0898) 18 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang. 朝阳区酒仙桥路18

Si'de Park 四得公园

Located in Lido, this modest park is a popular destination for families. Si'de Park features a running track that winds around the entirety of the park, along with a roller skating rink, a fishing pond, soccer pitches, playground, a bouncy castle, and fairground rides. (6438 6093) Jiangtai Xilu, Chaoyang. 朝阳区将台西路

Lido Place

A popular apartment and mall complex where many foreigners reside and also many fairs and bazaars are held. This can be great for those looking to connect with the local crafts scene or the occasional farmer's market. (6437 6688) 6 Jiangtai Lu, Chaoyang. 朝阳区 将台路6号

The New City Center

Tucked away above the Yuan Art Museum in Wangjing, the New City Center is a cross between a cafe, community center, and events venue. Founded by expat Canadians, the Center offers children's programs and after school classes. (6475 1066) 112 Lize Xiyuan, Guangshun Beidajie, Wangjing, Chaoyang. 朝阳区 望京广顺北大街丽泽西园112号 (www.thenewcitycenter.com)

Laiguangying and Beigao

来广营和北皋

Riviera Plaza Mall

Another great shopping area with a liberal amount of kid-friendly space sprinkled about. This is a very popular space to not only get some shopping done but to also get your play on. Opposite West Gate of Lane Bridge Villa, 5 Laiguangying Donglu, Chaoyang. 朝阳区来广营东路5号 香江广场

Red1Karting Beijing

Do you have a little Formula 1 racer in the making? Then get over to Red1Karting Beijing to satisfy that need for speed. Located north of Shangezhuang subway station, Red1Karting is a pretty swanky affair, featuring karts manufactured by French company Sodikart and other facilities including a cafe, entertainment room with billiards and foosball tables, and KTV. (186 1015 8386) Laiguangying Donglu, Cuigezhuang, Chaoyang. 朝阳区崔各庄乡善各庄村来广营东路88号

Crab Island

This family friendly park covers an enormous amount of space and has a lot to offer visiting families. Some highlights include an ecological science park, go-karting, mini zoo, and water park. (8433 5566/5588) 1 Xiedao Lu (take Weigou Exit off Airport Expressway and follow signs), Chaoyang. 朝阳区1号 蟹岛路 (苇沟出口)



Shunyi 顺义

Shine Hills

Packed with kids' stores, family-friendly restaurants and big names like Uniqlo and Gap, this shopping center has a little for everyone. There is even a cinema on the premises so you can relax and catch a flick after all that playtime. 9 Anxiang Dajie, Shunyi. 安祥大街9号院中粮·祥云小镇

Shunyi Jian River Park

This park is located at the joining of the Jian and Chaobai Rivers and extends down 3.8km to Nanbei Road. That's a lot of space to run around and go wild on with your little ones, especially on those clear spring and summer afternoons when you just need to get out.

Latitude

Jump around and get loose with your kids at this state-of-the-art trampoline park. Along with boasting tons of bouncy fun, there is also an array of climbing walls, obstacle courses, a dodgeball court, and more. (8047 6556) Anping Street, Houshayu, Shunyi. 顺义区后沙峪安平街3号 (枯柳树环岛国门一号)

Atelier

Get your child's creative juices flowing with this arts-focused school for kids and adults. They have classes in drawing, painting, along with a couple new media focused programs to help your kids get ahead with their creative endeavors. (5686 4243) 204-205, Building 2, Central Park, No.16 Road Yufeng, Shunyi. 顺义区裕丰路16号院会展誉景2号楼204-205



From Top to Bottom

Check out your rental in every spot to avoid living in a mess

CHECKLISTS

The Shell

- ☐ Ceiling for signs of leakage
- ☐ Stains or cracks (check by outlets and height from knee-below)
- ☐ Flooring for unevenness, cracks, or holes
- ☐ Size of the windows and whether there is cross-ventilation
- ☐ Screens and locks on all windows (look for rips in the screens)

Bathroom and Kitchen

- ☐ Amount of cabinet space
- ☐ Location of the main gas valve and water valve
- ☐ Location of gas meter, electricity meter, and water meter
- ☐ Water pressure and functionality of the showerhead
- ☐ Sturdiness of the faucets (do they leak or need to be replaced?)
- ☐ Amount of counter space
- ☐ Drainage speed in all sinks and tubs
- ☐ How well does the toilet flush?
- ☐ Does the toilet seat need to be replaced?)

Electronics

- ☐ Functionality of kitchen appliances (stove, fridge, microwave)
- ☐ Functionality of water heater, air conditioner, washing machine
- ☐ Number of electrical outlets in every room
- ☐ Phone/broadband jacks/WiFi/cable TV
- ☐ Cellphone reception inside the apartment
- ☐ Lighting fixtures for brightness (Can bulbs be easily replaced?)
- ☐ Speed and power of all fans
- ☐ Location of fuse box and the electricity meter
- ☐ Location of the radiators

Furnishings

- ☐ Amount of storage space
- ☐ Current furniture fits in the apartment (and through the door)
- ☐ Mattress for firmness

Security

- ☐ Windows have bars (on a lower-level apartment)
- ☐ Front door has a solid lock
- ☐ Policy of guards at the community gates (visitors, delivery men)
- ☐ Proper functioning of video and sound on door monitor

Outside

- ☐ How much natural light does the apartment get?
- ☐ Is the neighborhood noisy?
- ☐ How close is the nearest street?
- ☐ How soundproof is the apartment?
- ☐ Location of garbage cans and recycling bins
- ☐ Location of bike racks



THE BASICS

How long ago was the apartment renovated? 上次装修是什么时候? Shàngcì zhuāngxiū shì shénme shíhòu?

Will you clean it before I move in? 我搬进来之前你能清理一下吗? Wǒ bānjìnlái zhīqián nǐ néng qīnglǐ yíxià ma?

Can this room be repainted? 能粉刷一下这个房间吗? Néng fěnsuā yíxià zhège fángjiān ma?

Can I hang things on the walls? 墙上可以挂装饰品吗? Qiángshàng kěyǐ guà zhuāngshìpǐn ma?

Can you remove this? 你能把这个拿走吗? Nǐ néng bǎ zhège ná zǒu ma?

Can you buy a _____? 你能买一个_____吗? Nǐ néng mǎi yíge _____ ma?

How old is this item? Can it be replaced before I move in? 这个用了多久了? 我搬进来之前你能换新的吗? Zhège yòngle duōjiǔle? Wǒ bānjìnlái zhīqián nǐ néng huàn xīn de ma?

Can you provide more furniture? 能提供更多家具? Néng tígōng gèng duō jiājù?

Write it down please. Put it in the contract. 写下来吧。在合同上标出。Xiěxiàlái ba. Zài hétóng shàng biāochū.

LOCATION

Where's the nearest _____? 最近的_____在哪儿? Zuìjìn dī _____ zài nǎ'ér?

- subway station 地铁站 dìtiě zhàn
- bus stop 公交车 gōngchē zhàn
- ATM 提款机 tíkuǎnjī
- convenience store 便利店 biànlì diàn
- hospital 医院 yīyuàn
- internet company 网络公司 wǎngluò gōngsī

INFRASTRUCTURE

What year was this building constructed? 这个房子是哪一年建的? Zhège fángzi shì nǎ yī niánjiān de jiàn de?

How many square meters? 有多少平米? Yǒu duōshǎo píngmǐ?

How many entry points does this residential compound have? 这个小区有几个入口? Zhège xiǎoqū yǒu jǐ gè rùkǒu?

Have there been problems with insects or vermin? 这个房子又没有过虫蛀问题? Zhège fángzi yòu méiyǒuguò chóng zhù wèntí?

Does this residential compound have round-the-clock security? 这个小区有24小时的保安吗? Zhège xiǎoqū yǒu èrshísí xiǎoshí de bǎo'ān ma?

Does this apartment use community heating or independent heating? 这里是区域供暖还是按用量计算? Zhèlǐ shì qūyù gōngnuǎn háishì àn yòngliàng jìsuàn?

Is there hot water in both the kitchen and bathroom? If not, can you have a plumber redo it? 厨房和卫生间有热水吗? 如果没有, 你可以请人安装吗? Chúfáng hé wèishēngjiān yǒu rèshuǐ ma? Rúguǒ méiyǒu, nǐ kěyǐ qǐng rén ānzhuāng ma?

Is the hot water heater gas or electric? 热水器是使用煤气还是电? Rèshuǐqì shì shǐyòng méiqì háishì diàn?

MONEY

How much is the rent? 房租多少钱? Fángzū duōshǎo qián?

Who pays the agency fee? 谁交中介费? Shéijīāo zhōngjiè fèi?

Who pays the property management fee? 谁交物业费? Shéijīāo wùyè fèi?

Where can I pay the gas bill? 在哪儿能交煤气费? Zài nǎr néng jiāo méiqì fèi?

Where can I pay the electricity bill? 在哪儿能交电费? Zài nǎr néng jiāo diànlì fèi?

Where can I pay the water bill? 在哪儿能交水费? Zài nǎr néng jiāo shuǐ fèi?

Can I pay by Alipay? 我可以用支付宝支付吗? Wǒ kěyǐ yòng zhīfù bǎozhī fù ma?

Can I pay by WeChat? 我可以用微信付吗? Wǒ kěyǐ yòng wēixìn fù ma?

Whose name is on the phone account? 在电话账户上是谁的名字? Zài diànhuà zhànghù shàng shì shéide míngzì?

Who pays the heating fee? 谁交暖气费? Shéijīāo nuǎnqì fèi?

TV - How many channels? Is the fee included? 电视有几个频道? 是含在房租以内吗? Diànshì yǒu jǐ gè pínào? Shì hán zài fángzū yǐnèi ma?

Listen for:

The payment method is ... 交款方式是... jiāo kuǎn fāngshì shì...

(1) monthly 月付 yuè fù

(2) quarterly 季付 jì fù

one month's deposit, three months rent 押一付三 yā yī fù sān

(3) half-yearly 半年付 bànnián fù

• deposit 押金 yājīn

• normal wear and tear 正常磨损 zhèngcháng mósǔn

• rechargeable card IC卡 IC kǎ

• pay at the bank 银行 yínháng

• meter reader 抄表 chāo biǎo

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

If this breaks, who is responsible for fixing it? 如果这个坏了, 谁负责修理? Rúguǒ zhège huàile, shuí fùzè xiūlǐ?

Where is the property management office? What's their phone number? 物业办公室在哪? 电话号码是多少? Wùyè bàngōngshì zài nǎr?

Diànhuà hàomǎ shì duōshǎo?

Can you recommend a _____? 能推荐一个_____? Néng tuījiàn yíge _____?

• handyman 修理工 xiūlǐgōng

• plumber 下水道修理 xiàshuǐdào xiūlǐ

• locksmith 锁匠 suǒjiāng

• electrician 电工 diàngōng



Insure Us

The basics of healthcare and medical insurance

by Andrew Killeen

Nothing is more important than our children's health – so we don't want to compromise when it comes to medical care. But going to an international-grade facility in Beijing is costly, as registration and consultation fees alone can amount to over RMB 2,000 depending on the doctor you wish to see. Having healthcare insurance will ease the burden of paying out of pocket. Below is a breakdown of what to expect from healthcare in Beijing.

Clinics

Clinics provide routine services such as checkups, pediatric medicine, and outpatient care. They may also offer dentistry, mental health services, physical rehabilitation, official physical examinations (for visas or other purposes), and vaccinations. In most cases, anything relating to obstetrics and prenatal care require a visit to a hospital with more specialized medical staff and facilities. Although some clinics offer emergency care, patients may need to be transferred to a hospital depending on the seriousness of the case.

Hospitals

Most uninsured expats use local public hospitals, many of which have excellent reputations in their fields. They are much cheaper compared to private hospitals and see a higher number of patients, but the language barrier can be an issue. In addition, they can be a rude awakening for expats who go in expecting a western-style bedside manner and privacy standards. If language isn't an issue and/or you don't have medical insurance, you might try visiting a local hospital. Expats often recommend Peking Union Medical College Hospital (founded in 1921) and the China-Japan Friendship Hospital. Both have "VIP" sections with fewer patients and some English-speaking doctors.

At international hospitals, foreign patients will find the process and surroundings familiar and therefore comforting, but bear in mind that the attending doctor will likely still be Chinese – although English-speaking – and that not every international-standard hospital is equipped to handle all scenarios. For example, patients requiring major surgery – particularly emergency surgery – may need to be transferred to a Chinese hospital, both for the operations themselves and for continuing post-surgery treatment.

These cautions aside, international hospitals offer extras such as reminders for checkups and some have more than one location, making them convenient for your home, office, or school. There will also be a greater emphasis on preventative care.

Emergencies

The emergency phone number in Beijing is 120 (999 for English speakers). Keep in mind that ambulances in Beijing have a mixed record for two reasons: (a) getting lost and (b) being perfunctory in their treatment of non-emergency patients. Also, Beijing's traffic situation isn't exactly conducive to the quick transfer of patients to medical facilities, and drivers here aren't yet in the habit of yielding immediately to ambulances.

There's no simple solution for this. Many taxis will simply refuse to take injured or sick passengers for fear of being held liable for any negative outcomes. Some international hospitals have their own 24-hour emergency call centers with English- and Chinese-speaking operators. However, ambulances are still subject to traffic constraints.

To make matters even more complicated, there's no Good Samaritan law in China. This may explain why many Chinese are unwilling to get involved in emergency situations. Bystanders who offer help may be held liable even if their actions help resuscitate the injured party. A patient who is given cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) may survive,

but non-qualified rescuers have been sued for the broken ribs that can occur in the process. When in doubt, call 120 and report the emergency. However, consider carefully whether there's a good reason to become directly involved in a situation.

That said, for the sake of one's own family, friends, and colleagues, most international hospitals and clinics in Beijing offer internationally-recognized CPR and first aid training in English. It's a good idea to take a course, especially for people who live farther away from a major medical center.

Hospitals require a Guarantee of Payment (GOP) from incoming patients regardless of if it is an emergency or not, and sometimes the insurance company needs to be notified to ensure that the insured gets the medical coverage they require, and the hospital knows that the bill will be settled.

