

Transport	210
Air 210	
Bicycle 212	
Bus 213	
Car 214	
Taxi 214	
Subway & Light Railway 215	
Train 216	
Practicalities	217
Accommodation 217	
Business 217	
Business Hours 218	
Children 218	
Climate 219	
Courses 219	
Customs 220	
Discount Cards 220	
Electricity 220	
Embassies & Consulates 220	
Emergency 221	
Gay & Lesbian Travellers 221	
Health 222	
Holidays & Festivals 223	
Internet Access 224	
Legal Matters 225	
Maps 225	
Medical Services 225	
Metric System 225	
Money 226	
Moving to/from Běijīng 227	
Newspapers & Magazines 227	
Pharmacies 228	
Photography 228	
Post 228	
Radio 228	
Safety 229	
Scams 229	
Taxes 229	
Telephone 229	
Television 231	
Time 231	
Tipping 231	
Toilets 231	
Tourist Information 231	
Travellers with Disabilities 232	
Visas 232	
Women Travellers 234	
Work 234	

TRANSPORT

As it's the national capital, getting to Běijīng is straightforward. Rail and air connections link the capital to virtually every point in China, and fleets of buses head to abundant destinations. Using Běijīng as a starting point to explore the rest of the land makes perfect sense.

Central Běijīng's roads may be of orderly design, but getting around town can be grueling as the huge distances and overburdened transport options make navigation exhausting. The city is undergoing rapid development to haul its transport infrastructure into the modern age, but until the new lines of the subway are up and running, getting around Běijīng will remain an effort. Road construction and widening has eased vehicular flows, but progress has been reversed by the rapidly multiplying number of cars (approaching three million) in the capital, which consequently slows down the city's buses and taxis. Běijīng's mushrooming population over the past decade has only added to the burden on the creaking transport infrastructure.

For the moment, taking the subway is the surest way of reaching your destination on time. If you have to take to the road, jump in a taxi. They are cheap and efficient, but avoid the rush hour and prepare for incessant traffic jams. Alternatively, combine the underground with taxi rides. Riding the extensive bus network is very cheap and buses are plentiful, but traffic can slow things to a crawl.

Tackling Běijīng by bicycle is a fascinating and effective way of getting about. Walking about on foot is only realistic in the centre of town and over short distances – some of Běijīng's roads seemingly go on to the ends of the earth.

Flights, tours and rail tickets can be booked online at www.lonelyplanet.com/travel_services.

AIR

Tickets for Chinese carriers flying from Běijīng can be booked through most mid-range and top-end hotels, at any one of the ubiquitous ticket offices (航空售票处;

hángkōng shòupiào chù) around town (one can be found to the left of the entrance to Beijing Train Station) or from the **Aviation Building** (Mínháng Yíngyè Dàshà; Map pp266–7; ☎ 6656 9118; ☎ domestic 6601 3336, international 6456 3604; 15 Xichang'an Jie; ☎ 7am-midnight). A downtown check-in service desk is situated just inside the door, available for passengers with carry-on luggage only (☎ 8am–5pm; domestic flights only); you must check in at least three hours prior to departure.

Make inquiries for all airlines at Běijīng's **Capital Airport** (☎ 6512 8931, or 962580 from Běijīng only). Call ☎ 6459 9567 for information on international arrivals and departures and ☎ 1689 6969 for information on domestic flights, or click on www.bcia.com.cn/en/index.jsp or the websites of individual airlines listed below.

Airlines

Chinese carriers in Běijīng include:

Air China (Map pp266–7; ☎ 6601 7755; www.airchina.com.cn; Aviation Building, 15 Xichang'an Jie)

China Eastern Airlines (☎ 6464 1166; www.ce-air.com)

China Southern Airlines (☎ 950 333; www.cs-air.com; 2 Dongsanhuan Nanlu)

Shanghai Airlines (☎ 6456 9019; www.shanghai-air.com in Chinese; Bldg 3, Capital Airport)

International airlines in Běijīng include:

Air Canada (Map p264; ☎ 6468 2001; www.aircanada.com; Room C201, Lufthansa Center, 50 Liangmaqiao Lu)

Air France (Map p264; ☎ 4008 808 808; www.airfrance.com.cn; Room 1606-1611, Bldg 1, Kuntai International Mansion, 12A Chaoyangmenwai Dajie)

British Airways (Map pp268–9; ☎ 8511 5599; www.british-airways.com; Room 210, 2nd fl, SciTech Tower, 22 Jianguomenwai Dajie)

Dragon Air (Map pp268–9; ☎ 6518 2533; www.dragonair.com; Room 1710, Office Tower 1, Henderson Center, 18 Jianguomennei Dajie)

Japan Airlines (Map pp268–9; ☎ 6513 0888; www.jal.com; 1st fl, Changfugong Office Bldg, Hotel New Otani, 26a Jianguomenwai Dajie)

KLM (Map pp268–9; ☎ 6505 3505; www.klm.com; W501, West Wing, China World Trade Center, 1 Jianguomenwai Dajie)

Lufthansa Airlines (Map p264; ☎ 6468 8838; www.lufthansa.com; Room 101, Lufthansa Center, 50 Liangmaqiao Lu)

Qantas Airways (Map p264; ☎ 6467 3337; www.qantas.com.au; Room 120, Lufthansa Center, 50 Liangmaqiao Lu)

Singapore Airlines (Map pp268–9; ☎ 6505 2233; www.singaporeair.com; Room L109, China World Trade Center, 1 Jianguomenwai Dajie)

Thai Airways International (Map pp268–9; ☎ 8515 0088; www.thaiairways.com; Units 303, Level 3, Office Tower 3, Oriental Plaza, 1 Dongchang'an Jie)

United Airlines (Map p264; ☎ 800 810 8282, 6463 1111; www.united.com; Lufthansa Center, 50 Liangmaqiao Lu)

Airports

Běijīng's Capital Airport is 27km northeast of the city centre. The arrivals hall is on the first floor, the departure hall is on the second floor. For currency exchange, several banks can be found in the arrivals hall. They're open 24 hours and offer a similar exchange rate to banks in the city and probably a better rate than your hotel. There are also several ATMs with international access, where you can draw local currency. A small post office is in the departure hall as you enter the airport, where you can buy a Běijīng map. Phones are at each end of the arrivals hall. Left-luggage facilities (from Y5) are on the first floor, where luggage can be stored for a maximum of seven days. Trolleys are available for free. A small Airport Clinic is on the first floor.

There is a branch of the **Beijing Tourist Information Center** (see p231) in the arrivals hall, where you can pick up a map, literature on Běijīng or book a hotel room. Other desks in the arrivals hall also provide hotel bookings, and you can often obtain substantial discounts on accommodation.

Airport restaurants and shops are generally overpriced. If you're doing last-minute souvenir shopping, try to do it in town.

International/domestic departure tax is Y90/50 and is included in the price of your air ticket.

A colossal new third terminal building is being constructed alongside Capital Airport. A monumental building project designed by Norman Foster and due to be completed in 2007, the new terminal is essential to the airport's ambitions to deal with 60 million arrivals by 2015 and is the world's largest-ever airport expansion project. Construction on a second airport is also planned to commence before 2010, although the location of the new airport is still up in the air.

GETTING INTO TOWN

Běijīng's **Capital Airport** is 27km from the centre of town; about 45 minutes to one hour by car, depending on traffic.

A rail link from Capital Airport to Dongzhimen in Běijīng is under construction, and due for completion in time for the 2008 Olympic Games. Passengers will be able to transfer to the subway system from Dongzhimen station.

Several express bus routes (☎ 6459 4375, 6459 4376) run regularly to Běijīng every 10 to 15 minutes during operating hours. Tickets on all lines are Y16. Line 3 (first bus 7.30am, last bus meets arrival of last flight) is the most popular with travellers, running to the Beijing International Hotel and Beijing Train Station via Chaoyangmen. Line 2 (first bus 7am, last bus meets arrival of last flight) runs to the Aviation Building (opposite) in Xidan, via Dongzhimen. Line 1 (first/last bus 7.30am/10.30pm) runs to Fangzhuang, via Dabeyiao, where you can get onto the subway Line 1 at Guomao.

Public bus 359 (Y3) runs to Dongzhimen from the airport, from where you can get on the subway.

From the city to the airport, the most useful place to catch the bus is at the west door of the Beijing International Hotel (Map pp268–9), where buses leave every half-hour between 6am and 7.30pm (Y16). You can also take a bus (☎ 6459 4375/4376; Y16; one hour) from the eastern end of the Aviation Building (the CAAC ticket office) on Xichang'an Jie in Xidan district; departures are every 30 minutes between 5.45am and 7.30pm.

