

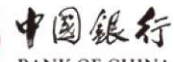
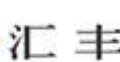


CBBC Business Trip Tips

Travelling to China can be an enjoyable experience. In order to make sure your trip goes smoothly, CBBC has prepared a list of things to watch out for. While not exhaustive, it is important that you take these points into consideration both before and during your stay in China.

Before you leave: Preparing for your Trip

- **Remember to apply for a visa:** Any travel to China will necessitate obtaining a visa. For business trips, one will typically apply for a business (F) visa. The processing time for Chinese visas is typically 4 working days (though this can be expedited with a premium charge).
 - There are three Chinese Visa Centres in the UK (London, Manchester and Edinburgh)
 - Alternatively, if one is willing to pay a premium, a visa agency can handle the entire process. Agents can be particularly useful in making sure all the documentation is in order.
- **Change money:** China's currency is the Renminbi. It is a good idea to change some money before you come to China. It is also important to note that outside large hotels, vendors will rarely accept international credit/debit cards. However, there many of the larger banks will have ATMs that accept international credit/debit cards (at a fee).



ATMs that will accept foreign bank cards

- **Pack wisely:** Weather varies dramatically across China. Some parts of the country can be extremely warm/humid or cold depending on the season. It is important to pack appropriately to ensure a decent level of comfort throughout the duration of one's stay in China.
- **Bring power adapters:** China operates on a 220V/50HZ system. Chinese sockets are similar to those found in the USA.
- **Keep in mind that internet access is restricted:** You will experience restricted access on certain foreign websites (for example, Facebook, Youtube, Twitter).
- **Arrange travel insurance:** It's better to be safe than sorry, so you should pre-arrange travel insurance before your trip to China. Ideally, make sure your travel insurance covers international hospitals.
- **Remember the time difference:** The whole of mainland China is under one time zone, China Standard Time (CST) (GMT+8). CST is 7 hours ahead of British Summer Time. This is important to keep in mind when calling business partners or your prospective hosts in China.
- **Schedule a jet-lag recovery period:** Given the time difference, it is a good idea to allow for some time to acclimatise to the time difference.
- **Have emergency contact information prepared:** This can be someone of your choosing or CBBC.





- **Locate the closest embassy/consulate:** Keep the embassy's contact details on hand in case you encounter a situation that requires consular support. The UK maintains a presence in the following locations:
 - **Beijing (British Embassy):** +86 0(10)5192 4000
 - **Shanghai (Consulate-General):** +86 (0)21 3279 2000
 - **Guangzhou (Consulate-General):** +86 (0)20 8314 3000
 - **Chongqing (Consulate-General):** +86 (0)23 6369 1400/6369 1500
- **Read the Overseas Market Introduction Service (OMIS):** This is extremely important; as it will help you become familiarised with the companies you will meet.
- **Arrange a translator:** As English is not widely spoken in China, arranging for a translator may be useful. CBBC offers a translator service for an additional fee.
- **Bring plenty of business cards:** Exchanging business cards is a frequent activity when conducting business in China. It is also recommended to print double-sided English/Chinese cards to give to your Chinese counterparts.
- **Research Chinese local customs/practices:** You will impress your guest if you familiarise yourself with some of the more nuanced traditions of the cities you will be visiting (*e.g. In Guangdong, it is customary to wash bowls and cutlery before eating – this is typical in restaurants as well*).

Once in China: Practical Issues

- **Taxis:** Have the address of your hotel and destination written/printed in Chinese characters (汉字). Taxi drivers will usually not be able to understand English writing or Romanised Chinese written with the Latin alphabet (*hànyǔ pīnyīn*), and won't know where to take you. Additionally, remember that it is very difficult to get a taxi on rainy days and during rush hour, and big Chinese cities can get very congested at these times. Never take unlicensed taxis ("black taxis"), as they are illegal.
- **Account for irregular travel times:** Whether travelling within a large city or cross-country, it is a good idea to account for delays and longer than usual travel times. This is especially true in cities such as Beijing or Shanghai where traffic can increase transit times considerably. Generally speaking, the trains in China run on time, but planes are often delayed. The new high-speed rail network (with an average speed of 200 km/h) is a fast and reliable choice.
- **Chinese roads:** Crossing the road can be precarious for someone unfamiliar with Chinese traffic laws and how they're applied. Remember, cars do not have to stop at zebra crossings, and they can turn right on red lights even if there is a green man at a pedestrian crossing. Many roads have cycle and motorcycle lanes, for which traffic rules rarely apply. Be careful, and when in doubt, follow a local.
- **ATMs:** Unlike in the UK, you will receive your cash first, and then the card. Don't leave without both!