Insurance

In traditional expat remuneration packages, medical insurance can be an attractive benefit. Students are usually covered through their institutions of higher learning, while younger students are included in their parents' insurance. However, a significant number of expats aren't covered at all. In a 2014 online survey conducted by insurer NOW Health International, a quarter of the 209 respondents living in United Arab Emirates, China (including Hong Kong), Singapore, and Thailand reported having no medical insurance.

"[They] believed that such cover was unnecessary because they were currently healthy and would not fall ill. However, as costs for medical care in popular expat locations have undergone double-digit inflation in recent years, they risk facing large bills if they are proved over-optimistic," says the report.

You may be able to buy into a group insurance through your employer. Alternatively you might prefer, or have no choice, but to buy an individual plan.

Groups that are more likely to look at individual plans include entrepreneurs and their families; individuals traveling, studying, or engaging in short-term consulting projects in China; family members who are visiting, studying, or interning in China for several months; and small and medium-sized enterprises employing foreign nationals with medical needs not covered by the state-provided *shèbǎo* 社保 (social insurance) or *yībǎo* 医保 (medical insurance) system.

Brokers and Agents

The simplest way to compare medical insurance plans is through a broker. In a nutshell, a broker acts on behalf of the client to find the best insurance plan for their needs. Brokers are usually compensated through commissions taken from the premiums charged to policyholders (i.e. you) by the insurance company, so their services are free for clients. Be sure to seek out an advisor who specializes in medical insurance for expats living in China.

Though both brokers and agents act as a bridge between the client and the insurer, an agent usually represents an insurance company like Cigna, Aon, Allianz, Bupa, IMS, or Aetna. Both agents and brokers must be legally licensed to work in China.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

Annual Limit

An annual limit is the cap on benefits that your insurer will pay in a year, ranging from USD 100,000 to several million per year. If the dollar amount of covered hospitalizations, treatments, and prescriptions exceeds the annual limit, you'll need to pay all healthcare costs for the rest of the year.

Discounts

Some insurers offer a family discount, which can be especially cost-effective for large families. No-claims discounts or first-year discounts are sometimes also offered, but keep in mind that a 10 percent first-year discount carries a 10 percent plus age plus annual increase at renewal.

Child Coverage

Medical care for children (including checkups and immunizations) is often included, but confirm this with your insurer. Families with older children who may or may not live at home as dependents may be included, but check if there are any age caps and details of the "global" part of "global insurance coverage" if your kids don't live in China.

Annual Rate Increases

Smaller and mid-range insurers with less financial stability usually have more erratic rate increases. Some even increase the premium in response to claims. Larger, more reputable insurers have more gradual increases, both annually and with age.

Travel Insurance

International travel goes hand-in-hand with living in Beijing; getting travel insurance is important as a backup on your rider. This is often available as a small package when you have visitors, either through your current insurance plan or through an international hospital or clinic membership. US citizens should note that many global policies don't cover treatment in the US or only cover it for a limited number of days (usually 30-45).

Medical Evacuation

Evacuation would cover transport for essential surgery, medical treatments unavailable here, or a health epidemic. Check whether the plan covers return transportation to Beijing. Insurance for evacuation can be overkill if your primary policy covers most or all possibilities, so make sure it complements rather than overlaps existing coverage. Note that medical evacuation doesn't necessarily cover treatment in your home country or a third location like Hong Kong.

Maternity Coverage

Couples planning to conceive should note that most insurers require a waiting period of 10-12 months of paid maternity insurance before pregnancy, birth, and/or newborn coverage kick in.

Pre-Existing Conditions

Some insurers will cover certain pre-existing medical conditions, but the trade-off is a higher premium. Coverage for high blood pressure or cholesterol may seem expensive, but keep in mind you'd also be covered for heart attacks.

Outpatient Treatment

Consider how often you or your dependents are likely to visit the doctor in a given year. Policies with high deductibles to minimize the cost of monthly premiums may not be the most cost-effective if you're only planning to see doctor twice a year.

If you currently have medical insurance but are looking to change plans, your current insurer would be the most logical place to start. However, the insurance company may not extend coverage to China, or may limit the list of hospitals you can go to. If you're set on going to a particular facility, check the hospital's or clinic's website for a list of insurers they currently have direct billing relationships with.

OTHER

Additional considerations include coverage for children with special needs, deductible and copayment options, dental and visual insurance, coverage for second opinions on major treatments, and emergency protocols (e.g. whether pre-authorization is required).

In addition to health insurance, international hospitals such as Beijing United Family Hospital or primary care clinics such as Raffles Medical have memberships that offer patients additional discounts and extra services for an annual fee. These memberships can supplement company-sponsored insurance packages; they can also be appealing for expats who select packages based on low upfront fees, or those who must pay for treatment out-of-pocket.



Birthing in Beijing

Why giving birth in Beijing can be a breeze

By Pauline van Hasselt

Congratulations! You're pregnant, and not just that, you are having your baby in Beijing. A lot of international hospitals and support networks are around to help guide your journey to motherhood for the first time, or once again. A few things will be different in this issue of beijingkids though; we made a small guide to help the family make the transition easier. Look out for our special maternity issue coming out in July for a more in-depth explanation of what to expect when you're expecting in Beijing.

International hospitals have all the modern technology you would need to give birth. Some of the more popular hospitals with maternity departments include Amcare, Beijing United Family Hospital, and Oasis International Hospital. Also available are postpartum doulas to help a new family in those first days and weeks after bringing home a newborn. Home birth is not permitted in China, and we would advise giving birth at a hospital.

Finding a good obstetrician and hospital, as well as that somebody with whom you feel compatible with while feeling secure is very important. Follow your gut instinct and find out the English speaking levels at the hospital. Also, get your insurance settled and inquire about self-pay and package deals at hospitals.

Resume your post-birth customs the same way as you would at home, but this time add a strange Chinese traditional practice. Elderly local ladies advise pregnant women complete *zuò yuè zi* 坐月子 or "sitting the month," which is, staying warm in bed and resting up for a month after birth. Together with other rituals and dietary restrictions (mainly bland food), these Chinese elements will bring you quickly back to health. Don't be surprised if locals frown upon you leaving home with a newborn before this period is over.

We can't emphasize enough how important it is to find friends who can be your family while you're away from home during these exciting moments of your life. The good thing in Beijing is that there are a lot of expat parents who are willing to help and give advice to newcomers. Online groups are a great way to start looking for potential friends. Make use of your newly set up WeChat to look for your mommy tribes and groups like **Bumps2Babes** (a playgroup organization), **Beijing Parenting and Beyond** (a WeChat group where parenting resources are being shared by parents), and Beijing **Mommy Yahoo Group**. Feel free to contact us directly (editor@beijing-kids.com) to get connected to these or other helpful parenting groups (see p 52 for more community groups).



PHOTOS VIA PIXABAY

Documents for Your New Baby

Registering your baby for passports and residence permits is such a complicated and tiring process but needs to be completed before the baby is 30 days old to avoid fines. If the baby is from two non-Chinese parents, the hospital will give them a birth certificate. Make sure the hospital staff writes down the English names of both parents. Bring that to your or your partner's embassy or consulate to apply for your baby's passport. The process is usually straightforward and will require you to bring along some passport photos and the necessary paperwork that you can find on the embassy website.

The baby will need a visa or residence permit as well, and you should apply for this within 30 days. You don't have to wait for the passport to be issued by the embassy or consulate. Go to the local Exit-Entry Office of the Public Security Bureau and bring the following:

- Birth certificate
- Parents' passports
- Proof from the embassy or consulate that you are applying for your baby's passport

Babies born to one Chinese parent and one non-Chinese parent will be considered a Chinese national. China does not recognize dual nationality. However, you can renounce your child's Chinese citizenship, but this is not easy and the protocol is not always clear

Chinese rules and regulations change on a regular basis. Finding information and parents who recently finished the process are widely available. Having a baby in Beijing does not have to be daunting, and with the support of your newfound pengyou, you'll be amazed by how child-friendly your new home can be!



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Law of the Land

Laws, rights, and scams - oh my!

Annie Wang

Know Your Rights

Maternity and Paternity Leave	Expectant foreign mothers are permitted 128 days paid maternity leave. At least 15 days of maternity leave is permitted for pregnancies less than 4 months that were aborted. At least six weeks of maternity leave is permitted for pregnancies that lasted over four months that were aborted or resulted in miscarriage. Fathers are permitted up to 15 days of paternity leave.
Pre-natal Checkups	Beginning at 12-weeks, pregnant workers are entitled to paid leave for these checkups. The checkups will also be noted in a pregnancy handbook given by the local Community Health Service Center. As with maternity leave, these policies can differ across China so be sure to look at the policy specific to your location.
Breastfeeding	Female employees are permitted one hour of breastfeeding time during every working day for a one-year breastfeeding period. It is also common practice for employers to ask women to work the usual eight-hour workday and accumulate the one hour towards their vacation time. Women are also permitted to breastfeed in public without covering up.
Terminating Contracts of Pregnant Workers	It is illegal to terminate the contract of a pregnant worker during her pregnancy, maternity leave, or breastfeeding period (lasts until the infant is one years old). If a worker becomes pregnant during her contract and that contract ends during her pregnancy, the contract will be automatically extended until the end of the breastfeeding period.
Withdrawing Social Security	All foreign workers are required to contribute to social security in China. If you contributed to a pension/social security fund in China for 15 years or more, you qualify for social security benefits. Foreigners that leave China before this 15-year period has been reached are entitled to recoup the money they had contributed to social security during their employment time.
Lease Termination	A landlord that wishes to prematurely terminate the lease agreement must pay double the down-payment (usually one month's rent) and double the security deposit (usually two to three month's rent). This is roughly eight-months of rent. Tenants that prematurely terminate the lease agreement forfeit both the down-payment and the security deposit.

Laws Foreigners Might Break

Registration	Foreigners must register their presence with the local police regardless of length of stay in the country. Most but not all hotels will automatically register their guests. If you are moving to a new neighborhood, you must register at your local Public Security Bureau within 24 hours of your arrival. Each time you exit and enter the country on a valid visa, you must register within 24 hours at the police station.
Jaywalking	In 2013, the Beijing Traffic Management Bureau officially announced a RMB 10 fine for pedestrians who crossed the street out of turn. Considering how traffic flow has continued in these recent years, it seems this law has not been widely enforced.
Smoking in Public Spaces	As of 2015, smoking has been banned in public spaces including offices, public transportation, and restaurants. Lighting up in these areas can result in a RMB 200 fine for individuals and RMB 10,000 for businesses that allow smoking within their quarters.
Subleasing and Property Removal	Subleasing is usually not permitted. The landlord is entitled to three month's rent if they find the tenant subleasing the apartment without approval. Property that is not removed 10 days after the lease expiration date can be disposed of at the discretion of the landlord without compensating the tenant.
Visas	Staying in China on an expired visa can lead to deportation or being held indefinitely in a foreigners' detention center while your deportation is being arranged. Working on any visa other than the Z or R visas is illegal. Scan the QR code for more details about visa types and rules.

SCAN ME



Need more information?

Scan for more articles on our website covering laws, rights, and scams.

Common Scams

Taxi Scams

Taxis have all sorts of methods for tricking unsuspecting riders out of their money. Some include: programming a meter to overcharge customers, driving off with a customer's luggage, and switching a customer's real RMB 100 bill for a fake one. Black taxis, and unlicensed persons posing as taxi drivers, have also been known to cheat people out of their money.

Overcharged for Internet

One of our own was overcharged for their internet subscription and was asked to pay for the cable box (which should have been free).

Telephone Scams

Automated messages and persons posing as police over the phone have been used to cheat people out of their personal banking information and money. The caller will request your personal information in order to correct the fabricated wrong. Incidents of scammers calling parents to request funds after alleging that the parent's child has been hurt at school and requires money for hospitalization have also occurred.

Overpriced or Unnecessary Hospital Procedures

Hospitals can overcharge, diagnose incorrectly in order to get money from unnecessary procedures, or might work with outside organizations to funnel patients to their facilities. During her prenatal care, our editor was told she needed an unnecessary procedure. Others have gotten MRIs at lesser known hospitals and been told they have cancer and require immediate operations.

Fake Food and Fake Online Products

There have been instances of fake eggs, nuts, honey, and even fake green peas being sold on the street and in stores. In addition to these fake food items Taobao, a very popular online store akin to Amazon, has also been known to host fake products on its site.

Overpriced or Unnecessary Hospital Procedures

Try to stick to more reputable hospitals when going in for any procedures, check-ups, or other health related issues. Bringing a friend to the hospital during a more in-depth check up may also help ease any difficulties you might encounter.

Telephone Scams

Avoid giving your personal information out over the phone, especially your financial information.

Bring a Friend

When signing up for an internet subscription, phone, paying your utilities and other bills, renting an apartment or setting up other life-needs, it would be helpful to bring a Chinese friend or colleague. As a further safety precaution, make sure you have the contact information of a Chinese friend handy.

Fake Products

When purchasing groceries, be sure to inspect the foods you buy for anything unusual and stick to brands you trust, the same goes for fake online products. If you have ingested fake or toxic food, try to induce vomiting so as to expel the foods.

Taxi Scams

Be vigilant when handing money to your cab driver to ensure that any bills they 'reject' and hand back to you are indeed the ones that you handed to them in the first place. Be sure to take licensed taxi cabs. The starting price for Beijing meters is RMB 13. If your cab begins at anything more than that, it may not be a legal taxi. You can also call your ride on Didi, an app similar to Uber for hailing taxis on your phone, where the fare is decided by the app.

Avoiding Common Scams

Sources: the Beijinger, China Highlights, Travel Scams

In Case of Emergencies Theft/Missing Persons

Thefts can be more common than one would like in Beijing. Below are some of the commonly seized items and what to do post-theft.

Passports

If you lose your passport, report immediately at both the police station and the division of Exit/Entry Administration at the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau or at the exit-entry department of the public security bureau branch nearest to where the passport was lost. A new passport can be acquired at your embassy or consulate using the Confirmation of Passport Loss document. Don't forget to apply for a new visa!