Many top-end hotels run shuttle buses from the airport to their hotels. Check at the hotel desks at the airport upon arrival or check with the hotel beforehand. You do not necessarily have to be a guest of the hotel to use these, but you do have to pay for the service. The price for the minibuses is higher than that for the regular airport buses.

A taxi (using its meter) should cost between Y80 and Y100 from the airport to the centre of town, including the Y15 airport expressway toll; make sure the driver uses the meter. Queue for your taxi outside and never take a taxi from touts inside the arrivals halls, where a well-established illegal taxi operation at the airport attempts to lure weary travellers into a Y300-plus ride to the city (one man acts as a taxi pimp for a squad of drivers).

Don't expect to be able to rent a car at the airport, unless you have a residence permit and a Chinese driving licence.

CLIMATE CHANGE & TRAVEL

Climate change is a serious threat to the ecosystems that humans rely upon, and air travel is the fastest-growing contributor to the problem. Lonely Planet regards travel, overall, as a global benefit, but believes we all have a responsibility to limit our personal impact on global warming.

Flying & Climate Change

Pretty much every form of motor transport generates CO₂ (the main cause of human-induced climate change) but planes are far and away the worst offenders, not just because of the sheer distances they allow us to travel, but because they release greenhouse gases high into the atmosphere. The statistics are frightening: two people taking a return flight between Europe and the US will contribute as much to climate change as an average household's gas and electricity consumption over a whole year.

Carbon Offset Schemes

Climatecare.org and other websites use 'carbon calculators' that allow travellers to offset the greenhouse gases they are responsible for with contributions to energy-saving projects and other climate-friendly initiatives in the developing world – including projects in India, Honduras, Kazakhstan and Uganda.

Lonely Planet, together with Rough Guides and other concerned partners in the travel industry, supports the carbon offset scheme run by climatecare.org. Lonely Planet offsets all of its staff and author travel.

For more information check out our website: www.lonelyplanet.com.

To the Rest of China

Daily flights connect Běijīng to every major city in China. There might not be daily flights to smaller cities throughout the country, but there should be at least one flight a week. You can buy tickets from the Aviation Building (p211), one of the numerous airline offices in Běijīng or through your hotel. Discounts for domestic flights are generally available (full fare may be effective at weekends and public holidays, however). The domestic airfares listed here are approximate only and represent the non-discounted air fare from Běijīng.

Destination	One-way fare (Y)
Chéngdū	1560
Dàlián	710
Guǎngzhōu	1700
Guilin	1790
Hángzhōu	1150
Hong Kong	2860
Kūnmíng	1810
Lhasa	2430
Nánjīng	1010
Qīngdǎo	710
Shànghǎi	1130
Ūrūmqi	2410
Wūhàn	1080
Xī'ān	1050

BICYCLE

Flat as a mah jong table, widely supplied with bicycle lanes and riddled with alleys, central Běijīng is ideally suited to cyclists. You will need to keep your wits about you on the main thoroughfares, however, as the exponential increase in vehicle numbers has made cycling potentially hazardous. Cycling through Běijīng's often car-free *hútòng* (alleyways) is far safer and it's an experience not to be missed (see p118), although pollution may have you gagging (join the locals donning surgical masks; 面罩; *miànzhào*) and the spring dust storms can be simply stupendous.

Take care when you're on your bike. Hazards include unpredictable vehicle movements, pedestrians crossing the road impulsively and with little warning, icy roads in winter and fierce sand storms in spring. Nighttime brings its own risks, as few Chinese bikes have lights and both pedestrians and cyclists tend to wear dark clothes. Pedestrians are furthermore regularly ejected onto the road by clutter on the pavement. Remember you will be on the lowliest transportation device in town and buses, lorries, taxis, cars and scooters will all honk at you, in that pecking order (just ignore them).

Parking your bike in one of the more secure pavement bike parking lots found all over town is around Y0.50. Very cheap

roadside repairs can be found down Běijīng's numerous alleyways.

Purchase is straightforward and you can pick up a mountain bike for as little as Y250 at super/hypermarkets such as Carrefour. Bikes need to be taxed, with a disc displayed (the bike shop will usually arrange this, and hypermarkets have a counter for this).

Hire

Budget hotels are good places to rent bicycles, which cost around Y20 to Y30 per day (plus deposit); rental at upmarket hotels is far more expensive. Tourist-oriented rental outfits can also be found.

A handy **bike rental outfit** (Map p262) in the centre of town is on the pavement along Jinyu Hutong, just west of the Novotel Peace Hotel; a similar **bike rental outfit** with similar prices can be found opposite St Joseph's Church (p93). Further bike rental can be found at **Bird of Freedom Bicycle Rental** (Map pp268–9; Zixíngchē Chūzū Fúwùzhàn; ☎ 6313 1010; 47 Qianmen Dajie; per hour/day Y15-20/50-60, deposit Y300-600; ☎ 7am-8pm), opposite the Quanjude Roast Duck Restaurant, and from the shop at 77 Tieshu Xiejie (Map pp266–7; Y20 from 7am-11pm; deposit Y200). The expensive **Universal Bicycle Rental Outlet** (Map p262), has outlets in the vicinity of Qianhai Lake. Tandems (*shuāng rén zìxíngchē*) are Y20 per hour, single bikes Y10 per hour (Y500 deposit). When renting a bike it's safest to use your own lock(s) in order to prevent bicycle theft, a common problem in Běijīng.

BUS

Relying on buses (公共汽车; *gōnggòng qìchē*) to get swiftly from A to B can be frustrating unless it's a short hop. Getting a seat can also be impossible, especially during rush hour. Fares are typically Y1 depending on the distance, although air-conditioned buses are slightly more expensive (Y2). You generally pay the conductor, rather than the driver, once aboard the bus. Běijīng's fleet of aged leviathans is busily being replaced with modern low-pollution green buses running on compressed natural gas (CNG).

Buses run from 5.30am to 11pm daily or thereabouts, and stops are few and far between. Routes on bus signs are all in Chinese, with no English. It's important to

work out how many stops you need to go before boarding. If you can read Chinese, a useful publication (Y5) is available from kiosks listing all the Běijīng bus lines; alternatively, tourist maps of Běijīng illustrate some of the bus routes.

One- and two-digit bus numbers are city-core; 100-series buses are trolleys; 200-series are night buses (*yèbān gōnggòng qìchē*); 300-series are suburban lines and 900-series are long distance buses. Mini-buses (*xiǎobā*) follow some routes and cost from around Y2. If you work out how to combine bus and subway connections you'll find the subway will speed up much of the trip.

Special double-decker buses run in a circle around the city centre and are slightly more expensive, but spare you the traumas of normal public buses and you should be able to get a seat.

The following double-decker routes are useful:

1 Beijing West Train Station, heading east on Fuxingmen Dajie, Xichang'an Jie, Dongchang'an Jie, Jianguomennei Dajie, Jianguomenwai Dajie, Jianguo Lu, Bawang fen (intersection of Jianguo Lu and Xidawang Lu)

2 Shangxing Qianmen, north on Dongdan Beidajie, Dongsì Nandajie, Dongsì Beidajie, Lama Temple, Zhonghua Minzu Yuan (Ethnic Minorities Park), Asian Games Village

3 Jijia Miao (the southwest extremity of the Third Ring Rd), Grand View Garden, Leyou Hotel, Jinguang New World Hotel, Tuanjiehu Park, Agricultural Exhibition Center, Lufthansa Center

4 Beijing Zoo, Exhibition Center, Second Ring Rd, Holiday Inn Downtown, Yuetan Park, Fuxingmen Dajie flyover, Qianmen Xidajie, Qianmen

Useful standard bus routes include:

1 Runs along Chang'an Jie, Jianguomenwai Dajie and Jianguomennei Dajie: Sihuzhan, Bawangfen, Yongnanli, Dongdan, Xidan, Muxidi, Junshi Bowuguan, Gongzhufen, Maguanying

4 Runs along Chang'an Jie, Jianguomenwai Dajie and Jianguomennei Dajie: Gongzhufen, Junshi Bowuguan, Muxidi, Xidan, Tiananmen, Dongdan, Yongnanli, Bawangfen, Sihuzhan

5 Deshengmen, Dianmen, Beihai Park, Xihuamen, Zhongshan Park, Qianmen

15 Beijing Zoo, Fuxingmen, Xidan, Hepingmen, Liulichang, Tianqiao

20 Beijing South Train Station, Tianqiao, Qianmen, Wangfujing, Dongdan, Beijing Train Station

44 **outer ring** Xijiekou, Xizhimen Train Station, Fuchengmen, Fuxingmen, Changchunjie, Xuanwumen, Qianmen, Taijichang, Chongwenmen, Dongbianmen, Chaoyangmen, Dongzhimen, Andingmen, Deshengmen, Xijiekou

54 Beijing Train Station, Dongbianmen, Chongwenmen, Zhengyi Lu, Qianmen, Dazhalan (Dashilar), Temple of Heaven Park, Yongdingmen, Haihutun

103 Beijing Train Station, Dengshikou, China Art Gallery, Forbidden City (north entrance), Beihai Park, Fuchengmen, Beijing Zoo

332 Beijing Zoo, Weigongcun, Renmin Daxue, Zhongguan-cun, Haidian, Beijing University, Summer Palace
For more information, you can check the Beijing Public Transport website: www.bjbus.com/english/default.htm.