Once in China: Business Meetings, Communications & Social Etiquette

- **Business card etiquette:** Always give and receive business cards with both hands and a short bow. Also, when receiving a business card, don't put it immediately in your pocket, as this can be



portrayed as flippant. Take a moment to inspect it and then place it gently in your pocket or portfolio.

- **Speak slowly and clearly:** English will not be your counterparts' first language. Speaking slowly and in a simple (but not patronising) manner will help ensure that you convey your message effectively. Try also to limit using British humour/sarcasm as Chinese people will likely find this strange or rude.
- **Avoid taboo subjects:** It is unwise to bring up politically sensitive subjects such as Tibet, Diaoyu Islands, Xinjiang, bribery, human rights and jokes of an adult nature.
- **Avoid insulting or being condescending to people, especially in front of their peers:** 'Saving face' is one of the most important aspects of Chinese culture. Even inadvertently causing your host/business partners to lose face can be disastrous for your relationship with them.
- **Physical contact:** Although shaking hands has become the norm for business greetings in China, it's often deemed unnecessary on social occasions. Avoid physical contact such as hugs and back patting.
- **Be patient:** Business negotiations can be drawn out considerably longer than in the West.

Once in China: Hospitality & Dining

- **When at business dinners/lunches:**
 - **Food is shared:** In most situations, food is ordered for the whole table for everyone to share. It would be considered very odd to keep the tastiest dishes to yourself (this rule doesn't apply when eating Western food).
 - **Chopsticks:** Be aware many restaurants that will not have Western-style cutlery.
 - **Don't be alarmed by drinking:** Drinking of alcohol is common at business dinners in China, as alcohol is thought to show an individual's 'true face'. If you do not to drink, make this clear to your host before dining (be prepared to hold your ground). The traditional Chinese liquor is "Bai'jiu", though beer also very common.
 - **Guests eat first:** Your host may insist that you, as the guest, are the first to try each dish.
 - **Expect your host to offer you excessive amounts of food:** It is considered hospitable to invite your guest to eat to excess.
 - **Arguing to pay the bill:** At the end of the meal, Chinese people will usually fight over paying the bill. This is done to demonstrate their generosity.



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- **If invited to a private dinner, bring a gift:** Gift giving is part of Chinese culture, including at business meetings. If invited to somebody's home for dinner (some fruit, for example, will suffice). Ideally, any gift should be presented in a gift box or a gift bag. Don't be disappointed if your host doesn't immediately open it and comment on its attractiveness/practicality. They may do so in private later to avoid looking greedy.
- **Avoid gifts that bear negative connotations:** Items which may raise eyebrows include: clocks (=death), red ink (=sever relations) or books (=losing).





Basic Mandarin

The written language is uniform throughout China, however, as in any other country, Chinese dialects vary from region to region. The standard language, Putonghua (often called Mandarin), is based on the Beijing dialect and is spoken by most people across the country. This is the language of business and if you would like to learn some Chinese, Putonghua is the language to study. There are numerous free-to-access websites designed to help you learn Putonghua, and some simple phrases are below.

English Phrase	Pinyin (Romanised Chinese)	Phonetic Pronunciation	Chinese Characters
<i>Hello</i>	<i>Ni hao</i>	<i>Nee how</i>	你好
<i>How are you?</i>	<i>Ni hao ma?</i>	<i>Nee how ma?</i>	你好吗?
<i>Goodbye</i>	<i>Zaijian</i>	<i>Sigh jyen</i>	再见
<i>Thank you</i>	<i>Xiexie</i>	<i>Share share</i>	谢谢
<i>You're welcome</i>	<i>Bukeqi</i>	<i>Boo ke chee</i>	不客气
<i>Sorry</i>	<i>Duibuqi</i>	<i>Dway boo chee</i>	对不起
<i>No problem (it's okay)</i>	<i>Mei guanxi</i>	<i>May gwan shee</i>	没关系
<i>I would like to go to...</i>	<i>Wo xiang qu...</i>	<i>Wor sheang choo</i>	我想去
<i>Hotel</i>	<i>Jiudian</i>	<i>Jeew Dyen</i>	酒店
<i>How much is...</i>	<i>Duo shao qian</i>	<i>Dwo shao chee-yen</i>	多少钱
<i>Too expensive</i>	<i>Tai guile</i>	<i>Tie gway-la</i>	太贵了
<i>Toilet</i>	<i>Cesuo</i>	<i>Tsir swor</i>	厕所