Stolen Property

In the event that your property is stolen, call the police at 110 and report the theft immediately. Then wait for the police to arrive and cooperate with them, which may include going to the station.

Missing Persons

A missing persons' report can be filed 48 hours after that persons' disappearance. The report can be filed both at your country's embassy location in Beijing or at the local police department.

Embassies

You should locate the embassy nearest to your residence before arriving, and keep their contact information with you. Embassies often send out alerts or other important information that their citizens should know about while in Beijing. At the embassy, you can file a missing person's report and vote in your home country's elections.

Emergency Hotlines

Fire: 119

Police (Phone): 110

Police (Text): 12110

Police (English Emergency Hotline): 6525 5486

Ambulance (Chinese): 120

Ambulance (English) 999

Traffic Accidents: 122

Foreign Emergency Services: 6525 5486

Beijing Chaoyang District Center for Disease Control and Prevention: 6777 3512

United Family Hospital Emergency Services: 5927 7120

International SOS Clinic and Emergency Services: 6462 9112

International SOS Office: 6462 9199

International SOS Assistance Center: 6462 9100

Sources: *the Beijinger* and *Beijing International*



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App'd Out


Essential apps for surviving Beijing


By Andy Penafuerte III


The smartphone has transformed expat life, giving us access to information and services wherever we go. Here are a few of the most useful apps to help you survive and thrive in Beijing.


Three apps we wish were in English


- 1  **WeChat**
Forget Facebook, Twitter, and Whatsapp – in China, WeChat is king. Beijingers use it for networking, sharing and gossip, and even pay their bills on it. See pg 41 for instructions on how to set up WeChat Wallet.
Available for: iOS, Android, Windows Phone, Symbian, Blackberry OS


- 2  **Alipay**
WeChat may dominate social media, but when it comes to website payments, the competition is Alipay. It's more than just a Paypal equivalent. Go to pg 41 for details on how to set up Alipay.
Available for: iOS, Android


- 3  **Pleco**
Whether you're serious about learning Mandarin or just want to get by, Pleco is an outstanding language app for Chinese. The basic package is free, but you can buy and download other added functions.
Available for: iOS, Android


- 4  **Baidu Translate**
Baidu Translate is a must-have for translating short words or long paragraphs. Its handy camera function can help you decode daily things in a world full of Mandarin, from operating your washing machine to replying to messages sent by your Chinese contacts.
Available for: iOS, Android


- 5  **Air Matters**
If you want to know how dirty the air you breathe is, Air Matters is the harbinger of bad news. You can opt to put the current air quality index reading as an app notification.
Available for: iOS, Android

- 6  **Apple Maps**
Apple Maps is a viable tool to help you survive daily commuting and traveling in the city.
Available for: iOS

- 7  **MetroMan Beijing**
This handy subway app includes a search function and will tell you which stations are close to you, as well as a map of the whole subway system. It also gives users estimates about travel time and distance, number of transfers, and prices.
Available for: iOS, Android

- 1  **Baidu Maps**
Baidu Maps is an up-to-date counterpart of Apple Maps, and offers 3D searching, traffic information, street view, and more – as long as you can read Chinese.
Available for: iOS, Windows Phone, Android, Symbian

- 2  **Taobao**
Taobao, its upmarket sister site Tmall and wholesaler Alibaba are at the heart of the Chinese obsession with e-commerce (though newcomer JD.com is taking them on in the cities at least.)
Available for: iOS, Android, Windows Phone

- 3  **Didi**
Just a year ago, we had Uber cars circulating the city. But after a mega merger between Uber and Didi, the car-hailing game in Beijing has changed, making taxi hailing a little bit difficult compared to just riding a bus or taking the subway.
Available for: iOS, Android



Taobao



Jingdong

SHOPPING

See a comparison between these two apps along with another website on p 44-45



Mobike



Ofo



Bluegogo

BIKE SHARING

These three bike-sharing apps are taking Beijing's roads by storm. Turn to p 56-57 for more details.

Meituan
Wai Mai

Sherpa's

Baidu
Wai Mai

Eleme

FOOD DELIVERY

Hungry and lazy to cook? There are a lot of food delivery options to choose from. See more about them on p 54-55.






Emergency (24hr)	Obstetrics & Gynecology	Internal Medicine
Surgery	Pediatrics	Cardiovascular Medicine
Urology Surgery	Pediatric Surgery	Interventional Radiology
Orthopedics	Oncology	Family Medicine
Sports Medicine	Pathology	Vaccination Clinic
Neurosurgery	Dental Clinic	Clinical Psychology
Cardiovascular Surgery	Eye Clinic	Traditional Chinese Medicine
Thoracic Surgery	ENT Clinic (Ear, Nose, Throat)	Laboratory
Plastic Surgery	Dermatology	Imaging
Anesthesiology	Integrative Medicine	

Beijing United Family Hospital
 Add: 2 Jiangtai Road, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100015
 24hr Service Center : 4008-919191 24hr ER : (010) 5927 7120





BJU中文微信 BJU English WeChat BJU中文微博

Crossing the Border

When does culture shock become racism?

by Andrew Killeen

Experiencing different cultures is part of the reason we travel, and those of us who choose to live somewhere far from home may smugly assume that we are more open and accepting than most. Sometimes though even the most cosmopolitan of us will feel revolted by something they see, or long for familiar food from home.

In the past, our Home and Relocation Guide has included an article, usually light-hearted, about some of the aspects of Beijing life which new arrivals from other cultures often find difficult to cope with. Last year however a reprinted piece attracted some criticism from Chinese readers, even an accusation of racism. The observations made in the article will all be familiar to anyone who has spent any time in this city; however, were we wrong to suggest, even unintentionally, that the Beijing way is wrong? When does culture shock become – let's say the word and confront the issue – racism?

Culture shock is not a trivial issue. It goes beyond the sort of day to day irritations that we all experience to a deep, visceral repulsion. It can lead to people giving up their dreams and going home, and in extreme cases even to suicide. It is a genuine phenomenon, recognized by psychologists and the subject of a growing body of research.

And it's hard to deny that of all the places in the world, Beijing may be the toughest to adapt to for foreigners. For much of the 20th century, China resisted the so-called "coca-colonization" by Western soft powers. Even now that there is a KFC and Pizza Hut in every mall, the similarities are only superficial – as one bite of sweet, gooey pizza will reveal.

Even for Chinese people from other parts of the country Beijing can be an extreme environment: its overcrowding, pollution, and the more pugnacious habits of its citizens are notorious. There are also significant class differences. The term *nongmin* 农民, literally meaning just "farmer" but with connotations closer to the English word "peasant," is used to express the contempt of sophisticated city dwellers for those from rural districts whose behavior is seen as boorish or backward.

Many of the aspects which people find most difficult to deal with relate to bodily fluids, and their appropriate disposal. Spitting on the streets is one example: I know people for whom even the preparatory hawking is enough to provoke a strong reaction, making them feel physically ill. Yet to many Chinese people the western habit of wiping your nose with a handkerchief which you then put back in your pocket seems disgusting.

Similarly, the practice of putting young children in "split pants," and allowing them to urinate and defecate on the street, is often a sticking

point for westerners. But it's not hard to see how putting children in diapers, so that they run around in their own waste, could be viewed with repugnance.

Food and table manners are another major area of difference. Until recently eating with your hands was seen as gross behavior by most Chinese people, and in the early days McDonalds gave customers plastic gloves with which to eat their food. The rapid spread of western fast food outlets has done much to overcome this taboo. For many westerners though even the practice of leaving the heads on chickens and ducks can be a shock, and that's before we get to some of the more challenging culinary delights on offer in China: silkworm cocoon, donkey, even dog. Yet the Chinese might reasonably retort that western squeamishness about the food we eat is hypocritical, making sentimental distinctions between which animals are pets and which are food, and hiding the truth about farming methods.

It's no surprise that these issues provoke the strongest feelings: physical disgust evolved as a way of keeping us safe, so that we can learn to be repelled by things which might make us ill. However we have also evolved to be intensely social animals, and the impulse to define ourselves and our tribe by our differences to the "other," and to consider the way we were raised to be innately superior to all other ways, runs very deep. We may consciously consider all cultures to be equal, but we can't always control our instinctive reactions.

It makes no sense then to add guilt to the mix, and make the problem worse. We need to be kind to ourselves, to recognize that these feelings are normal and natural, and to begin to find ways to get past them.

One model describes culture shock as having four stages (see next page). My own experience is that these stages do not come in the orderly progression that the model suggests. There are days when you feel you have adapted and accepted, that you feel at home, but then can still encounter something which sets you right back. It is perhaps most important to recognize though that things do gradually get better, that you learn to cope given time.

Humor, too, is a crucial outlet. It's important for expats to be able to vent, to swap stories about their experiences. Laughter reduces fear and tension, and sharing reassures us that we are not alone in feeling alien. However we still need to be aware that not everyone might be laughing. When we're joking in an office we might forget, for example, that a colleague has a Chinese spouse and might feel deeply uncomfortable with the conversation.

Artwork provided by 3e International School, Angie, 9, Grade 4, US.



So we at *beijingkids* will continue to laugh about the differences which make travel and expat life so interesting and exciting, while remaining respectful of the culture and values of our hosts. And we'll rely on feedback from you, our readers, to make sure we find the right balance.

For expert advice on culture shock and how to deal with it, we talked to Dr. Yuwen Chou, MA, PsyD, who is a psychologist at Beijing United Family Hospital Psychological Health Center.

Before joining Beijing United Family Hospital and Clinics, Dr. Chou worked as a psychologist in private practice settings for 5 years and developed expertise treating people with anxiety, depression, adjustment difficulties, marital and relational issues in adults, as well as children with behavioral and psychological issues. As a Chinese person who has lived and worked in the United States, she is very sensitive and aware of the cross-cultural issues people may experience.

"You and your family relocate to Beijing and in the beginning, everything seems to be exciting and you are intrigued with both similarities and differences between the new culture and your home culture. After a while, the novelty of the new culture starts to wear off and you now primarily focus on the differences; even small things can make you feel frustrated, confused, or irritated like walking across the street and cars honking at you for no reason, or using the squatting toilet. It is very common that you feel this way; even well-travelled individuals or business people experience culture shock from time to time.

"Generally speaking, there are four stages of culture adjustment. The first one is the honeymoon stage, and the stage two is what we call culture shock. With time and practice of adaptive strategies, this unpleasant phase will end, then you feel you have adjusted to the new culture with a positive attitude – the third stage. Finally, you can feel comfortable in the host culture and a sense of mastery and adaptation occur.

"There is also a reverse culture shock which can take place when an individual returns to his/her own culture after growing accustomed to a new one that the same effect can happen.

Some people find it impossible or very difficult to accept or acculturate to the new culture; some people integrate fully and decide to stay and make it home while some manage to adapt to the new culture they view as positive and keep their own thereby create their unique blend.

Here are some tips for dealing with culture shock more effectively:

1. Admit frankly that the impact exists – it is not a sign of weakness.
2. Stop thinking about or idealizing home – avoid constant comparison with home.
3. Take care of yourself – eat healthy, exercise regularly, sleep adequately, and limit alcohol consumption to moderation.
4. Take the time to learn the language – people will appreciate your effort and it also helps you to understand more about the host culture.
5. Stay in touch – keep contact with your friends and families.
6. Don't be shy – share your thoughts and feelings with colleagues, friends, and loved ones. Or you can talk to professionals to identify coping strategies.
7. Make friends and develop relationships – Getting to know local people will help you overcome cultural differences and start to understand the host culture. Make friends with a positive mindset from your own culture so that you can get the support you want instead of focusing on the negative aspects.
8. Travel – taking the time to see new places will make you appreciate the new home country.
9. Just remember that the manners, appearance, habits, and behavior you see from people of your new home country are only the tip of the iceberg. The differences that cause culture shock are more often attitudes, beliefs and values, and we eventually need to reach an understanding and develop empathy in order to get through the phase.

About Dr. Chou

Dr. Chou is a Chinese American who received her bachelor degree in English Literature at Tamkang University in Taiwan. She then went to the University of Minnesota and received her master's degree in educational psychology with a focus in counseling. In 2000, Dr. Chou received her Doctorate degree in clinical psychology at Argosy University in the Twin Cities. Dr. Chou then worked at Asian Bicultural Clinic at Gouverneur Healthcare in New York City for 6 years, serving a patient base mostly composed of Chinese immigrants. In 2006, she joined the Mailman School of Public Health of Columbia University as a postdoctoral research scientist to study how psychosocial factors impact the Chinese patients and their families with severe mental disorders. She has continued to work as a therapist in the community.



Artwork provided by 3e International School, K&I, 8, Grade 3, UK.





Help Is on Hand

Finding helping hands around Beijing

Text updated by Pauline van Hasselt

Relatively affordable domestic help is one of the luxuries of expat life in China. Not only do ayis (as nannies and cleaners are known in Beijing) provide invaluable support for any family, their services can be downright liberating for new parents and those with limited mobility. Many families develop a bond with their ayi beyond that of employer and employee; time and time again, long-term expats have told us that the hardest part of leaving Beijing was separating from their ayi.

Beyond domestic chores, ayis can also soften the effects of culture shock by helping families navigate some of the more challenging aspects of living in Beijing: dealing with repairmen, tracking down missing parcels, sourcing hard-to-find ingredients, etc.

While personal drivers are often assigned to executives by their company, ayis will almost always be hired by the family, either directly or through an agency. The interview is a crucial part of the process, so it is a good idea to ask someone to act as a translator so that both you and the prospective ayi are clear about expectations and benefits.

In general, June and December are the best times to look for domestic help because many employment contracts are up around then. The best way to start your search is through word-of-mouth. Finding an ayi with the kinds of qualifications needed to serve an expat family – the ability to work full-time, cook, clean, take care of children and pets, and perhaps speak basic English – can be difficult, so getting in touch with other parents can save considerable time.

Start by asking around school or parenting-focused WeChat groups, expat forums, and Yahoo groups (e.g. *the Beijinger*, *beijingkids*, Beijing Mamas, Beijing Exchange, etc.). Families leaving Beijing often post advertisements vouching for their ayi while others post on behalf of ayis looking for additional work.