To the Rest of China

No international buses serve Běijīng, but there are plenty of long-distance domestic routes. Although most domestic travel is by train, roads are improving, buses are cheaper and it's easier to book a seat. Sleeper buses are widely available and recommended for overnight journeys.

Běijīng has numerous long-distance bus stations (长途汽车站; *chángtú qìchēzhàn*), positioned roughly on the city perimeter in the direction you want to head. The most useful bus stations for travellers are: **Bawangfen long-distance bus station** (Bāwángfēn Chángtú Kèyùanzhàn; Map pp268–9) in the east of town, **Sihui long-distance bus station** (Sihui Chángtú Qìchēzhàn; Map pp258–9), **Luliqiao long-distance bus station** (Liùlǐqiáo Chángtúzhàn; Map pp266–7; ☎ 8383 1717) southwest of Beijing West Train station, and **Lianhuachi long-distance bus station** (Liánhuāchǐ Chángtú Qìchēzhàn; Map pp266–7). Other important stations are at **Zhaogongkou** (Map pp258–9; ☎ 6722 9491/6723 7328) in the south. A huge long-distance bus station and transport hub was under construction at **Dongzhimen Transport Hub Station** (Map p264) at the time of writing.

Buses range in both type and quality, from simple minibuses to luxury air-conditioned buses, equipped with TV sets, toilets, reclining seats and hostesses handing out free mineral water. On long journeys, it is advisable to spend a bit more so that you can travel in comfort.

Sightseeing tourist buses for the Great Wall, Ming Tombs and other sights around Běijīng leave from the twin depots of the

Beijing Sightseeing Bus Centre (北京旅游集散中心; Map pp268–9; Běijīng Lǚyóu Jísàn Zhōngxīn; ☎ 8353 1111) northeast and northwest of Qianmen, alongside Tiananmen Square; certain routes also depart from outside the South Cathedral (p97).

CAR

At the time of writing, only foreigners with residency permits and Chinese driving licences were permitted to drive, effectively excluding tourists from the roads. For the latest update, contact **Hertz** (☎ 800-810 8883 countrywide; www.hertz.net.cn), where car hire is available from around Y320 per day.

Taxis are cheap, however, and even hiring a vehicle plus driver is a good proposition – this can be arranged through Hertz, major hotels, China International Travel Service (CITS) or other travel agencies. Depending on the type of vehicle, a chauffeur-driven car could cost you between Y600 and Y1000 per day, but a cheaper alternative would be to hire a cheap taxi for the day for around Y400 (see below).

TAXI

Taxis (出租车; *chūzūchē*) are everywhere, and finding one is only a problem during rush hour and (infrequent) rainstorms.

Běijīng taxis have red stickers on the side rear window declaring the rate per kilometre. Y2 taxis (Y10 for the first 3km; Y2 per kilometre thereafter) include a new fleet of Hyundai cars which are spacious, have air-con and rear seatbelts; other vehicles include Volkswagen Santanas and Citroëns. Taxis are required to switch on the meter for all journeys (unless you negotiate a fee for a long journey out of town). Between 11pm and 6am there is a 20% surcharge added to the flag fall metered fare. The cheaper *xiali* bone-rattler taxis that infested Běijīng's roads have effectively been phased out.

Běijīng taxi drivers speak little, if any, English, despite encouragement to learn 100 basic phrases in the run up to 2008. If you don't speak Chinese, bring a map or have your destination written down in characters. It helps if you know the way to your destination; sit in the front with a map.

Cabs can be hired by distance, by the hour, or by the day (a minimum of around Y400 per day). Taxis can be hailed in the

street, summoned by phone or you can wait at one of the designated taxi zones or outside hotels. Call ☎ 6835 1150 to register a complaint. Remember to collect a receipt (ask the driver to give you a receipt, or *fāpiào*; 发票); if you accidentally leave anything in the taxi, the driver's number appears on the receipt so he or she can be located.

The taxi driver may try to dissuade you from wearing a seatbelt – ignore him/her and prepare yourself for Běijīng's atrocious driving. Watch out for tired drivers – they work long and punishing shifts.

If you're staying for a long time and you meet a taxi driver you like or trust, ask for a name card. Most drivers have home phones or mobile phones and can be hired for the day. Alternatively, **Beijing Beiqi Taxi** (☎ 8661 1062; 28 Xizhimen Nandajie) can hire you a taxi plus driver from around Y400 per day.

SUBWAY & LIGHT RAILWAY

The subway (地铁; *dìtiě*) is probably the best way to travel around. The Underground Dragon can move at up to 70km/h – a jaguar compared with the lumbering buses. The system is modest and trains are showing their age, but five new subway lines are being constructed to take the strain off the roads for the 2008 Olympics. Four lines currently exist: Line 1, Line 2, Line 13 and the Batong Line (the extension of Line 1 which connects Sihui with Tuqiao). Except for the Batong Line (Y2 or Y4 if you transfer from Line 1), the fare is a flat Y3 on all lines, regardless of distance (Y5 if you swap between Line 13 and the rest of the subway system). Only a few platforms have seats, and toilets have only recently begun appearing. Trains, which can get very crowded, run at a frequency of one every few minutes during peak times. The subway runs from 5am to 11pm daily; platform signs are in Chinese characters and Pinyin. Stops are announced in English and Chinese. You'll find a detailed subway map of Běijīng in the colour map section at the back of this book.

To recognise a subway station (地铁站; *dì tiě zhàn*), look for the subway symbol, which is a blue English capital 'D' with a circle around it. Another way of recognising a subway station is to look for an enormous cluster of bicycles.

Subway lines currently under construction are lines 4, 5, 8, 9, 10 and the Airport Line. Line 5, which will run north–south,

intersecting with Line 2 at Yonghegong and Chongwenmen and intersecting Line 1 at Dongdan, is due to open in mid-2007, Line 4, linking northwest Běijīng with the south of the city, is due to open in 2009. Line 8 (the Olympic Branch Line) will connect with the Olympic Park and is due for completion in 2008. Line 10 will run from Jingsong in the southeast through Guomao and onto Wanliu in the northwest of town and is due for completion in 2008. The Airport Line will connect Capital Airport with Dongzhimen and will be open by 2008.

A non-stop subway line linking Beijing West Train Station and Beijing Train Station is also under construction and is due to start operating in 2007.

Line 1 一号地铁线

With 23 stations, Line 1 runs from Sihuidong to Pingguoyuan, a western suburb of Běijīng. The transfer stations with Line 2 are at Fuxingmen and Jianguomen stations. Passengers for the Batong line transfer at Sihui. Tickets are Y3.

Line 2 二号地铁线

With 18 stations including Beijingzhan (Beijing Train Station), this 16km line intersects with Line 1 at Fuxingmen and Jianguomen. Passengers for Line 13 transfer at Dongzhimen or Xizhimen. Tickets are Y3, unless you are continuing to a station on Line 13 (Y5).

Line 13 十三号地铁线

Classified as part of the subway system but actually a light rail link, Line 13 runs in a northern loop from Xizhimen to Dongzhimen in the north of Běijīng, stopping at 14 stations (approximately three minutes per station) in between (first/last train 6am/9pm). As with the subway, tickets are Y3, but Y5 gets you a ticket to any station on the other lines of the underground system.

Batong Line 八通地铁线

Batong Line stations are Sihui, Sihuidong, Gaobeidian, Guangboxueyuan, Shuangqiao, Guanzhuang, Baliqiao, Tongzhoubeiyuan, Guoyuan, Jiukeshu, Liyuan, Linheli and Tuqiao. Tickets are Y2 unless travelling to or from stations on Line 1 (Y4).

PRACTICALITIES

ACCOMMODATION

Běijīng's rapidly growing population of hotels, hostels and guesthouses in the Sleeping chapter are listed by budget within each neighbourhood. Rack rates at midrange and top-end hotels are rarely the rule and discounts are the norm.

Hotel rooms are generally easy to find, although it can be harder during the peak tourist season from June to September and during the 1 May and 1 October holiday periods, so book ahead if visiting during these times. A 15% service charge is levied at midrange and top-end hotels. Checkout time is usually noon, but exceptions are indicated in hotel reviews.

For information on rates and discounts, reservations and other aspects of accommodation in Běijīng, consult the Sleeping chapter (p178).

Before visiting Běijīng, explore online deals. Accommodation websites that can get travellers substantial hotel discounts include CTrip (☎ 800-820 6666; www.english.ctrip.com) and Beijing Hotels Travel Guide (www.beijing-hotels.net).

BUSINESS

Doing business in China has long been fraught for Westerners since Lord Macartney's turkey of a mission to Chéngdé (p203) in 1793 to develop trade relations.

Things are easing up rapidly, but even simple things can be frustrating. Renting properties, getting licences, hiring employees and paying taxes can generate mind-boggling quantities of red tape. Many foreign businesspeople who have worked in China say that success is usually the result of dogged persistence and finding cooperative officials.

Anyone planning on doing business in China is advised to read *The China Dream: The Elusive Quest for the Greatest Untapped Market on Earth*, written by Joe Studwell (Profile Books Ltd, 2002), which presents a sober and balanced perspective on the Chinese economy and how it all fits together.

Also refer to the City Life chapter (p16) for further information on Chinese etiquette, the Chinese economy and the structure of political power in Běijīng.

has little headroom. As with all other classes, smoking is prohibited in hard-sleeper. Lights and speakers go out at around 10pm. Each compartment is equipped with its own hot water flask (热水瓶; *rèshuǐpíng*), which is filled by an attendant.

Soft sleeper (软卧; *ruǎn wò*) has four comfortable bunks in a closed compartment with a sliding door. Costing much more than hard sleeper (the upper berth is slightly cheaper than the lower berth), soft sleeper is usually easier to purchase than hard sleeper; however, more and more Chinese are travelling this way.

Services

Travellers arrive and depart by train at **Beijing Train Station** (北京火车站; Běijīng Huòchē Zhàn; Map pp268-9; ☎ 5101 9999) or **Beijing West Train Station** (北京西站; Běijīng Xī Zhàn; Map pp266-7; ☎ 5182 6273). Beijing Train Station is served by its own underground station, making access simple. International trains to Moscow, Pyongyang and Ulaan Baatar arrive at and leave from Beijing Train Station; trains for Hong Kong and Vietnam leave from Beijing West Train Station. Buses 122 and 721 connect Beijing Train Station with Beijing West Train Station.

Two other stations of significance are **Beijing South Train Station** (Yǒngdǐngmén Huòchē Zhàn; Map pp266-7; ☎ 5183 7262) and **Beijing North Train Station** (Běijīng Běizhàn; Map pp260-1; ☎ 5186 6223) on the Second Ring Rd.

Left luggage counters (寄存处; *jìcúnchù*) and lockers can be found at most train stations.

Typical train fares and approximate travel times for hard-sleeper tickets to destinations from Beijing Train Station include: Chángchūn (长春; Y239, 9½ hours), Dàlián (大连; Y257, 12 hours), Dàtóng (大同; Y70, 5½ hours), Hāěrbīn (哈尔滨; Y281, 11½ hours), Hángzhōu (杭州; Y363, 15 hours), Jǐnán (济南; Y137, 4½ hours), Lhasa (拉萨; Y813, 47½ hours), Nánjīng (南京; Y274, 11 hours), Qīngdǎo (青岛; Y215, 9 hours), Shànghǎi (上海; Y327, 13½ hours, soft-sleeper express 12 hours), Sūzhōu (苏州; Y309, 11 hours) and Tiānjīn (天津; Y30 hard seat, 80 minutes). The fast soft-sleeper Z19 express train departs daily from Beijing West Train Station for Xī'ān (西安; Y417, 11½ hours) at 8.28pm.

ahead. Never just turn up and expect to be able to buy a ticket to a distant destination for same-day travel. Train tickets to and from Běijīng can be booked solid for almost a week around National Day (1 October); the rail network is also totally congested during Chinese New Year. Chinese speakers can call ☎ 962586 to book tickets in advance. Note that tickets can often only be purchased five days in advance at most, which includes the day you buy the ticket and the day you depart; so don't bank on being able to get hold of a ticket a week before you want to travel. In general, tickets are for single (单程; *dānchéng*) rather than return trips.

Complicated paperback train timetables for the entire country are published every April and October, available in Chinese only (complete/abridged Y5/Y2). The resourceful Duncan Peattie (www.chinatt.org) publishes an English-language Chinese railway timetable. You can also consult www.travelchinaguide.com/china-trains, which allows you to enter your departure point and destination, and gives you the departure times, arrival times and train numbers of trains running that route.

Classes

Trains on longer routes are divided into classes. Hard-seat (硬座; *yìng zuò*) is actually generally padded, but it can be hard on your sanity, painful on long hauls and typically packed to the gills. Your ticket should have an assigned seat number, but if seats have sold out, ask for a standing ticket (无座; *wúzuò* or 站票; *zhànpiào*), which at least gets you on the train, and you can then find a seat or find the conductor and upgrade (补票; *bǔpiào*) yourself to a hard-sleeper, soft-seat or soft-sleeper if there are any available.

On short express journeys (such as Běijīng to Tiānjīn) some trains have soft-seat (软座; *ruǎn zuò*) carriages. Seats are two abreast, overcrowding is not permitted and carriages are often double-decker.

Hard-sleeper (硬卧; *yìng wò*) carriages consist of doorless compartments with half a dozen bunks in three tiers. The lowest bunk (下铺; *xiàpù*) is the most expensive and the top bunk (上铺; *shàngpù*) is the cheapest. The middle bunk (中铺; *zhōngpù*) is preferable, as all and sundry use the lower berth as a seat during the day, whereas the top bunk

TRAIN

China's extensive passenger rail network covers every province except Hāinán, and the link to Lhasa was completed in 2006. At any given time it is estimated that over 10 million Chinese are travelling on a train in China, except at the Chinese New Year when everyone appears to be on the railway.

Travelling China by train is an excellent way to voyage, especially by sleeper, as it offers an entertaining ride and brings you together with Chinese travelling the land. Intercity trains are largely air-conditioned, fast and comfortable, and varying classes of travel are often available. The safety record of the train system is also good, but keep an eye on your belongings.

The new fleet of trains that run intercity routes is a vast improvement on the old models – these trains are much cleaner and equipped with air-con. The new 'Z' class express trains (eg from Běijīng to Shànghǎi and Xī'ān) are very plush, with meals thrown in on some routes, mobile-phone charging points and well-designed bunks. Trains nationwide are punctual and depart on the dot.

Buying Tickets

It's cheapest to buy tickets at the train station, but for a small surcharge you can get them at most hotel counters and ticket counters around the city or through travel agents. Avoid buying from the touts who gather outside the train station, unless you are desperate for a ticket. If you do buy from a tout, examine the ticket carefully to check the date of travel and destination before handing over your money.

The queues at the ticket office (售票厅; *shòupiàotīng*) at Beijing Train Station can be overwhelming. At the time of writing, the ticketing office for foreigners on the first floor had closed, although an English-speaking service was available at ticket window No 26. Information is available at ticket window No 29. A foreigner's ticketing office can be found on the 2nd floor of **Beijing West Train Station** (☎ 24hr). Tickets can also be bought online at www.chinatrip advisor.com or www.china-train-ticket.com, but it's cheaper to buy your ticket at the station.

Your chances of getting a sleeper (hard or soft) are good if you book several days

If you are considering doing business in China, considerable preliminary research is recommended. In particular, talk to other foreigners who are already doing business in China. Alternatively, approach a firm of business consultants for advice or approach the business associations listed below.

Business Associations

The following organisations can be found in Běijīng:

American Chamber of Commerce (☎ 8519 1920; www.amcham-china.org.cn; Room 1903, 8 Jianguomen Beidajie, China Resources Bldg, Dongcheng)

British Chamber of Commerce (☎ 8525 1111; www.pek.britcham.org; Room 1001, China Life Tower, 16 Chaoyangmenwai Dajie, Chaoyang)

Canada-China Business Council (☎ 6512 6120; www.ccbc.com; Suite 18-2, 18th fl, CITIC Bldg, 19 Jianguomenwai Dajie, Chaoyang)

China-Australia Chamber of Commerce (☎ 6595 9252; admin@austcham.org; Room 314, Great Wall Sheraton Hotel, 8 Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang)

European Union Chamber of Commerce in China (☎ 6462 2065; www.euccc.com.cn)

French Chamber of Commerce & Industry (☎ 8451 2071; S123, Office Bldg, Lufthansa Center, 50 Liangmaqiao Lu)

US-China Business Council (☎ 8526 3920; www.uschina.org)

Business Cards

The Chinese hand business cards around in place of handshakes, and if you don't have one it can be embarrassing. These are essential items, even if you don't do business. Try to get your name translated into Chinese and have it printed on the reverse. Hotel business centres can print business cards; alternatively, try **Alphagraphics** (Map pp268-9; ☎ 6505 2906; www.alpha-graphics.com; L206, 2nd fl, China World Trade Center, 1 Jianguomenwai Dajie).