These forums are also a valuable source of information on the benchmark for typical working hours, average pay, overtime rates (if any), and the range of duties ayis can be expected to perform.

Online classifieds are also a research avenue, but ads are often posted by ayi recruitment agencies and will require more sifting through. The building and compound management office can sometimes provide leads or recommendations for ayis that residents have employed in the past. Ayis themselves often leave advertisements on billboards at businesses often frequented by expats, such as April Gourmet or Jenny Lou's.

Once you have a list of applicants, start by checking their references. Do not hesitate to contact previous employers and ask as many questions as necessary; the ayi will have a significant place in your family's life, so find out exactly what you want to know. Determine the qualifications that are most important to you and ask about the ayi's experience and performance in these areas. If you need help with childcare, a history of looking after expat kids is a must. If you need someone to do the groceries and cook, a repertoire that goes beyond simple Chinese dishes might also be beneficial.

Once it is time to interview prospective ayis, be candid, clear, and thorough (see next page for questions to ask). The interview also provides a good opportunity to see how much English the applicant speaks, if any. It is perfectly reasonable to ask the prospective ayi to go through a trial, such as preparing a meal or cleaning. It is customary to pay the applicant a day rate for any trial; determine the amount with them ahead of time.

Questions to consider include:

- How much time will the ayi have off for Spring Festival and other national holidays?
- Will they receive a guaranteed bonus (often referred to as a "13th-month bonus")? Many ayis will expect this.
- Will the ayi receive full salary while you are away on vacation?
- Will you need the ayi to travel with you, including out of the country?

What About Ayi Agencies?

If you are short on time, an ayi agency can significantly simplify the process of finding domestic help, but this requires a careful evaluation of the agency first. Your company may be able to recommend a vetted agency.

However, keep in mind that using an agency will likely be more expensive and possibly carry higher ayi wages, though it is much simpler to change ayis if you are not satisfied with the first one. Agencies usually require a membership or management fee, but the monthly wage should go directly to the ayi. Make sure to clarify how the fees are split between the agency and the ayi. Agency websites are a great resource for pay ranges, which are clearly outlined according to qualifications, language ability, hours and other criteria.

Going through an agency can take some of the guesswork out of the process, with background checks, health checks, and training sometimes included. During the interview stage, use your own translator rather than one provided by the agency. Monthly wages for a full-time, English-speaking ayi range from RMB 3,800-7,000.

Establishing Expectations

Besides setting expectations for everyday tasks, it is crucial to discuss holiday policies during the interview stage. If you go through an agency, it is possible they have their own policies concerning holiday leave and pay.

Ayi Training

Invest in your ayi. Our ayi had previous employers who paid for her English classes, and now she reaps the benefits and can charge more an hour for her services. We decided to teach her western cooking so she can take this with her to the next employer when we leave. This will allow her to continuously upgrade her CV as she works for us.

Different ayis have different strengths and experiences. Expect to spend some time showing them what “clean” means to you. At the beginning, demonstrate down to the cleaning product how you would like cleaning tasks to be done, including laundry, ironing, and tidying.

If you are interested in a particular posting or referral, contact the candidate immediately; good ayis are always in demand. Remember, if you’re happy and your ayi is happy, that’s all that really matters. It may take several tries to get it right, but putting in the effort to find and train your ayi will benefit all those concerned.

Keeping Your Ayi

Consider her workload and pay her accordingly. If you have six kids, make sure to pay her extra, and always make sure she is happy with her position. Be the employee you would want to work for, and don’t advertise the fact you have a great ayi to others.

Ayi and Driver Checklist

Questions to consider when hiring an ayi:

- ☐ Does she speak English? If so, how well?
- ☐ Do you want her to speak English with your children or help them improve their Mandarin?
- ☐ Has she worked for expat families before? If so, were their customs and background similar to yours?
- ☐ Has she undergone a recent health check? If not, you may want to insist she does so, although you would have to cover the cost.
- ☐ Is she certified in CPR and first aid?
- ☐ How old were the children she has cared for in the past?
- ☐ Does she have any experience caring for babies?
- ☐ Is she available for babysitting and/or on weekends?
- ☐ Does she have any experience looking after pets? Does she have any allergies?
- ☐ Do you need her to cook? Do you want her to cook western food?
- ☐ Do you want a live-in ayi? If so, what are her needs and can you accommodate them?
- ☐ Does she live close by? This can affect her availability, should you need her for emergencies or occasional babysitting duties.
- ☐ Do you want a trial period? This can range from three weeks and upwards of three months.

- ☐ Is she trustworthy? Was she referred to you by a friend?
- ☐ If the ayi is to have keys to your house, is she willing to give you a photocopy of her Chinese ID card?
- ☐ What do you want your ayi to do? Be specific about her daily tasks, as well as a list of additional tasks such as
- ☐ looking after the children at birthday parties.
- ☐ Discuss all aspects of money and leave, including pay, overtime, raises, bonuses, holiday leave, and sick leave.

Questions to consider when hiring a driver:

- How many years of experience does the applicant have as a personal driver?
- Do you need them to speak English?
- Do they have previous experience with expat families?
- Have they ever been involved in an accident?
- What kind of car do they drive?
- How much will their salary be? Will there be overtime pay?
- How much will their annual bonus be?
- What will be their standard working hours?
- What holidays will they be entitled to? With full or reduced pay?
- How well do they know the city and suburbs?



"Foggy Penalties" provided by Tiffany Raab, Year 13, British School of Beijing, Shunyi

Catch Your Breath

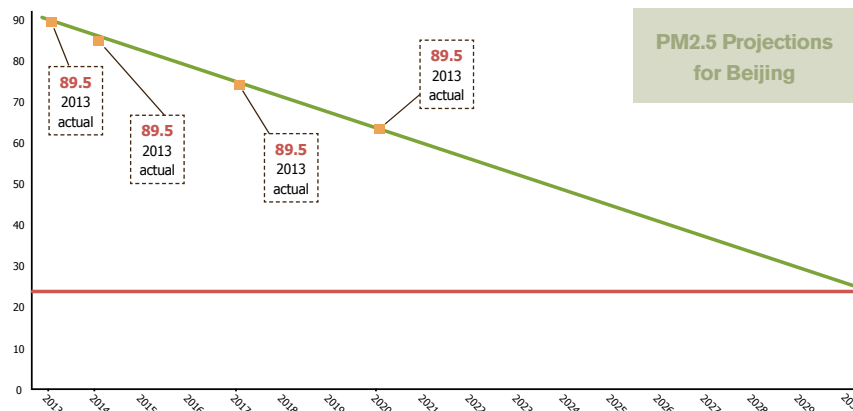
Dealing with the reality of pollution in Beijing

By Vanessa Jencks

We hope we're not the first ones to break this to readers, but air pollution in Beijing is unfortunately just a fact of life. Though it does bring a damper on a good day, most of the haze lingers during winter, as household coal burning from neighboring zones, like Hubei, is a major source of pollution.

What's In It?

The Beijing government has pointed to several sources of air pollution, including but not limited to, car exhaust, coal burning, factory production waste, fire-works (during Chinese New Year), paper burning (during traditional holidays), and cooking waste. The upside is, according to statistical trends, the air pollution should improve with time and further government restrictions.



PHOTOS: THEREJINGER.COM, COURTESY OF BSB SHUNYI



Dealing With It

Since Beijing pollution is a fact of life, staying indoors unequipped and unguarded will not help to deal with the smog blues, but only make you feel worse. Even once you purchase the equipment to help you physically, keep in mind that there is the potential for mental health troubles due to pollution. Scan the QR code for more information. [QR A]



Other Pollutants

Though air pollution is often the largest concern for most families, don't forget to check for other indoor pollutants, like lead painting in older buildings, and water vapor from showerheads. Check out more information about these pollutants by scanning the QR code.

This is our checklist for what you need to protect yourself and your family whether inside or outside.

Inside the Home	Out and About
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Air purifiers- Air monitor- Tape for drafts on windows- DIY pollution stopper for door drafts- Plenty of crafts for indoor days- Showerhead filter- Water filter or ordered water	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mask for adults and children- Portable air quality monitor or- Pollution app and data for phone (see p 32)- List of places with air filtration inside, see p 18 for more information



Mask Fit

Other than actual testing in a lab and material of mask, fit is king. The cost of the mask doesn't matter as much as the fit on the face, so make sure to follow these guidelines.

- 1: To test the fit around the nose, put on a pair of glasses and see if steam fogs up the lenses.
- 2: The nose should have a tight fit around the nose bone using a wire or plastic seal.
- 3: Not all masks are reusable, but some are washable and some need replacement filters. Some masks are not able to filter out oil-based pollutants, while others are. Make sure to follow the manufacturer's guidelines.
- 4: Without a seal all the way around the face, the mask is essentially worthless.
- 5: Some masks have parts and should be regularly cleaned according to manufacture's guidelines.



Exercise – Don't Skip It

One way to keep smog blues at bay, but is often overlooked, is exercising indoors even when pollution is heavy. When the smog is heavy, you might not feel like staying fit, but a little bit of exercise will go a long way in helping mind and body. These supplies are easily found on either JD.com, Taobao.com, Decathlon, or other area sports stores. Remember that kids and adults both need appropriate play.

- Mats
- Weights
- Exercise ball
- Tents and tunnels
- Dance and other workout videos
- Expo markers for windows and floor tile
- Colored tape for PE type games
- Stationary bike set up
- Indoor trampoline
- Balls and blow up pool

SCAN ME

Curious about more?
Scan for a roundup of many different articles covering air and household pollutants.

Bank On It

Setting up your bank account and transfer tips

updated by Andrew Killeen

Just a few years ago, conventional wisdom held that China was a cash society. However, that is rapidly changing with the growth of mobile payment platforms like Alipay, Baidu Wallet, and WeChat Wallet. These cashless payment methods are now accepted not only on e-commerce sites, but also the majority of brick-and-mortar stores, supermarkets, and restaurants, and increasingly even at streetside food stalls. That said, using them still requires setting up a good old-fashioned domestic bank account.

Setting Up a Bank Account

Opening a bank account requires only a passport, a proof of address, and a minimal deposit, though you will need to bring a Chinese-speaking friend or colleague since most banks still do not have customer service in English. You'll also need a Chinese mobile phone, which is used to verify your identity across a whole range of services. Be sure to note the details as the bank records them, particularly your name: have they put your surname first? Used your middle name? Put it all in capitals? These details are vitally important when setting up mobile payments.

Unless your employer issues salary payments through a specific bank, it is best to base your choice on convenience. Be sure to open your account at a branch near your home or office since you will need to return to this location to replace lost or stolen cards. If your work involves a lot of domestic travel, consider a bank with ATMs nationwide such as Bank of China or ICBC. Domestic accounts carry a single withdrawal limit of RMB 2,500 and a daily withdrawal limit of RMB 20,000.

Take great care to avoid losing or damaging your card, as it is a hassle to get a new one. The replacement process can take up to a week – or longer if it is a national holiday. It is impossible to withdraw money during the waiting period, even if you present your passport in person to a bank clerk.

All the "Big Four" banks offer online banking in English: Bank of China (BOC), China Construction Bank (CCB), Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), and Agricultural Bank of China (ABC). Their usability varies, and you may run into problems using your passport number as ID with systems set up for an 18 digit Chinese ID number. The best online and mobile services are probably those of China Merchants Bank, but for everyday purposes Alipay and WeChat Wallet are far more useful, if not essential (see next page to set up these services).

Transferring Money Overseas

The State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE) severely restricts the outward flow of renminbi, so it can be difficult for expats to get money out of the country. The limit for overseas transfers is a paltry USD 500 per day for foreigners. Though both foreign and Chinese nationals are limited to USD 50,000 per year for accounts held in RMB, Chinese nationals can wire that amount in one transaction.

If you are an expat working for a foreign company and paying all your taxes, your company should be able to apply on your behalf for a wire transfer of over USD 50,000 without issue. If you do not work for a foreign company, the simplest way to transfer a considerable sum of money overseas is to go through a trusted Chinese friend or colleague. You will need your passport, domestic bank card, the details and address of your foreign bank account, its SWIFT code, and the

permanent address tied to that account.

The bank will require you to convert the renminbi to the foreign currency in-house before making the transfer. Charges vary and include a basic commission fee, plus a small percentage of the amount being transferred (typically 0.01 percent). For reference, Bank of China has a basic commission fee of RMB 80 while China Merchants Bank charges RMB 100.

Alternatively, Alipay and the Bank of Shanghai offer an international transfer service that allows Chinese nationals to wire up to RMB 350,000 per transaction or month for a reasonable commission fee. The transfer must be done from a Chinese national's Alipay account, so again, choose someone you trust.

Another option is Western Union, which has higher transfer limits but only allows transfers in USD or EUR. In addition, someone has to receive the money transfer, which means you have to provide their name, address, city, state, country, phone number, and gender. Commission fees vary from USD 15-30 depending on the amount being wired. For a list of locations, visit www.westernunion.cn/en or call 800 820 8668 (press 2 for service in English).

A Word of Caution

It can be tempting to use illegal methods to move money out of the country, but do not do it – it is simply not worth the risk. When in doubt, retain the services of a tax lawyer who is well-versed in Chinese capital control regulations. Keep in mind that you can carry the equivalent of up to USD 5,000 in cash when flying out of the country; anything between USD 5,000 and 10,000 must be declared and amounts of over USD 10,000 are prohibited.

On a lesser note, beware of fake bills. There is little incentive to turn them in, as banks will usually not replace money lost. As a result, people often try to shift fake bills onto others. For example, some taxi drivers have been known to surreptitiously replace a real RMB 100 bill with a fake one and make a big show of examining the money, only to claim the customer gave them a fake bill. Carry smaller denominations whenever possible and always be aware of your surroundings.



"Lion Dance" provided by EtonKids, Yuluojia, 5, Kindergarten, China

Let Us Pay

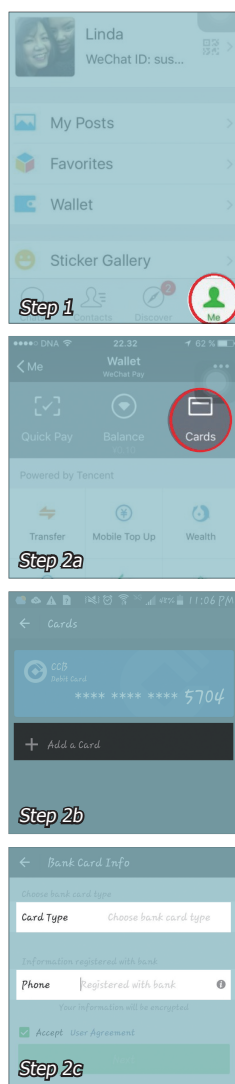
No more excuses to remain without WeChat Wallet or Alipay

By Annie Wang, Kyle Mullin, and Andy Penafuerte III

Pre-steps

Set up your Chinese bank account (see pg 40), download apps, and make basic accounts

WeChat Wallet



STEP 1

Go to WeChat Wallet, located under "Me".

**For some users, WeChat Wallet will only show up after receiving and opening a WeChat Red Packet.*

STEP 2

Tap on "Cards" (Step 2a) and then "Add Card" type in your bank card number (Step 2b). Enter your "ID Type" (Step 2c).

STEP 3

The verification page will ask for a code sent to your phone. This step will only work if the phone number during the setup process is the same used to setup your bank account.

STEP 4

Setup a security pin to use each time you make a payment or transfer money to someone via WeChat Wallet. This pin will also be used for verification in the case that your phone is stolen. Once you've set up your pin, hit next and you will be able to see your bank card in your Wallet.

EXTRA NOTES

Without WeChat Wallet, you won't be able to join WeChat groups once they reach over 100 users, which include most WeChat based support communities on pg 51. You also will be prevented from using certain functions on Didi Dache, the car hailing app, JD.com, and some food ordering apps.

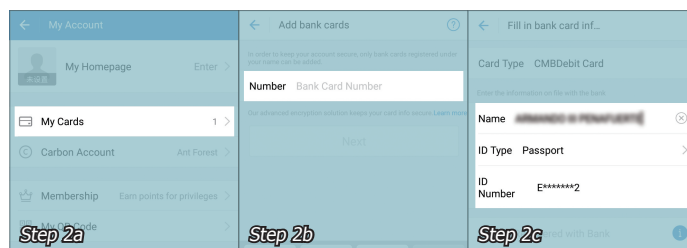
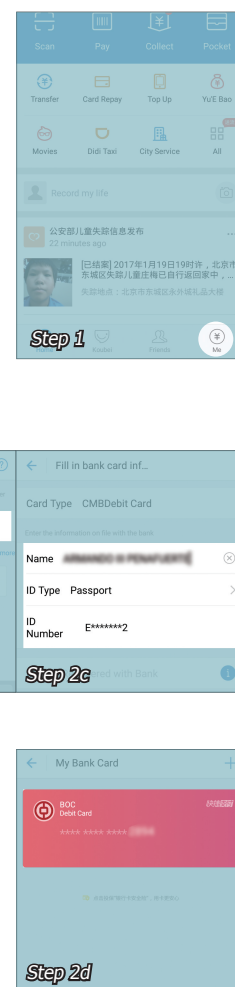
Alipay

STEP 1

Tap Sign Up and input your mobile number. A SMS verification code will be sent. Set your transaction password. In the Home page, tap "Me" to go to Account page.

STEP 2

Link your bank card. In the second row select "My Cards" (Step 2a) to add your bank card. Once you input your bank card number (Step 2b), you'll be prompted to fill in bank card information (Step 2c). Once your bank card is connected to Alipay, you'll see your card in the list (Step 2d).



EXTRA NOTES

Alipay has a QR scanner, mobile and utilities top-up, lottery services, and fund transfer to contacts options. It also has menus for movie tickets, Didi taxi hailing, a Dianping-style restaurant review section, and food delivery via Koubei. Other features in Chinese include a parcel delivery section, allowing you to send packages via a delivery serviceman who will come to your home or office, a real-time currency converter using up-to-date conversion rates.

HAVING TROUBLE?

All the bank information you type in must be exactly consistent with what was used to open your bank account. This includes capitalization and order of the name used to open your account. If you've tried to no avail to switching the order of your name during setup, typing without spaces, and dropping your middle name, you may have to go to the bank to fix errors. For Alipay, if you enter the incorrect details more than three times, you will be temporarily locked out and unable to attempt to register again for 24 hours.

WeShop Around

Start selling your products to a wider online audience

By Annie Wang

In addition to WeChat Wallet for beginners, more advanced users looking to sell products on the app can open their own WeChat shop. Those interested in selling products via WeChat Shop must first create a WeChat service account. This can be done via apply.wechat.com. You will need business credentials to get through the registration of a service account (i.e. business phone, email, and documentation proving the official existence of the business). For non-Chinese registered businesses, there are currently no official guidelines for this type of registration. Once your official account is verified and your bank account is linked to the account, you can begin the journey to financial independence through the almighty WeChat. If your Chinese is not advanced yet, it might be wise to have a Chinese friend or co-worker help for these next few steps

STEP 1

First, login to your WeChat account. If you are fairly new to accessing this account, you will need a phone that is registered to the account in order to scan and verify your login.



STEP 2

Scroll to the bottom of the left hand side menu entitled "功能". Then click on the very last option "接口权限". To the right of "接口权限" you will see "功能服务". To the right and one down from "功能服务" you will then see "微信小店接口". If you have a service account, this option should be accessible.



STEP 3

WeChat officially put out instructions in Chinese for setting up a WeChat shop from within the app. The first of these instructions calls for adding products to your shop. To do so, go to "添加商品". In this step, you will be asked to choose the category and subcategories for product information you are uploading. For example, the below picture has shown the categories and subcategories (from left to right): a product for outdoor use -> camping equipment -> a tent.



STEP 4

After identifying the categories and types of products that you would like to add, you will be given the opportunity to add the description and vital information regarding your product such as product names, shipping fees, and product description.



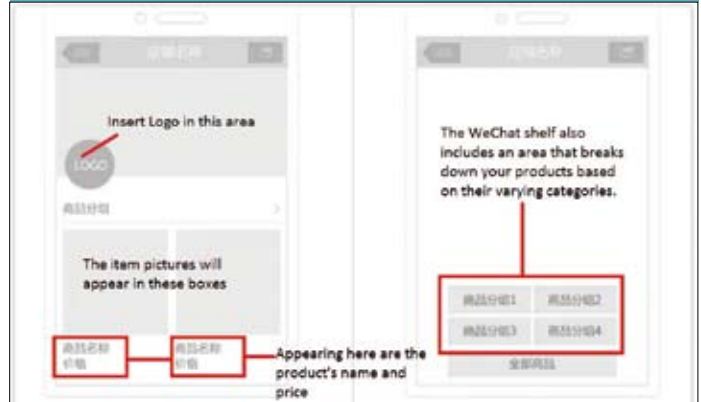
STEP 5

You can then choose what products appear in your shop, and which ones you would like to withhold.



STEP 6

After uploading your items, it's time to "manage your shop." The WeChat Shop is made up of "shelves" where you house your items. Each shelf is made of different parts.



Once you've laid out your shelf, you can add products to your shelf via the categories created in Step 3.



You are now ready to release your products to the WeChat world! Products that are ready for the public can be uploaded into the messaging board and sent out whenever you see fit. Once you've uploaded the products a hyperlink will be created that you can send to your friends and followers.



STEP 7

So your shop is up and your products are now hauling in the dough, but how much dough exactly? Luckily you can also track information regarding the number of orders, completed orders, and the like.



STEP 8

As your WeChat shop continues to thrive, you will need to manage the thousands upon millions of sales you will be making. You can do so by searching through the orders that have been placed to ensure that each one is on track.





It's quite common nowadays to hear people, and even your newfound *pengyou*, saying their recent purchases are bought on either Taobao or JD – or the most popular online marketplace apps in China. Even if those apps are fully in Chinese, you can actually get over the language barrier by remembering several steps or using clever strategies just like what other well versed expats do.

Online shopping in China is truly distinct, and most of the time a learning experience. But a word of caution: it can be addicting and a real cash drain once you learn the how-to's.

So first, let's have a quick rundown of the top three online marketplaces you should know.



Taobao

taobao.com

Available on iOS, Android, and web

What can you buy here?

Everything! Well, sort of. You can buy items ranging from clothes and accessories to household appliances and electronics. On its sister site Tmall, you can buy food items and "higher end" products.

How about the prices of the items?

You can find really cheap stuff on Taobao!

Are the items of good quality?

It depends. Some cheap items have defects, but in general you can get good buys even if your Chinese is very limited. Alibaba, the parent company of Taobao and Tmall, also began its crackdown on fakes early this year after being recently labeled as a "notorious market" for counterfeiting by the Office of the US Trade Representative.

Tell me more about the customer service.

Okay, this gets tricky because expats who don't speak Chinese will find it hard to communicate with Taobao and Tmall vendors, rendering transactions very difficult.



Baopals

baopals.com

Available on WeChat and web

What can you buy here?

It can be classified as an English version of Taobao and Tmall, so you can buy on Baopals almost everything sold from those two sites.

How about the prices of the items?

Items are priced a little bit higher compared to their Taobao counterparts because of a commission fee.

Are the items of good quality?

Same with Taobao.

Tell me more about the customer service.

There's an English speaking service so communication won't be that much of a hassle.



Jingdong

jd.com

Available on iOS, Android, and web

What can you buy here?

It's known to sell quality electronic products and household appliances. You can also buy clothes but the choices are much more limited than that of Taobao's.

How about the prices of the items?

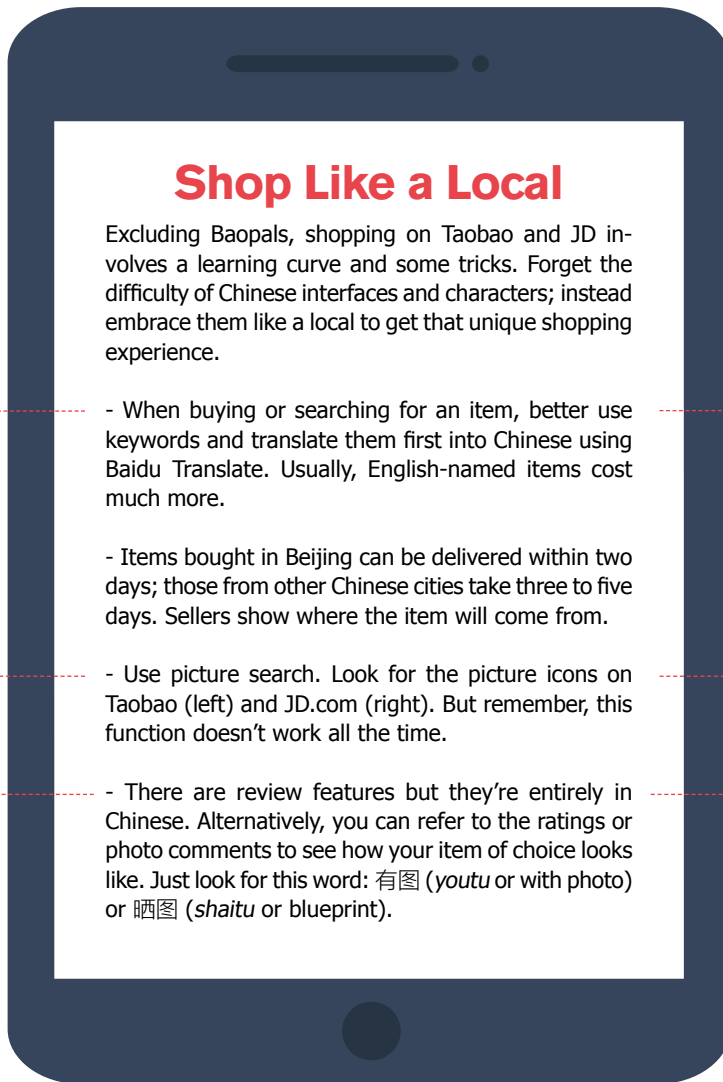
Item prices are mid-ranged though you can still get discounts or promos.

Are the items of good quality?

Many Chinese say items sold on JD.com are durable, with some having warranties included in the price.

Tell me more about the customer service.

Same with Taobao/Tmall.



Shop Like a Local

Excluding Baopals, shopping on Taobao and JD involves a learning curve and some tricks. Forget the difficulty of Chinese interfaces and characters; instead embrace them like a local to get that unique shopping experience.

- When buying or searching for an item, better use keywords and translate them first into Chinese using Baidu Translate. Usually, English-named items cost much more.
- Items bought in Beijing can be delivered within two days; those from other Chinese cities take three to five days. Sellers show where the item will come from.
- Use picture search. Look for the picture icons on Taobao (left) and JD.com (right). But remember, this function doesn't work all the time.
- There are review features but they're entirely in Chinese. Alternatively, you can refer to the ratings or photo comments to see how your item of choice looks like. Just look for this word: 有图 (youtu or with photo) or 晒图 (shaitu or blueprint).

But Here's the Catch...

Success! Your item will be delivered but you think you'll be in the office by the time the courier arrives at your home.

Just add your office address as your second shipping address so that your item will be directly sent there. Remember to select that before paying an item.

"The delivery of my item is taking too long!"

It could be because of the shipping location or other issues like public holidays, the famous November 11 sales day, and severe pollution (yes, because it affects air freights). You can also track the courier, but remember everything is in Chinese so you need to translate it using an app or asking help from a Chinese pengyou.

Okay, you bought a cheap quality item and it's ready for shipping ... but you changed your mind and want to replace it with a different colored one, if not, get a refund.

That's tough because you need to talk to a seller's customer service representatives (CSRs) or fill up a form. Only a few of these CSRs can speak a limited amount of English. What you can

do is to use your translator app... or when they call you, just tell them the following phrases:

- Sorry, I don't speak Chinese. Can you send me a message instead so that I can translate it? (对不起, 我不会说中文。你可以给我一个消息, 以便我可以翻译吗? Duìbùqǐ, wǒ bù huì shuō zhōngwén. Nǐ kěyǐ gěi wǒ yīgè xiāoxi, yǐbiàn wǒ kěyǐ fānyì ma?)
- Hold on, here's a friend to talk with you. (等一下。这是一个朋友跟你说话。Děng yíxià. Zhè shì yīgè péngyǒu gēn nǐ shuōhuà.)