BUSINESS HOURS

China officially has a five-day working week. Banks, offices and government departments are normally open Monday to Friday, open roughly from 9am (some closing for two hours in the middle of the day) until 5pm or 6pm. Some banks have branches that are open at weekends as well. Saturday and Sunday are both public holidays, but most

Běijīng museums stay open on weekends and make up for this by closing for one day (usually Monday). Museums tend to stop selling tickets half an hour before they close. Bank of China branches are generally open weekdays from 9am to noon and 2pm to 4.30pm Monday to Friday, and 24-hour ATMs (see ATMs, p226) are plentiful. Travel agencies, foreign-exchange counters in the tourist hotels and some of the local branches of the Bank of China have similar opening hours, but are generally open on weekends as well, at least in the morning. Shops are generally open from 10am to 10pm while restaurants tend to run from 10.30am to 11pm, although some shut in the afternoon between the hours of 2pm and 5.30pm. Internet cafés are either open 8am to midnight or are 24-hour. Note that many businesses in Běijīng close for three week-long holidays (p223) or have interruptions in their service.

Parks are generally open from 6am to around 9pm or later, although they can open later and shut earlier in winter. Opening hours for sights are listed under each entry in the Sights chapter.

Běijīng's entertainment sector is working increasingly long hours, and it's possible to find something to eat and somewhere to drink at any hour of the day.

CHILDREN

The Chinese have a deep and uncomplicated love of children. The treatment you'll receive if you're travelling with a young child or baby can often make life a lot easier (especially if they have blond hair). Don't be surprised if a complete stranger picks up your child or tries to take them from your arms: Chinese people openly display their affection for children.

Baby food and milk powder is widely available in supermarkets, as are basics like nappies, baby wipes, bottles, creams, medicine, clothing, dummies (pacifiers) and other paraphernalia. Few cheap restaurants, however, have baby chairs, and finding baby-changing rooms when you need one can be impossible. Check the Health section for information on recommended vaccinations (p222). If you need a babysitter (阿姨; *āyí*), contact **Century Domestic Services** (☎ 6498 8220; from ¥10-15 per hour), who can supply an English-speaking *āyí* at an hourly rate.

Admission prices to many sights and museums have children's rates, usually for children under 1.1m to 1.3m in height. Infants under the age of two fly for 10% of the full airfare. Children between the ages of two and 11 need to pay half the full price for domestic flights, and 75% of the adult price for international flights.

Always ensure that your child carries a form of ID and a hotel card, in case they get lost.

International schools where children are educated in the English language are plentiful; among high-profile arrivals is the elite **Harrow International School Beijing** (☎ 6444 8900; www.harrowbeijing.cn).

See the Běijīng For Children boxed text (p96) for recommended diversions and activities for kiddies.

For more information on travelling with children, turn to the following books:

Adventuring with Children Nan Jeffrey; Avalon House Travel Series.

Backpacking with Babies and Small Children Goldie Silverman; Wilderness Press.

Take the Kids Travelling Helen Truszkowski; Take the Kids series.

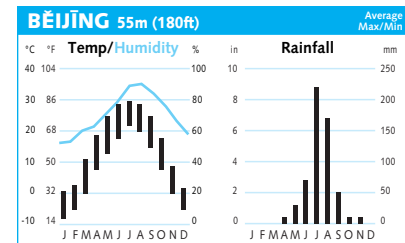
Travel with Children Maureen Wheeler, Cathy Lanigan; Lonely Planet.

Travelling Abroad with Children Samantha Gore-Lyons; Arrow.

CLIMATE

Autumn (mid-September to early November) is the optimal season to visit Běijīng as the weather is gorgeous and fewer tourists are in town. Local Běijīngers describe this short season as 'tiāngāo qìshuāng', literally 'the sky is high and the air is fresh' – with clear skies and breezy days. Arid spring (March to April) is OK, apart from the sand clouds (see the Dust Devil boxed text, p26) that sweep in from Inner Mongolia and the ubiquitous static electricity that discharges everywhere. Spring also sees the snow-like *liǔxù* (willow catkins) wafting through the Běijīng air. From May onwards the mercury can surge well over 30°C. Běijīng simmers under a scorching sun in summer (May to August), when temperatures can top 40°C, with heavy rainstorms appearing late in the season. Surprisingly, this is also considered the peak season, when hotels typically raise

their rates and the Great Wall nearly collapses under the weight of marching tourists. In winter (early November to February) there are few tourists in town and many hotels offer substantial discounts – but it's glacial outside (dipping as low as -20°C) and the northern winds cut like a knife through bean curd. Heating in public buildings is officially turned on in mid-November every year. Air pollution can be very harsh in both summer and winter (see the Environment, p25).



COURSES

With so many *lǎowài* (foreigners) arriving in Běijīng to learn Mandarin in the heartland of the dialect, language schools are burgeoning. You may not have the time to sign up for a whole semester at a university such as the Beijing Language & Culture University or Beijing Normal University (the cheapest and most effective strategy), but there are ample other schools to choose from. It pays to hunt around however, as the rapidly expanding market regularly produces schools of suspect quality. Check out how long the school has been in business and if possible, talk to students attending classes there. For language exchange partners, consult the classified pages of English magazines such as *That's Beijing* (www.thatsbj.com). The following language schools are reputable and either offer tuition in the Chinese language or Chinese culture, and occasionally both:

Berlitz (Map pp268-9; ☎ 6593 0478; www.berlitz.com; Room 801, Sunjoy Bldg, 6 Ritan Lu) Classes in Chinese, including effective immersion lessons for total novices.

Chinese Culture Club (Map p264; ☎ 6432 9341, ext 18; www.chinesecultureclub.org; 29 Liangmaqiao Lu) Offers a range of cultural programmes, taught in English and aimed squarely at foreign visitors and expats. Recommended.

Executive Mandarin (Map p264; ☎ 6561 2486; www.ecbeijing.com; Hanwei Bldg, 7 Guanghua Lu) Immersion programs, Mandarin and Cantonese, business Chinese.

FESCO (Map p264; ☎ 8561 6180; www.fesco-training.com.cn; 1st fl, FESCO Bldg, 14 Chaoyangmen Nandajie) This long-established institution has courses in Chinese language, Chinese painting, calligraphy, seal cutting, music, dance, martial arts, acupuncture, moxibustion and other traditional crafts and skills. FESCO also holds regular seminars on subjects relating to Chinese history and culture.

Global Village (☎ 6253 7737; west side of Wudaokou light rail station) Popular school with value-for-money classes in Mandarin. Taster lesson available.

My Chinese (Map p264; ☎ 6417 9553; www.mychinese.classroom.com; Room 8203-8209, Baoliyuan Bldg, 55a Xingfuyiun) Offers classes in business Chinese, HSK (Chinese proficiency test) and a range of cultural courses.

CUSTOMS

Chinese customs generally pay tourists little attention. There are clearly marked 'green channels' and 'red channels' at the airport. Duty free, you're allowed to import 400 cigarettes or the equivalent in tobacco products, 1.5L of alcohol and 50g of gold or silver. Importation of fresh fruit and cold cuts is prohibited. You can bring in or take out ¥20,000 in Chinese currency without declaring it. There are no restrictions on foreign currency; however, you should declare any cash that exceeds US\$5000 (or its equivalent in another currency).

Objects considered antiques require a certificate and red seal to clear customs. To get the proper certificate and seal your antiques must be inspected by the **Relics Bureau** (Wénwù Jiānding; ☎ 6401 4608), where no English is spoken. Anything made before 1949 is considered an antique and needs a certificate, and if it was made before 1795 it cannot legally be taken out of the country.

DISCOUNT CARDS

An ISIC card (www.isiccard.com) may be useful as you could get half-price entry to some sights. Chinese signs at many sights clearly indicate that students pay half price – so push the point. It's worth trying to get air ticket discounts using your ISIC card; some travellers report success. If you are studying in China, your school will

issue you with a student card, which is more useful for discounts on admission charges.

Tickets must be purchased for virtually every sight in Běijīng and beyond, and there is little that one can do for free (see the boxed text on p78). The Y80 Beijing Museum Pass (p74) is an invaluable investment, getting you cut price entrance to myriad temples, museums and sights in town.

ELECTRICITY

Electricity is 220 volts, 50 cycles AC. Most plugs take four designs – three-pronged angled pins (as in Australia), three-pronged round pins (as in Hong Kong), two flat pins (US style but without the ground wire) or two narrow round pins (European style). Conversion plugs are easily purchased in Běijīng. For more information on electricity and adaptors in China, see www.kropla.com.

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

Chinese Embassies & Consulates

For a full list of Chinese diplomatic representation abroad go to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website at www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng.