"Wow, the delivery was fast..." only to find out the item has defects or different from what you ordered. Worse, you found the item was fake!

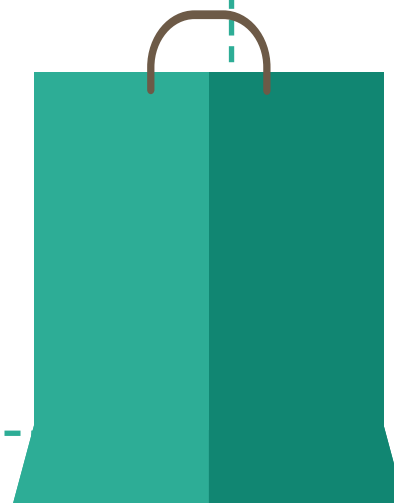
Again, this is a tricky part because you need to contact the vendor. Try sending them a message telling:

- The item I bought was [fake / has defects]. Can I replace it [or have a refund]? (我买的物品是[假/有缺陷]。可否更换[或退款]? Wǒ mǎi de wùpǐn shì [jiǎ/yǒu quēxiàn]. Kěfǒu gēnghuàn [huò tuì kuǎn]?)

Baopals Around

So when every effort you exerted in using Taobao and JD fails, or if you lose patience, Baopals is another option. On Baopals, most items are priced slightly higher compared to their Taobao counterparts, so if price is not an issue, then you might want to go with Baopals.

Getting your Baopals account is pretty straightforward. In addition, it has a WeChat account where you can do online shopping. You can also find in the account a blog, that contains its famous "The Cool, the Cheap, & the Crazy," items. Since Baopals is integrated into WeChat, you can for pay items using WeChat Wallet. Baopals also has customer service that responds promptly, so you can direct your instructions like item quantity and shipping location.



*Provided by Yew Chung International School Beijing, (YCIS, Beijing),
Shiyuan Lin, Year 13, Hong Kong*

Food in a Box

You can also buy food from these sites, but beware, there are fakes, and freshness may not be guaranteed.

Other thrift options to set up your home

If online shopping on Taobao or JD.com proves to be too much and you feel Baopals is too pricey for small kitchenware, fret not and remember to use your WeChat. There are several groups like **Old & New Deals – Beijing** and **2nd Hand Beijing Bargains** where you can buy (or sell) items at a much lower price. Below are also some groups you can follow to buy, donate, or sell items. Following these groups will open a lot of possibilities for networking and volunteering too!



Roundabout is a free service / social enterprise. Donations are either forwarded to charities that are registered with Roundabout or sold to raise money to help those in need. (6040 8794, English contact: 137 1877 7761, Chinese contact: 137 1895 3814, roundaboutchina.com) Roundabout Store, adjacent to Yosemite Villa Compound, Yuyang Road West, Houshyu, Shunyi District. 众爱慈善商店北京市顺义区后沙峪燕山美地别墅西街榆阳路. Roundabout Community Center, N4-1-4, Shine Hills, No.9 Antai Dajie, Houshayu, Shunyi District. 云爱汇社区中心北京市顺义区安泰大街9号院祥云小镇北区4号楼104

The Migrant Children's Foundation (MCF) is a non-profit organization whose sole aim is to enrich and develop the lives and education of migrant workers' children in and around Beijing, China. MCF holds a quarterly auction called "Live for Less" where everyone can donate their unused items or exchange with others. The remaining items are given to Roundabout to help its registered charities. For more information, email lorna@mcfchina.org or visit www.mcfchina.org.

Founded in 2005, **Freecycle Beijing** is a Yahoo group that is open to all who want to 'recycle' that special something rather than throw it away. This group is part of The Freecycle Network, a nonprofit organization and a movement of people interested in promoting community involvement, reducing consumerism, and keeping viable items out of landfills. By following a few simple rules, members can post ads for things they no longer need and others will claim them for free. It currently has over 1300 members. Membership is free. To join, follow the prompts at groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/FreecycleBeijing/info.

Brandnu is a social enterprise that works with migrant women, using second-hand clothes to create upcycled fashion. It is essentially a charity store that employs disadvantaged women. The shop accepts donations of clean, gently-used clothes. Call the donation hotline at 153 1300 8571 (Chinese only) to find out more.



Getting Down to Business

The pleasures and pitfalls of setting up your own company in China

By Andrew Killeen

The profile of the typical international family in Beijing is rapidly changing. While there are still many who are posted here for a few years by their governments or multinational companies, increasing numbers are entrepreneurs, drawn here by China's booming economy and still untapped potential. And if you're accompanying your partner here for their work – as the unflattering jargon has it, a "trailing spouse" – then you might want to set up in business for yourself, to make sure your own potential isn't wasted.



Mr. Ken Lee

However, while doing business in Beijing holds many attractions, it also has pitfalls. And the penalties for getting it wrong, legally, socially or financially, can be serious.

To guide us through this maze, we spoke to two experts. Mr. Ken Lee, Partner with Lee & Lee Associates (www.lla.cc). He is a certified accountant in China and the UK, as well

as being a certified tax Agent and internal auditor. He's worked with international companies and accountancy firms, and written for and edited books on taxation, accounting and law.

We asked Lee whether it's possible for a foreigner to set up in business alone, or whether they'll always need a local partner.

"In considering whether a foreigner needs a Chinese partner, we need to take into account two aspects: legal and business," Lee told us. "From a legal perspective, if the business to be conducted is prohibited according to the State Industry Catalog, then foreigners are not allowed to establish a business in China. If the business is a restricted industry, then the foreigner needs to find a Chinese partner to set up a joint venture and the shareholding interests may be restricted to a certain percentage.

"From a business perspective, if the foreigner is quite confident in his/her capability and experience in the Chinese market, then the foreigner can choose to set up a Wholly Owned Foreign Enterprise (WOFE) so that he/she can have full control of the company. If the foreigner is short of some key resources, such as key technology, sales channels for certain industry, etc., then to find a Chinese partner to work together with would be a better option to grow the business

quicker. To set up a WOFE, the industry must be a non-prohibited and non-restricted industry according to the State Industry Catalog.

"No matter what option you choose, obtaining practical and affordable advice from professional accountants and legal consultants is key to protecting and developing a good business."

To Lee's words of wisdom, we'd add our own warning: make sure your partner is someone you can trust. If the relationship breaks down, the law will tend to take the side of the Chinese citizen. Here at *beijingkids* we've heard many tales of woe where people have put time and money into a business, to be left with nothing when their partner splits from them.

However a local partner can be valuable for developing *guānxì*, that network of connections and loyalties which underpins so many aspects of Chinese society.

"*Guānxì* in China is very important," Lee agreed. "As you may know, Chinese people care more about personal relationships. Thus, it is critical to try to make good relationships with your clients or customers, vendors, partners and also government authorities."

There are other cultural differences in the way of doing business. Westerners might find Chinese business practices to be maddeningly slow, indirect, and opaque. In contrast, Chinese businesspeople often consider westerners to be impatient, abrasive, and disrespectful. Before making a deal you should expect there to be a "courting" process, which may seem frustrating but is essential for establishing trust.

"Cultural difference is quite a big topic," Lee said, "and it includes many aspects, such as the manner of your speech and the words you choose, gestures, ways of making contact, drinking, and eating, with Chinese employees or clients. You can learn about it by hiring some professional and loyal Chinese employees, or finding professional agencies to consult."



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Seemingly endless form-filling is another reality of doing business in China.

"To set up a company you will need various paperwork," Lee told us, "including the notarized and authenticated investor's certificate, AOA (Articles of Association), office rental, and the investor's bank credential letter, etc. At LLA we usually provide you a list of information required for your business establishment. For a WOFE, it will take about 2 to 3 months after all the documents are ready before the process is completed."

And it doesn't stop there.

"After the company is set up, there will be annual filings, such as filings to the Administration of Industry and Commerce, Finance Bureau, Tax Bureau, Statistics Bureau, etc. There would be also monthly and quarterly filings for state and local taxes, labor union fees, and so on."

You also need to make sure that any investment you're relying on is legal.

"Investors could be foreign individuals or foreign companies," Lee said, "and the Chinese government will check the country of the investors. Most countries can invest in China. However, different cities in China may have different restrictions on which country cannot invest in China. Thus, it is better to consult the authorities beforehand as to whether or not the investment from those investors is allowed."

And don't forget to pay your taxes!

"What taxes to pay are decided by the services to be provided and products to be sold. They need to be assessed when the company's accountant visits the state and local tax authorities at the registration stage."

Tax liability is also dependent on the all-important *fapiao*. Whereas in most countries any company can issue its own invoices and receipts, in China only officially issued government forms are valid for tax purposes.

"*Fāpiào*," Lee explained, "is the Chinese pronunciation of official receipt. It is regarded as the only legal supporting document for expense and cost. They are strictly controlled by tax authorities. Violation of the regulations of *fāpiào* could trigger various penalties."

All this can seem intimidating, and Lee agreed that it may be best to dip your toe in the water first.

"You could find one local trader first," he said, "to test the market situation and the way of doing business in China, before setting up a real company."

But don't panic, help is at hand!

"To start a business in China, there are various issues and difficulties," Lee said. "A good professional firm [like his own Lee & Lee Associates] can offer various solutions to help you get through the difficulties. This help could be with company set up, hiring people, payroll, social insurances, accounting, tax, audit, various government filings, planning and budgeting, finance and investment, credit research, etc."

Somebody who knows all about the opportunities and challenges of doing business in China is British-born Jim James. He moved to Beijing because the clients of his Singapore PR firm, Eastwest Public Relations, wanted more support in their biggest market. He identifies three key issues for anyone starting up a business.

"I have now started some seven companies, across Singapore and China," he told us, "and the common issues are cash, people, and clients. Cash enables the business to create what clients may eventually buy, and people are the essential machinery to turn the business model into a cash generating vehicle. A business is about profit, risk and time. Cash is the number one bottleneck at the start and throughout the lifetime of a business as the entrepreneur tries to formulate the right equation to optimize profit whilst reducing the time to deliver and remove the risk for the shareholders, staff, and customers."

It's important, he told us, not to spread yourself too thinly.

"The biggest mistake that I have made is to be mission critical to more

than one business at a time. Playing different roles within different companies is possible, but being the sole source of vision, cash, and staff motivation across multiple businesses has meant that I have not been able to give the individual teams all the attention that they need to be fully engaged."

But while managing your time is perhaps the greatest challenge of entrepreneurship, it's also one of its greatest benefits.

"I have achieved some level of success in having a portfolio career which affords me the choice of how to allocate my time," James said, "and as I get older it is time that I realize is the greatest asset of all. My 23 years of self-employment have not made me wealthy, but I am able to afford good education and healthcare for my family, and the ability to do work that I enjoy with people that I respect. Much is written of entrepreneurship as a path to wealth and fame, but for my part the true success is being able to control one's life by adding value on my terms."

The most important thing, according to James, is to be clear what you want to get from the experience of running a business.

"Evaluate the motivation for entrepreneurship - is it to change a societal issue, to make a fortune, to be independent, to do what you enjoy?... everyone's motivation is different and may include many of these and others. That motivation will impact the kind of business and scale of business that one will be able to make into a success. Entrepreneurship is not for everyone as it carries many stresses along with the positives. Read the Richard Gerber book, *The E-Myth*, to understand that entrepreneurship takes on many different forms, all of which are equally valid, and remember that entrepreneurship is not a one way trip; it can be part of a portfolio career."

And for all the challenges, running a business in Beijing offers unparalleled opportunities.

"China is the largest car market," James said, "the thirstiest beverage market, largest outbound tourist market, etc. So as much as I loved Singapore, and retain Eastwest offices there, China's magnetic power is the vastness of the market."



PHOTO: COURTESY OF JIM JAMES

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Creating Community

How to find or make the support you need

by Vanessa Jencks

One of many expat's favorite things about life in Beijing is the sheer amount of diverse community to be found and the many things to do with family. Most of the hurdles of settling into Beijing are more easily jumped with a friend in hand. Typically, both expats and Chinese are happy to help those fresh off the plane – one only needs to ask. Since it's been a while since *beijingkids* staff was new, we asked three new-to-Beijing moms what was hard about adjusting to life, tips they'd give, and how community and support groups can make a difference.

1. Learn the Language

"I didn't realize how many people really didn't know English. I've traveled a lot before, and I used to get by, but I really rely on my translator to get things done," said Jamila Geter, 35 from the US. She has two boys, ages 6 and 20 months. Her husband travels for his job so often that she acts as a single mom.

This will be a struggle until the language is learned or until you have a strong support system of Chinese friends who are willing to help you through the more difficult language issues.

2. Get in WeChat Groups

"Getting into relevant WeChat groups was also helpful for quick answers and references," said Shelia Loh, 42, Malaysia, mother of 3 girls ages 6, 8, and 10 years old.

We're still shocked when we hear of expats who live without WeChat and WeChat wallet since it makes life in Beijing so much simpler and more convenient. A great deal of Beijing social interaction is planned on WeChat, and isolated mothers are able to connect with other moms looking for community.

3. Ask a Friend to Help with Household Tasks

"I found understanding the card system of paying bills really odd, different banks for different things and no one really tells you just kind of sink or swim," said Aleesha Price, a mother of two small children from Australia.

We suggest asking an expat friend, neighbor, or Chinese friend for help for these seemingly easy tasks, which actually can be monumental without language skills. Tag along with them when they go to pay their bills to avoid feeling like you're causing an inconvenience.

4. Socialize

"I found a playgroup through Bumps2Babes, and they are just the most beautiful people and my kids love all those kids too," Price said. The clothing auction network she attended in the first few weeks was "amazing."

"[It was] just good to see so many expats having fun together,"

Price smiled. The clothing auction network was specifically created to combat the loneliness expat mothers often feel while raising money for charity and getting new clothes. For Loh, her husband's employer has a Spouse Association that welcomed her and gave her an opportunity to socialize upon arrival.