Australia Canberra (☎ 02-6273 4780, 6273 4781; http://au.china-embassy.org/eng; 15 Coronation Drive, Yarralumla, ACT 2600); Melbourne (☎ 03-9822 0604); Perth (☎ 08-9321 8193); Sydney (☎ 02-9699 2216)

Canada Calgary (☎ 403-264 3322); Ottawa (☎ 613-789 3509; www.chinaembassycanada.org; 515 St Patrick St, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 5H3); Toronto (☎ 416-964 7260); Vancouver (☎ 604-736 3910)

Denmark Copenhagen (☎ 039-625 806; Oregards Alle 25, 2900 Hellerup, Copenhagen)

France Paris (☎ 01 47 36 02 58; www.amb-chine.fr; 9 Ave V Cresson, 92130 Issy les Moulineaux, Paris)

Japan Fukuoka (☎ 92-713 1121); Osaka (☎ 06-445 9481); Sapporo (☎ 11-563 5563); Tokyo (☎ 03-3403 3389, 3403 3065; 3-4-33 Moto-Azabu, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106)

Malaysia Kuala Lumpur (☎ 03-242 8495; 229 Jalan Ampang, Kuala Lumpur); Kuching (☎ 82-453 344)

Netherlands The Hague (☎ 070-355 1515; Adriaan Goekooplaan 7, 2517 JX, The Hague)

New Zealand Auckland (☎ 09-525 1589); Wellington (☎ 04-587 0407; 104A Korokoro Rd, Petone, Wellington)

Singapore (☎ 65-734 3361; 70 Dalvey Rd)

Thailand Bangkok (☎ 02-245 7032/49; 57 Th Ratchadaphisek, Bangkok)

UK Edinburgh (☎ 0131-316 4789); London (☎ 020 7636 8845, 24-hr premium-rate visa information 0891 880 808; www.chinese-embassy.org.uk; 31 Portland Place, London, W1N 5AG; Manchester (☎ 0161-224 7480)

USA Chicago (☎ 312-803 0098); Houston (☎ 713-524 4311); Los Angeles (☎ 213-380 2508); New York (☎ 212-330 7410); San Francisco (☎ 415-563 9232); Washington DC (☎ 202-338 6688; www.china-embassy.org; Room 110, 2201 Wisconsin Ave NW, Washington DC, 20007)

Embassies in Běijīng

Embassies in Běijīng are open from 9am to noon and from 1.30pm to 4pm Monday to Friday, but visa departments are often open only in the morning. There are two main embassy areas: Jianguomenwai and Sanlitun.

The following embassies are in the Jianguomenwai area:

India (Map p264; ☎ 6532 1908; www.indianembassy.org.cn; 1 Ritan Donglu)

Ireland (Map pp268–9; ☎ 6532 2691; fax 6532 2168; 3 Ritan Donglu)

Japan (Map p264; ☎ 6532 2361; fax 6532 4625; 7 Ritan Lu)

Mongolia (Map pp268–9; ☎ 6532 1203; fax 6532 5045; 2 Xiushui Beijie)

New Zealand (Map p264; ☎ 6532 2731; www.nzembassy.com/china; 1 Ritan Dong Erjie)

North Korea (Map p264; ☎ 6532 1186; fax 6532 6056; Ritan Beilu)

Philippines (Map pp268–9; ☎ 6532 1872; fax 6532 3761; 23 Xiushui Beijie)

Singapore (Map pp268–9; ☎ 6532 3926; www.mfa.gov.sg/beijing; 1 Xiushui Beijie)

South Korea (Map pp268–9; ☎ 6505 2608; www.koreamb.org.cn; 3rd & 4th fl, China World Trade Center, 1 Jianguomenwai Dajie)

Thailand (Map p264; ☎ 6532 1749; www.thaiembassy.org/beijing; 40 Guanghua Lu)

UK (Map p264; ☎ 5192 4000; www.uk.cn; 11 Guanghua Lu)

USA (Map p264; ☎ 6532 3831; http://beijing.usembassy-china.org.cn; 3 Xiushui Beijie)

Vietnam (Map p264; ☎ 6532 1155; fax 6532 5720; 32 Guanghua Lu)

The Sanlitun area is home to the following embassies:

Australia (Map p264; ☎ 6532 2331; www.austemb.org.cn; 21 Dongzhimenwai Dajie)

Cambodia (Map p264; ☎ 6532 2790; fax 6532 3507; 9 Dongzhimenwai Dajie)

Canada (Map p264; ☎ 6532 3536; www.beijing.gc.ca; 19 Dongzhimenwai Dajie)

France (Map p264; ☎ 8532 8080; www.ambafrance-cn.org; 3 Dongsan Jie)

Germany (Map p264; ☎ 8532 9000; www.deutschebotschaft-china.org; 17 Dongzhimenwai Dajie)

Italy (Map p264; ☎ 6532 2131; www.italianembassy.org.cn; 2 Sanlitun Dong Erjie)

Kazakhstan (Map p264; ☎ 6532 6182; fax 6532 6183; 9 Sanlitun Dong Liuji)

Laos (Map p264; ☎ 6532 1224; 11 Dongsi Jie)

Myanmar (Map p264; ☎ 6532 0359; www.myanmarembassy.com; 6 Dongzhimenwai Dajie)

Nepal (Map p264; ☎ 6532 1795; fax 6532 3251; 1 Sanlitun Xi Liuji)

Netherlands (Map p264; ☎ 6532 0200; fax 6532 4689; 4 Liangmahe Nanlu)

Pakistan (Map p264; ☎ 6532 2504/2558; 1 Dongzhimenwai Dajie)

Russia (Map p262; ☎ 6532 1381; www.russia.org.cn; 4 Dongzhimen Beizhongjie)

Sweden (Map p264; ☎ 6532 9790; www.swedenabroad.com; 3 Dongzhimenwai Dajie)

EMERGENCY

Important telephone numbers include:

Ambulance	☎ 120
Directory inquiries	☎ 114
Fire	☎ 119
International directory inquiries	☎ 115
Police	☎ 110
Public Security Bureau (foreigners' section)	☎ 8402 0101
Tourist Hotline	☎ 6513 0828
Weather (English & Chinese)	☎ 121

GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

Even though the Chinese authorities take a dim view of homosexuality, which was officially classified as a mental disorder until 2001, a low-profile gay and lesbian scene exists in Běijīng. For informative and an up-to-date lowdown on the latest gay and

lesbian hot spots in Běijīng and the rest of China, have a look at the Utopia website (www.utopia-asia.com/tipschin.htm) or invest in a copy of the *Utopia Guide to China*. The second Beijing International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival was held in 2005.

HEALTH

Except for the thick layer of air pollution that sometimes blankets the city, Běijīng is a reasonably healthy city and you needn't fear tropical bugs like malaria. When weighing up health risks, always bear in mind other, more immediate dangers – the greatest danger you will probably face is crossing the road.

It's a good idea to consult your government's travel health website before departure, if one is available.

Australia (www.dfat.gov.au/travel)

Canada (www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

New Zealand (www.mfat.govt.nz/travel)

UK (www.doh.gov.uk/traveladvice)

USA (www.cdc.gov/travel)

It's worth taking your own medicine kit so that you have remedies at hand. Antibiotics (*kàngjiānsù*), sleeping pills (*ānmíányào*), anti-depressants and other medications can be picked up prescription-free from many chemists in Běijīng; but if you require a more specific type of drug, make sure you take an adequate supply. When looking for medications in Běijīng, make sure you take along the brand and the generic name so that pharmacy staff can locate it for you.

By early 2007, there were 22 confirmed human cases of bird flu in China. Of these, 14 died. Currently very close contact with dead or sick birds is the principal source of infection, and bird-to-human transmission does not easily occur. Symptoms include high fever and typical influenza-like symptoms with rapid deterioration, leading to respiratory failure and death in many cases. At this time it is not routinely recommended for travellers to carry anti-viral drugs such as Tamiflu; rather, immediate medical care should be sought if bird flu is suspected.

There is currently no vaccine available to prevent bird flu. For up-to-date information, check the websites www.who.int/en and www.avianinfluenza.com.au.

Required Vaccinations

Yellow Fever Proof of vaccination is required if entering China within six days of visiting an infected country. If you are travelling to China from Africa or South America, check with a travel medicine clinic about whether you need the vaccine.

Recommended Vaccinations

Adult diphtheria/tetanus (ADT) A booster is recommended if it is more than 10 years since your last shot. Side effects include a sore arm and fever.

Hepatitis A One shot provides almost 100% protection for up to a year; a booster after 12 months provides another 20 years' protection. Mild side effects include a sore arm, fever and headaches.

Hepatitis B Now considered a routine vaccination for most travellers. Given as three shots over six months, this vaccine can be combined with Hepatitis A (Twinrix). In most people the course gives lifetime protection. Mild side effects include a sore arm and headaches.

Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR) Two lifetime doses of MMR are recommended unless you have had the diseases. Many adults under the age of 35 require a booster. Occasionally a rash and flu-like illness occur about a week after vaccination.

Typhoid Needed if spending more than two weeks in China. A single injection provides around 70% protection for two to three years.

Varicella (chickenpox) If you haven't had chickenpox discuss this vaccine with your doctor. Chickenpox can be a serious disease in adults and has such complications as pneumonia and encephalitis.

Under certain circumstances or for those at special risk the following vaccinations are recommended. Discuss these with a doctor who specialises in travel medicine.

Influenza If you are over 50 years of age or have a chronic medical condition such as diabetes, lung disease or heart disease, you should have an influenza shot annually.

Japanese encephalitis There is risk only in rural areas of China. Recommended if travelling to rural areas for more than a month during summer.

Pneumonia (Pneumococcal) This vaccine is recommended for travellers over 65 or those with chronic lung or heart disease. A single shot is given, with a booster in five years.

Rabies Recommended if spending more than three months in China. Requires three injections given over a one-month period.

If you are pregnant or breast feeding consult a doctor who specialises in travel medicine before having any vaccines.

Diseases

AIDS & SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

The Chinese government is starting to take AIDS seriously as the country is said to be on the brink of a major epidemic. Although most cases so far have occurred in intravenous drug users or from contaminated blood products, the virus is increasingly being spread via heterosexual sex.

Always use condoms if you have sex with a new partner, and never share needles. If you have had unsafe sex while travelling, get a checkup and immediately seek medical advice if you develop pain, a rash or a discharge.

HEPATITIS A

This virus is transmitted through contaminated food and water, and infects the liver, causing jaundice (yellow skin and eyes), nausea and extreme tiredness. There is no specific treatment available; you just need to allow time for the liver to heal, which might take many weeks.

HEPATITIS B

This disease is common in China and is transmitted via infected body fluids, including through sexual contact. The long-term consequences can include liver cancer and cirrhosis.

INFLUENZA

Flu is common in Běijīng in winter. This virus gives you high fevers, body aches and general symptoms, such as a cough, runny nose and sore throat. Antibiotics won't help unless you develop a complication, such as pneumonia. Anyone travelling in winter should think about vaccination, but it is particularly recommended for the elderly or those with underlying medical conditions.

TRAVELLER'S DIARRHOEA

This is the most common problem faced by travellers in Asia. Most traveller's diarrhoea is caused by bacteria and thus responds rapidly to a short course of appropriate antibiotics. How soon you treat your diarrhoea will depend on individual circumstances, but it is a good idea to carry appropriate treatment in your medical kit.

TUBERCULOSIS (TB)

This is a rare disease in travellers and requires prolonged close exposure to a person with active TB infection. Symptoms include a cough, weight loss, night sweats and fevers. Children under the age of five spending more than six months in China should receive BCG vaccination. Adults are rarely immunised.

TYPHOID

This serious bacterial infection is contracted from contaminated food and water. Symptoms include high fever, headache, a cough and lethargy. The diagnosis is made via blood tests, and treatment is with specific antibiotics.

Environmental Hazards

AIR POLLUTION

Běijīng is one of the 10 most polluted cities in the world. Although the government is working to improve the situation before the 2008 Olympics, those with chronic respiratory conditions should ensure they have adequate personal medication with them in case symptoms worsen.

WATER

Don't drink the tap water or eat ice. Bottled water, soft drinks and alcohol are fine.

HOLIDAYS & FESTIVALS

New Year's Day 1 January

Spring Festival (Chinese New Year) Generally held in January or February; 7 February 2008, 26 January 2009, 14 February 2010

International Women's Day 8 March

International Labour Day 1 May

Youth Day 4 May

International Children's Day 1 June

Birthday of the Chinese Communist Party 1 July

Anniversary of the founding of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) 1 August

National Day 1 October

The big holiday periods for the Chinese are the weeks following the 1 May holiday, National Day on 1 October and the Spring Festival. Travelling in China during these periods can be hectic as tourist sights

are swamped and bus, train and air tickets are hard to come by (especially during the Spring Festival), although seeing Běijīng during the Spring Festival sees the city at its liveliest and most colourful. See the City Calendar section (p18) for details on annual festivals in Běijīng.

INTERNET ACCESS

Unlike in many small towns dotted around China, public internet access in Běijīng can be elusive, with terminals tucked away down side streets and located inconveniently away from the action. A fire in a Běijīng internet café in 2002 which killed 25 people was used as a pretext to close down scores of operations in town, and the number of licences for internet cafés (网吧, *wǎngbā*) became strictly controlled. The picture remains hazy, but controls could be eased in the lead up to the 2008 Olympics.

Internet censorship – known as the Great Firewall of China – is draconian, with an army of 30,000 censors working non-stop to stem the tide of undesirable electronic data from corrupting Chinese minds. Pornography is censored, but not as rigorously as politically taboo subjects such as Taiwanese independence, the Tiananmen Square massacre and outlawed groups such as Falun Gong. By some estimates, 10% of websites are inaccessible, including – at the time of writing – the BBC News website and Wikipedia in English. Internet monitors are employed by the state to discreetly usher online chatroom discussions on topical and sensitive issues in authorised directions. Reports suggest that all of this is little more than a minor irritation to Chinese online users who have become inured to constant censorship in all forms of media in China.

Rates should be around Y2 to Y3 per hour for a standard outlet with no frills, but comfier and smarter options often charge more, perhaps with a coffee thrown in. It is increasingly common for bars and cafés (eg along Nanluogu Xiang) to offer free internet access. Be prepared for agonisingly slow connections, especially on congested sites such as Hotmail, and the sudden disappearance of sites for long periods.

Internet cafés in Běijīng are required to see your passport before allowing you to go online, and a record of your visit may

be made. Most internet cafés will permit foreigners to use their facilities, but some do not.

Use midrange and top-end hotel business centre computers for going online only if you have no choice, as charges are stratospheric. Many cheaper hotels and youth hostels provide internet access at around Y10 per hour.

To access the internet using a laptop from your hotel room in Běijīng, free dial-up access can be made by hooking up through the phone line and using the local dial-up number (169). In the dial-up connection box enter '169' as your username and password, and in the phone number box again enter '169'. Many midrange and top-end hotels now provide free broadband internet access, so ask.

Many of the cafés and bars along Nanluogu Xiang in Dōngchéng offer free internet access to guests. The following internet cafés are centrally located:

Beijing Huohu Shiji Internet Café (Běijīng Huòhú Shíjī Wǎngbā; Map p264; Chunxiu Lu; per hr Y3; ☎ 8am-midnight) North of Xingfucun Zhonglu on Chunxiu Lu, south of Red House Hotel.

Chengse 520 Internet Café (Chéngsè 520 Wǎngbā; Map pp268–9; 3rd fl, 7 Dashilan Jie; per hr Y4; ☎ 8am–3am) Through clothing market and up the stairs in Dashilan.

Dayusu Internet Café (Dàiyùsù Wǎngbā; Map pp266–7; 2 Hufang Lu; per hr Y3; ☎ 8am-midnight) No English sign, but it's around three shops north of the Bank of China on Hufang Lu.

Hulindao Internet Café (Húlíndào Wǎngbā; Map p262; 2nd fl, cnr Dianmenwai Dajie & Yandai Xiejie; per hr Y3; ☎ 8am-midnight) Look for the characters '上网'.

Internet Café (Wǎngbā; Map pp268–9; Shop No 2601, 2nd fl, Soho New Town, next to exit B Dawanglu subway station; per hr Y3; ☎ 24hr)

Internet Café (Wǎngbā; Map pp268–9; 2nd fl, above the Beijing City Central Youth Hostel; per hr Y5; ☎ 24hr)

WI-FI ACCESS

Wi-fi (wireless internet) zones are increasingly common in hotels, cafés and restaurants around town. For a list of wireless hotspots, including **Bookworm** (Shūchóng; Map p264; ☎ 6586 9507; www.beijingbookworm.com; Bldg 4, Nan Sanlitun Lu; ☎ 9am–1am) and **Le Petit Gourmand** (Map p264; Xiǎo Měishìjiā; ☎ 6417 6095; Tongli Studio, Sanlitun; ☎ 10am–1am), consult www.chinapulse.com/wifi.

Moko Coffee Bar (Mòkè Wǎngbā; Map p262; ☎ 6525 3712, 6559 8464; 57 Dongsì Nándàjiē; per hr upstairs/downstairs Y4/15; ☎ 24hr) No English sign, but it's next to a chemist. Downstairs rates include a drink.

Qian Yi Internet Café (Map pp268–9; ☎ 6705 1722; 3rd fl, Old Station Bldg; per hr Y20; ☎ 9am-midnight) Outrageously expensive. A much cheaper internet café (Y4) exists on the same floor, but foreigners are not welcome.