5. Volunteer

"For me, the biggest help regarding settling in was being plugged into various community groups and finding a position to receive and serve (that's where I learned most)," Loh said. "We attend BICF, and there are many expats there at various stages of being in Beijing. Those who have lived in Beijing nearly 20 years or those that had just arrived like us, at that time. Both groups had insights to offer and gave us the opportunity to connect. More so via small groups and meetings like Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS)."

6. Get Involved at School

Geter found that relying on her school was the smartest thing she could do. She moved to Beijing then needed to start work almost immediately, requiring her to hire an ayi before she arrived and left her son with her the next day, "I had to trust the principal's daughter since she spoke Chinese to make sure the ayi was doing what she should." Geter found this help invaluable when she was navigating the medical system when her son was sick a few months after they arrived. "I could ask them about prices for visits and how to fill out insurance forms."

7. Magazines and Media

Geter promised she wasn't just saying this since she was talking to us, but she has found Beijing magazines incredibly helpful. "I joined parenting groups, like Bumps2Babes. I'm not too active in the discussions, but I do read the articles that are posted." The articles are specifically helpful in giving her ideas for events with her children, and since she's unable to conduct online research as she would back in the States, where answers were only a Google or phone call away. "Here, a lot of things are word of mouth or WeChat. Networking and asking around has been something I've had to do more."



Provided by Beijing City International School (BCIS), Jenae Drisner, Graduated (made in Grade 11), first published in JingKids March 2015

Great Communities Outside Your Neighborhood

By far, the best resource families have are the schools and community groups within each neighborhood, but for some families, this isn't enough for reasons like children's ages, distance from school, or language barriers. In these cases, here are plenty of community groups available. Send an email with your WeChat ID to editor@beijing-kids.com to request being added to these groups.

Cultural Organizations

- Creative Friends: www.creativefriends.asia
- French Institute: www.institutfrancais-pek.in.com
- Instituto Cervantes: www.pekin.cervantes.es
- Italian Cultural Institute: www.iicpechino.esteri.it

Newcomers' Networks

- Beijing International Newcomers' Network (INN): www.innbeijing.org
- InterNations: www.internations.org

Religious Organizations

- Beijing Baptist Church: www.beijingbaptistchurch.org
- Beijing International Christian Fellowship (BICF): www.bicf.org
- Bet Yaakov Chabad House and Community Center: www.chabad-beijing.cn
- Capital Community Church: www.capitalcommunitychurch.net
- Congregation of the Good Shepherd: www.cogs-bj.org
- River of Grace: theriverofgrace.com

Parenting Support Groups

- Bumps 2 Babes: beijingbumps2babes@gmail.com
- La Leche League: lelechebeijing@gmail.com, www.llli.org/beijing

WeChat Groups

- Bazaar & Markets Network
- Beijing Dads Group
- Beijing Family Group
- Beijing Parenting and Beyond
- Beijing Women's Network, Pregnant Married Mothers
- Beijing Writer's Network
- Clothing Auction Network, City
- Clothing Auction Network, Shunyi
- Clothing Auction Network, Yizhuang
- Events Only Beijingkids Group
- Fit Mamas
- Global Women Founders
- Mothers with Preschoolers (MOPS)
- мамочки в Китае (Mommies in China)
- Respectful-Positive Parenting

Volunteer Organizations

- Agape Family Life House: sarazhouhs@gmail.com
- Beijing Gender Health Education Institute: bjghei@gmail.com
- Bread of Life Bakery: www.breadoflifebakery.org
- Dew Drops Little Flower: www.dewdropslittleflower.org
- Friends of Nature: www.fon.org.cn
- Magic Hospital: www.magichospital.org
- Migrant Children's Foundation: www.mcfchina.org
- Roots & Shoots: www.genyuya.org.cn/en
- Roundabout: www.roundaboutchina.com
- Sew GORGEOUS: sewgorgeous@yahoo.com

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Food at Your Fingertips

Ordering food the easy way

By Nimo Wanjau and Andy Penafuerte III

If you're at your wits' end over what to cook, then don't fret, as getting hot, delicious food delivered to your doorstep is very simple. Beijing has several English- and Chinese-based delivery services that simplify your life by giving you one less thing to think about. Here's a list of English-only delivery services that truly deliver.

Sherpa's

familiar orange scooters can be seen across the Chaoyang and Dongcheng districts. It has a large selection of partner restaurants such as Home Plate BBQ, Wagas, and Tandoori Kitchen.

Delivery zones: Chaoyang and Dongcheng districts

Delivery fee: Starts at RMB 15 and increases according to distance. Sherpa's has a happy hour promotion from 1-6pm on weekdays where the delivery fee is waived if the total is RMB 20 or less. There's a minimum delivery amount of RMB 100 at dinner hours starting from 6pm.

How to order: Check their app, website at www.sherpa.com.cn, or contact 400 600 6209

Jinshisong 锦食送

is one of the larger delivery services for western restaurants. It has international and Chinese selections and covers a wider delivery area than Sherpa's.

Delivery zones: Chaoyang, Dongcheng, Xicheng, and Haidian

Delivery fee: Starts at RMB 15, though many restaurants offer free delivery within 3km. There is a minimum order of RMB 68.

How to order and pay: Check the app, website at www.jinshisong.com or contact 400 030 0517. Cash or POS upon delivery, WeChat or Alipay if ordering via the app.

KK Rabbit

offers a range of international and Chinese cuisine, though it is more limited than Sherpa's or Jinshisong. KK Rabbit Operators can also take orders through MSN and Skype.

Delivery zones: Guomao, Sanlitun, Chaoyang Park and Shunyi

Delivery fee: RMB 15 for addresses within 3km of the restaurant. There's an extra RMB 7 for every kilometer after that. When you place an order through the website, KK Rabbit will call you within ten minutes to tell you the correct delivery fee; the website tends to overestimate the fee as a conservative measure.

How to order: Their website (www.kkrabbit.com.cn) is easier than calling as the orders can easily be mistaken. Hotline: 400 720 1717

Youcansong 优餐送

delivers from Chinese and international restaurants. In its own words, Youcansong delivers "the best food with superior service."

Delivery zones: Chaoyang and Dongcheng districts

Delivery fee: Delivery fee is calculated by the distance from the restaurant to your home. Youcansong charges RMB 15 for the first 3km and RMB 5 for each additional kilometer.

How to order and pay: Online via www.youcansong.com, through the app, or by calling 4000 700 250 or 6500 9155. You can also use cash or POS (China Union Pay cards only) upon delivery.

Chinese-only Apps



Baidu Waimai

Delivery zones: Across Beijing

Delivery fee: Delivery is calculated by distance from the restaurant, but is rarely more than RMB 5-10.

How to order and pay: Via the app or call 1010 5777. You can also use Baidu Wallet, Alipay, WeChat Wallet, or cash on delivery (for some restaurants only).

Meituan Waimai

美团外卖

is a must for finding restaurants, food delivery, deals and vouchers, shopping, purchasing tickets, and so much more. Even better, with Meituan you can access its listings through WeChat.

Delivery zones: Across Beijing

Delivery fee: This depends on the restaurant but usually doesn't exceed RMB 10. Meituan Waimai also has a minimum price range for food items that can be delivered.

How to order and pay: Via the app. You need to pay using Baidu Wallet, Alipay, or WeChat Wallet upon ordering, though some restaurants accept cash on delivery.



Eleme 饿了么

Delivery zones: Across Beijing

Delivery fee: Up to RMB 20 (for restaurants) and RMB 30 (for fruit deliveries)

How to order and pay: Via app. You need to pay via Baidu Wallet, Alipay, or WeChat Wallet upon ordering, though some restaurants accept cash on delivery.



SCAN ME



Standalone Restaurants

Want to try family-friendly restaurants that offer delivery instead? Check out our listings and other dining blogs on our website.

Ride Your Way

What you need to know about Beijing's bustling transport options

By Andy Penafuerte III

Photo provided by International School of Beijing (ISB), Lauren B., Grade 9, first published in JingKids March 2017



Transportation in Beijing is convenient and relatively cheap if you can get around the traffic. However, newcomers might shy from hailing taxis on their own due to the language barrier (the prospect of having to speak Mandarin), or a fear of being rejected by a cabbie (due to his fear of having to speak English). Fortunately, ride hailing and rental transport mobile apps have become more commonplace. In this guide, we outline the basics of the most foreigner-friendly private ride hailing and bike rental apps in Beijing.

LOCAL TRANSPORT

BIKES

RIDE HAILING



Despite what seems to be a complicated system, Beijing's public transportation is fairly accessible and cheap. Besides taxi (出租车 *chūzūchē*), the Beijing Subway (北京地铁 *Běijīng dìtiě*) and public buses (公共汽车 *gōnggòng qìchē*) are your best bets when traveling, especially they have English transliteration of subway and bus station names and signs (though they're mostly poorly translated). When riding buses or taking the subway, you need—一卡通 (*Yīkǎtōng* or a public transportation smart card).

LOCAL TRANSPORT

RIDE HAILING

BIKES



Didi Chuxing (Didi)
滴滴打车

Pros:

- Integration into WeChat wallet
- Most convenient way to order a licensed taxi
- Easy input of GPS location and addresses
- Professional chauffeurs or carpool

Cons:

- Communication with drivers might be a hassle especially for foreigners who don't speak Mandarin
- Some cars might smell of smoke

RIDE HAILING

LOCAL TRANSPORT

BIKES



Mobike



Ofo



Bluegogo

Bike sharing apps have taken Beijing roads by storm, having become one of the most convenient ways to commute in the city. For only a minimal rent, you can just scan a QR code on a bike then go. The three-way battle in the bike sharing realm is just getting more and more competitive, but so disruptive that it's only a matter of time before authorities regulate it or worse, impose a crackdown.

Pros:

- Easy "scan and go" model for a minimum rental price of RMB 1 (but you need to register on your app of choice and deposit money for as low as RMB 99)
- As bikes come with built-in locks, you don't need to bring your own.
- Bikes can be located via GPS tracking

Cons:

- Beginner or dilettante bikers just ignore traffic lights and laws
- Many users park bikes in wrong places, or even lock them up!
- Issues with refunding deposits
- Several authorities said misplaced bikes are an "eyesore" and "nuisance" and banned parking on roads

Map It Out

Map apps are a must have especially when traveling, exploring, or even commuting. Foreigners accustomed to Google Maps should be aware that it is blocked and outdated. Instead use Apple Maps (for iOS users) or Baidu Maps (for Android users or those who know and understand Chinese).

Apple Maps is pre-installed in Apple devices while Baidu Maps is free to download. What separates the two are language and reach. Apple Maps' native interface is English and searching either English or Chinese location/building names works fine. But Baidu Maps has more power in Chinese location updates. Other functions in Baidu Maps require you to link your mobile phone number and bank card.



In the Baidu picture above, you will see the blue circle with arrows with 到这去 (dàozhèqù or go the place).



After tapping the circle, you'll see on another page several transport options. Be acquainted with the following keywords (refer to the highlighted bar in the picture below): 专车 (zhuānchē or car hailing), 出租车 (chūzūchē or taxi), 驾车 (jiàchē or car), 公交 (gōngjiāo or public transportation), 步行 (bùxíng or walking), and 骑行 (qíxíng or biking).



For brevity purposes, we'll just use the gōngjiāo and bùxíng options.

The Stayers

Dealing with change when everyone leaves

by Vanessa Jencks

Dr. March Murphy, born in Milwaukee, US, moved around as a kid since his father worked for the US Army. He came to Beijing (as the trailing spouse!) via Philadelphia, San Diego, and Delaware, after graduating with his Ph.D. from Nova Southeastern University in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, US in 1998. He became a psychologist because "When I was a senior in high school I thought I wanted to be a physician but the first time I donated blood I fainted. I went to university not knowing what I would be and when I took my first introductory psychology class I was hooked."



Beijing is such a transient city, but when some students stay at one school their whole lives, cliques of "stayers" are sometimes formed, making it hard for newcomers to fit in and hard for stayers to branch out. Some stayers even decide not to make friends with newcomers out of emotional self-protection. So in this edition of Tough Topics, normally in our Learning section of regular monthly issues, we asked Dr. March Murphy of Beijing United Family Hospital to talk about how students who stay in Beijing can make the most of relationships with friends who leave the country.

What opportunities are missed when a stayer decides to not form friendships with newcomers?

Stayers typically do this because they felt especially sad when a friend has had to say goodbye. The first job as a parent would be to acknowledge the sadness. This type of hurt feeling is normal and will pass naturally with time. Let your child know that the intensity of the emotion could be an indication of how much the friend meant to them.

A general guideline I encourage parents to do is to help their son or daughter problem solve rather than "tell" them how to cope. In this example, parents could have a conversation with their student to elicit the pros and cons to making friends with newcomers. If the student is particularly decided to not make friends with newcomers, keep reinforcing how they have overcome losses before and they have a lot to offer others.

How can a stayer remain emotionally protected even knowing the friend will leave?

Procrastination can sometimes be a good thing; in this case I recommend that the stayer use procrastination in their favor. The friend that stays could procrastinate the reality that the friend will be leaving soon.

The staying friend could make sure that the friend who is leaving gets to do their favorite thing in Beijing again with them or anything else that they want to do before they go. This is important because sometimes when some friends leave there is not a lot of notice and they may not have the chance to do these favorite things one last time. Encourage them to take a lot of pictures to make the memories last. This strategy is a type of protection through building up many positive memories beforehand, allowing friends to look back at the memories and say to each other that they got the most out of the time they had left together.

A word of caution is to not over-plan. If parents put too much effort into the time the friends have together, it will seem forced and artificial. Let the kids spend time together in a non-structured manner to avoid

feeling like "camp." Many schools have a learning trip at the end of the year, and parents could talk to teachers and counselors to see if parting friends could take the same trip together.

How can a strong friendship be maintained from a distance?

The easiest way to maintain a friendship is through video calls. It might be easier to schedule a call, or for others, it might be better to allow it spontaneously. It is important to remind each friend that school schedules can become very busy at times, and it may be impossible to keep to a schedule when the student is overloaded with school work.

Other ways to keep in touch is through social media platforms such as Facebook or WeChat. Your student can see what the other is up to at any time. Some schools have students write blogs; having friends allow access to each other's blogs might be helpful.

Lastly, parents might want to schedule a visit. How about spending spring break in the other friend's new hometown? Tour their new school; see their new favorite sites and restaurants. Having the other friend be the host is a great way for the stayer to get a sense of how their friend is coping and how they might cope when they go to university.

Let's say that a difficult topic comes up after a friend has left. What is the best way to deal with this sort of situation?

This is a challenge. On the one hand, if the topic is very sensitive and highly charged, I tend to recommend incorporating some "distance" (time/space) within the conversation. For example face to face confrontation is the most intense, and sometimes scary, sending a letter in the mail is the least intense. So, if the difficult topic could lead to someone saying something they will later regret, you may want to encourage email as the first way to resolve the topic. This will give each person a chance to read (and re-read) the email before clicking send. It also allows the friend on the other end a chance to do the same.

The difficulty of using "distance" to buffer the emotions is that written communication does not convey body language or tone of voice. These are critical ways we determine meaning in communication. If there is only writing as the form of communication, there is a chance to have misinterpretation. For instance, "What does this emoji mean in this context?" The way to protect against this happening is to stay away from joking about a difficult topic, which can easily be misunderstood and might make the situation worse. "Keep it simple" is a good rule when dealing with difficult topics. Once both parties have emotional reassurances, it is best to have a more direct communication where you could hear the tone of voice and ideally see the other friend's face. This will hopefully give the friends the best chance to resolve the difficulty.

★★★★★ WANTED ★★★★★

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GALAXY
银河 SOHO

Shipping Out

You don't have to do it alone when it's time to move on

By Sijia Chen, Aisling O'Brien, and Andy Penafuerte III



Artwork provided by House of Knowledge, German Middle School, first published in JingKids March 2016

SCAN ME



See more details and discussions about relocating here.

"After death and divorce, moving house is the third most stressful life event," so goes the cliché. With a little help, your move doesn't have to be a source of stress and worry, but it's important to be informed.

Before anything else, know the differences between the terms "moving," "shipping," and "relocation." Chad Forrest, general manager of Asian Express International Movers, says think about moving as one part of the relocation process. "The traditional components of relocation are moving, the home search, visa, immigration, and cross-

cultural training. A moving company focuses on the moving aspects. A relocation company will engage in all separate components in one way or another," he explains.

In your search for the right company and services, remember to get several quotes, make sure communication is clear (even if you have an interpreter), and plan ahead whenever possible. Very little is negotiable in the relocation business, so knowing exactly what you want up front makes the process move more smoothly. Scan the QR code above for more website resources about relocation.

Things to Know When Relocating

Terms of Service

- Most moving companies have a logistics division that moves products rather than household goods or a general cargo division that focuses on large projects and transporting machinery.
- Relocation management companies (RMCs) outsource different stages of the relocation process and are the single point of contact for a client. They might contract with one company to oversee global relocation, another for immigration, and yet another for cross-cultural training.
- Shipping is part of the international moving process in which personal belongings and household goods are transported by either the generally slower but cheaper sea freight or quicker but more expensive air freight to the destination country.

Preparing for the Visual Survey

If you are engaging the services of a relocation or moving company, one of the most important parts of the process is the visual survey. Before the survey, cull as much as possible by donating or selling anything you do not need to save considerable time and money. Keep in mind that the survey is by definition an estimate; this is why it is important to get several quotes. "If two moving companies have estimated a similar volume and the third is way out, then you pretty much have the answer to your question," says Forrest.

Moving on a Budget

The best thing families can do to save money is to get the process started and get estimates as early as possible. During less busy times of the year, contacting the moving company at least two months in advance is optimal. If you have the flexibility to choose when to move, you are more likely to get a good deal if you relocate during off-peak months in the fall or early spring and winter rather than June or July.

Also consider cutting down unnecessary daily expenses and making a moving budget several months before the intended relocation date to

prepare for unforeseen costs. Watch out for hidden fees, especially if you are planning the move yourself. Each stage in the relocation process carries its own costs, so be sure to clarify exactly which services and conditions are included in a quote: door to door, door to port, port to port, air versus sea freight, among others.

Challenges in Importing

Susie Hetherington, a teacher in Beijing, has had a bad experience in importing shipments. "No one informed us that China taxes all items for the [second shipment into] China, [and that] cost us USD 6,000," she said. Another expat mother, who refused to be named, shared that her family ended up paying RMB 30,000 in taxes. The reason? Their shipment was named under her (she's on a dependent visa) instead of her husband (who has a working visa).

In these situations, Asian Tigers Mobility advises expats to prepare all necessary documents and ask the shipping company about further requirements and taxes. "Full duties and taxes on every single item are applicable if the expat does not have their Chinese work and residence permit available. The moving company can change the shipper's name [to the one with these permits]. However, this has to be done before customs clearance takes place and may result in a delay with the shipment. These documents have to be valid up to 365 days and issued from Beijing," says Wilson Fan, Beijing manager of Moving Services unit of Asian Tigers.

He stresses that if an expat is importing a second shipment into China, just like Hetherington did, everything in that shipment is subject to additional duties and taxes. "The [added] duty and taxes should be a result of improper import documents." Fan instructs clients to choose a moving company not on price alone, but also consider the quality of service. In that way, he says bad experiences relocating can be avoided.

Services Offered	Moving Company	Shipping Company	Relocation Company
Packing, transporting, and unpacking (domestic)	X	X	X
Packing, transporting, freight forwarding, and unpacking (International)		X	X
Pre-move services (visa and immigration assistance, neighborhood scouting trip, etc.)			X
Housing assistance (temporary accommodations, finding a home, etc.)			X
Destination services (pet relocation, repatriation, finding a school, police registration, setting up utilities, language classes, etc.)			X

* For full details on services offered, contact the listed moving, shipping, and relocation companies directly.

Resources

Allied Pickfords has more than 800 locations worldwide in over 40 countries. In China, it has eight offices in major cities including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen. It offers international, domestic, local and office moving services, with a move coordinator to assist throughout the process from door-to-door. (5870 1133, www.alliedpickfords.com.cn)

Asian Express International Movers is a FIDI*/FAIM** accredited moving company founded in 1979 with four locations in Hong Kong, Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou. The website includes customs tips for various destinations, an import duty calculator, insurance forms, and more. (8580 1471, www.aemovers.com.hk)

Asian Tigers Mobility is a leading provider of international move management and relocation solu-

tions. Its team of trusted and experienced professional movers can handle all aspects of moving by providing customers visa, immigration, move management, home search, and destination programs. Additionally, it provides tenancy management, and settling services designed to ensure customers experience a hassle-free relocation. (6415 1188, china@asiantigers-mobility.com, www.asiantigers-mobility.com)

Crown Relocations Beijing offers domestic and international transportation of household goods, home and school search, storage, expense management, policy consulting and program administration, online tracking tools, transit protection, and intercultural services. It also provides services for corporations, diplomats, and private customers. (5801 8088, beijing@crowrelo.com, www.crowrelo.com)

Links Moving Beijing is established in Hong Kong in 1997, and has a full range of moving services and storage options. Its website offers info like freight container sizes and details; online quotes available for smaller shipments. Keep an eye out for specials, such as free air freight with certain container sizes or percentage discounts for early booking during peak seasons. (8447 7496, www.linksmoving.asia)

Santa Fe Relocation Services Beijing offers moving, relocation, real estate and visa and immigration services for individuals and companies moving to China and around the world. First established in Hong Kong in 1980, it has since then expanded to become a leading global mobility services company with operations in all six continents. (6947 0688, beijing@santaferelo.com, www.santaferelo.com)

Animals Embarking

Make the move with your beloved pets

By Andy Penafuerte III

Many expats wouldn't dream of moving without knowing that their beloved family pet could go with them, but the logistics and paperwork involved in relocating an animal to or from Beijing – coupled with the potential language barrier – are enough to worry even the most efficient planner. Whether you choose to outsource the process or go it alone, rest assured that relocating with pets can be straightforward with research and preparation.

With help from the International Center for Veterinary Services (ICVS), we summarize the latest regulations and procedures.

***Managing Editor's Note: Though some expats consider rehoming pets to be part of the process of moving, we believe pets are forever family and should move out of China instead of abandoned or rehomed.*



Exiting China

(for Beijing-based owners)



Bringing into China



Moving to Areas with Quarantine

Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan, Singapore and other places with strict quarantine controls require import permits and EU ISO compliant microchips. The US, Canada, and EU countries only require rabies vaccination and microchips prior to entry. The specifics for importing pets are discussed on our website.



Mandatory exit health examination to obtain an official Exit Health Certificate

After your pets have completed rabies and all other vaccinations and have obtained the official "vaccination red books," pet owners may take their pets for the official exit health examination at the designated government Quarantine Bureau animal hospital, Guan Shang, seven days prior to the animal's departure date from China.

Owners should bring the pet, the vaccination red book, passport or photocopy (one passport per pet), rabies antibody titre test report (for EU and other countries that require the test) and cash (about RMB 1,200+ per pet) at the time of the visit.

12 months to at least 30 days before departure

8-12 months before departure

No more than 7 days before departure

After receiving the official exit health certificate



Vaccinations and Immunity Certificate

Animals departing China must be rabies vaccinated at an officially designated animal rabies vaccination hospital in China and must have the official "PRC (Beijing) Animal Health and Immunity Certificate." (e.g., vaccination red book) with the stamp/chop of the issuing hospital.

Owners are also recommended to keep good records of the pet's local vaccinations upon adoption or arrival in Beijing.



Animal Exit Permit

To obtain the official "Animal Exit Permit," take the "vaccination red book," the exit health certificate, your passport, and RMB 200 (exit permit fee) to the Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau. It is not necessary to bring your pet to apply for the exit permit. The exit permit is usually processed within two business days and is valid for 14 days once issued. Pet owners have 14 days to take pets overseas once the exit permit is received.



4 Documents for Bringing a Pet into China

- 1) A work visa. Each passport is limited to one pet.
- 2) Proof of a recent rabies vaccination. The shot must have been administered between 30 days and 12 months before entry.
- 3) An official certificate to export your pet from your country of origin. Every country has different regulations. Usually, the Agriculture or Quarantine Bureau or an equivalent government agency oversees import and export of animals.
- 4) A health certificate issued by a veterinarian in your country of origin attesting to the health of your pet.



Resources

International Center for Veterinary Services (ICVS) 北京新天地国际动物医院 has a pet import and export service center. The vet hospital also holds free monthly information sessions. Open 9am-6pm daily. (8456 1939/40/41, www.icvsasia.com) Rm 13-16 Rongke Ganlan Chengshang Jie, Futongxi Dajie, Wangjing, Chaoyang. 朝阳区望京阜通西大街, 融科橄榄城商业街13-16号

Doctors Beck and Stone Health Care Center 思威(北京)国际动物医院 is a chain of animal hospitals staffed with Western and Chinese vets and staff. Branches double as emergency centers with ambulances available. www.doctorsbeckandstone.com

Globy Pet Relocation helps relocate pets from anywhere in the world, including obtaining required papers, arranging flights, and delivering pets. Mon-Fri 8.30am-5.30pm. (8762 5020, www.globypetrelo.com) Rm 26B, Block 2, Bauhinia Court, 30 Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang. 朝阳区东三环北路30号紫荆豪庭2座26B

Beijing Guanshang Animal Hospital 北京观赏动物医院 is open daily 8.30am-10.30pm. Its 24hr emergency services are available after 5pm (including holidays). (6237 1359, Chinese only: 6204 9631/9742, www.chinapet.com.cn) 7 Beisanhuan Zhonglu, Xicheng. 西城区北三环中路7号



Scan this QR code to get more information about pet relocation.



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☒ a DIY cupcake gift

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east

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Feast is at No. 22 Jiuxianqiao Road, Chaoyang District, Beijing.

*Prices are subject to 10% service charge and 6% VAT on the total bill.

SHANGHAI HOTELS

The Geankoplis Family Bids Farewell to Beijing

Text by Pauline van Hasselt, Photos by Dave's Studio

The time has come for the Geankoplis family to leave the hustle and bustle of China, after 4 years in Beijing. First arriving as a couple, Nick and Lindsay will leave as a family of three to move back home to the US and take their careers to the next level. Lindsay, who's a secondary art teacher at Yew Chung International School of Beijing (YCIS Beijing), is ready to pursue her portrait photography business full time. Nick, a professor of ceramic art and design for industry, has gotten a position at Kansas State University to teach Art and Design in Ceramics.

Favorite Weekend Activity

Getting out to walk or explore when the air is nice. We strap the baby in the carrier and set out for little adventures, but we're always sure to start with some bagels from Mrs. Shanens!

Best Kid's Clothes Shop

H&M's baby section at Indigo, sales rack at Baby Gap and the Big Clothing Swap in Shunyi.

Best Daytrip

Mutianyu Great Wall

Favorite Chinese Restaurant

Baoyuan dumplings. It's where Lindsay fell in love with dumplings... prior to this place she wasn't entirely sold on their texture.

Best Shop for Groceries

Produce from the Chinese markets and then we get all our comforts of home from Jenny Wangs.

Favorite Non-Chinese Restaurant

Sanfuzhe, a Korean Restaurant in Wangjing. It's downstairs and it has a nice wait staff and vibe. The food is knockout.

What will you miss about Beijing?

The food, the people, and the craziness.

What will you not miss about Beijing?

The pollution and the traffic.

Tips for newcomers in Beijing

Be patient, flexible, and open-minded. China has taught us both to be really flexible and adaptable.

What do you wish you would have done different about your stay in China?

Traveled together more throughout China and actually studied Chinese.





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www.britishschoolbeijing.com

Sanlitun - Downtown Location (Ages 1 to 11)

No. 5 Xiliujie, Sanlitun Road
Chaoyang District, Beijing, 100027
+86 10 8532 3088
sltadmissions@bsbsanlitun.com

Shunyi - Expat Community Location (Ages 2 to 18)

South Side, No. 9 An Hua Street
Shunyi District, Beijing, 101318
+86 10 8047 3558
admissions@bsbshunyi.com



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