LEGAL MATTERS

Anyone under the age of 18 is considered a minor in China, and the minimum driving age is also 18. The age of consent for marriage is 22 years for men and 20 years for women. There is no minimum age restricting the consumption of cigarettes or alcohol.

China's laws against the use of illegal drugs are harsh, and foreign nationals have been executed for drug offences (trafficking in more than 50g of heroin can result in the death penalty).

The Chinese criminal justice system does not ensure a fair trial, and defendants are not presumed innocent until proven guilty. Note that China conducts more judicial executions than the rest of the world combined. If arrested, most foreign citizens have the right to contact their embassy.

MAPS

As Běijīng is so huge and spread out, it's vital to get a decent map of town. English-language maps of Běijīng can be bought from newspaper kiosks and the **Foreign Languages Bookstore** (p164). They can also be picked up for free at most big hotels and branches of the **Beijing Tourist Information Center** (see p231).

Street vendors hawk cheap maps near subway stations around Tiananmen Square and Wangfujing Dajie – make sure you check they have English labelling before purchasing from pushy vendors. One of the better English-language maps is the **Beijing Tourist Map** (Y8), labelled in both English and Chinese, but it doesn't show much detail on the lesser streets and alleys. The Wangfujing Bookstore (north of Oriental Plaza) has a large range of (largely Chinese language) detailed maps and guides to Běijīng. Check the expat magazine *That's Beijing* (p227), which occasionally prints handy colour maps to popular bar and restaurant haunts around town.

MEDICAL SERVICES

As the national capital, Běijīng naturally sports some of China's best medical facilities and services. Your embassy can provide you with a list of recommended English-speaking doctors, dentists, hospitals and international clinics.

A consultation with a doctor in a private clinic will cost between Y200 and Y800, depending on where you go. It will cost Y10 to Y50 in a state hospital.

Bayley & Jackson Medical Center (Map p264; ☎ 8562 9998; www.bjhealthcare.com; 7 Ritan Donglu) Full range of medical and dental services; attractively located in a courtyard on Ritan Park.

Beijing Union Hospital Xiéhé Yiyuàn (Map p262; Xiéhé Yiyuàn; ☎ 6529 6114, emergency 6529 5284; 53 Dongdan Beidajie) A recommended Chinese hospital operating from a wonderful building off Wangfujing Dajie, with a wing reserved for foreigners in the back building. Open 24 hours with a full range of facilities for inpatient and outpatient care, plus a pharmacy.

Beijing United Family Hospital (Map pp258–9; ☎ 6433 3960, 24hr emergency hotline 6433 2345; www.unitedfamilyhospitals.com; 2 Jiangtai Lu; ☎ 24hr) Can provide alternative medical treatments along with a comprehensive range of inpatient and outpatient care, as well as a critical care unit. Emergency room staffed by expat physicians.

Hong Kong International Medical Clinic (Map p264; ☎ 6553 2288; www.hkclinic.com; 9th fl Office Tower, Hong Kong Macau Center, Swissôtel, 2 Chaoyangmen Beidajie; ☎ 9am–9pm) The clinic has a 24-hour medical and dental clinic, including obstetric/gynaecological services. The clinic has facilities for ultrasonic scanning, and immunisations can also be performed. Prices are more reasonable than at SOS.

International SOS (Map p264; ☎ clinic appointments 6462 9112, dental appointments 6462 0333, 24hr alarm centre 6462 9100; www.internationalsos.com; Bldg C, BITIC Ying Yi Bldg, 1 Xingfu Sancun Bei Jie, Cháoyáng; ☎ 9am–6pm Mon-Fri) Offering 24-hour emergency medical care, this clinic is located behind the German embassy and has a high-quality clinic with English-speaking staff.

METRIC SYSTEM

China officially subscribes to the international metric system. In markets however, you're likely to encounter the traditional Chinese weights and measures system, which features the *liàng* (两) and the *jīn* (斤). One *jīn* is 0.6kg (1.32lb). There are 16 *liàng* to the *jīn*, so one *liàng* is 37.5g (1.32oz).

MONEY

For information regarding exchange rates, see the Quick Reference section on the inside front cover. The City Life chapter (p16) gives you some idea of the costs you are likely to incur during your stay in Běijīng.

ATMs

A growing number of ATMs now accept foreign credit cards and bank cards. The network is not citywide, however, and you are more likely to find handy ATMs connected to Plus, Cirrus, Visa, Mastercard and Amex in and around the main shopping areas (such as along Wangfujing Dajie) and international hotels and their associated shopping arcades. Many large department stores also have useful ATMs. Most ATMs at banks other than the Bank of China and the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China accept only domestic cards. ATM screens that take international cards offer the choice of English or Chinese operation.

Useful ATMs can be found in the arrivals hall at **Capital Airport**. ATMs are also plentiful along **Wangfujing Dajie**, including a handy wall-mounted ATM at the **Bank of China** next to the main entrance to Sundongan Plaza. On the other side of the road you will find an ATM of the **Industrial and Commercial Bank of China** that takes foreign cards. A further ATM can be found at the Bank of China on the corner of Oriental Plaza (on the corner of Wangfujing Dajie and Dongchan'an Jie). Most top-end hotels, such as the **Peninsula Beijing** (p185) and the **Novotel Peace Hotel** (p184) have useful ATMs. The **Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation** (HSBC; ☎ 6526 0668; www.hsbc.com.cn; ground fl, Block A, COFCO Plaza, 8 Jianguomen Dajie) has a 24-hour ATM in Dōngchéng, as well as one just by Silk Street. An ATM can be found at **Citibank** (Map pp268–9; ☎ 6510 2933; www.citibank.com; 16th fl, Tower 2, Bright China Chang'an Bldg, 7 Jianguomen Dajie). For your nearest ATM, consult www.visa.com/pd/atm or www.mastercard.com/atm/locator/index.jsp; both have comprehensive listings. For those without their own ATM card or credit card, a PIN-activated **Visa TravelMoney card** (☎ 1-877-394-2247) gives you access to pre-deposited cash through the ATM network.

Changing Money

Foreign currency and travellers cheques can be changed at large branches of banks such as the Bank of China, CITIC Industrial Bank, the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China and the China Construction Bank, at the airport, hotel money-changing counters and at several department stores, as long as you have your passport. You should be able to change foreign currency into Renminbi at foreign-exchange outlets and banks at large international airports outside China, but rates may be poor. Hotels usually give the official rate, but some will add a small commission. Some upmarket hotels will change money only for their own guests.

Useful branches of the Bank of China with foreign exchange counters include a branch next to Oriental Plaza on Wangfujing Dajie, in the Lufthansa Center and in the China World Trade Center.

As Renminbi (Y) is still not fully convertible on international markets, you need to have a few exchange receipts if you want to change any remaining Renminbi back into another currency at the end of your trip.

Credit Cards

Most tourist hotels and restaurants and some major department stores accept credit cards. Many travel agencies also now accept credit cards for air tickets (plus a 4% service charge).

It's possible to get a cash advance on credit cards at CITIC Bank (19 Jianguomenwai Dajie), or the Bank of China (Sundongan Plaza and Sanlitun branches), but there is a steep (4%) commission. You can also cash personal cheques if you have an Amex card at CITIC Industrial Bank (CITIC Bldg, Jianguomenwai Dajie) and large branches of the Bank of China.

Currency

The basic unit of Chinese currency is the *yuán* – which is designated in this book by a capital 'Y'. In spoken Chinese, the word *kuài* or *kuàiqián* is often substituted for *yuán*. Ten *jiǎo* – in spoken Chinese, it's pronounced *máo* – make up one *yuán*. Ten *fēn* make up one *jiǎo*, but these days *fēn* are very rare because they are worth next to nothing.

Renminbi (RMB), or 'people's money', is issued by the Bank of China. Paper notes are issued in denominations of one, two, five, 10, 20, 50 and 100 *yuán*; one, two and five *jiǎo*; and one, two and five *fēn*. Coins are in denominations of one *yuán*; one, two and five *jiǎo*; and one, two and five *fēn*.

Travellers Cheques

Besides security considerations, travellers cheques are useful to carry in China because the exchange rate is actually more favourable than the rate for cash. Cheques from most of the world's leading banks and issuing agencies are acceptable in Běijīng – stick with the major players such as Citibank, American Express (Amex) and Visa and you should be OK. Note that although cashing travellers cheques is easy in Běijīng, don't expect to find anywhere to cash your cheques in small towns elsewhere in China.

Amex (Map pp268–9; ☎ 6505 2838; Room 2313, Tower 1, China World Trade Center, 1 Jianguomenwai Dajie)

Citibank (Map pp268–9; ☎ 6510 2933; fax 6510 2932; 16th fl, Tower 2, Bright China Chang'an Bldg, 7 Jianguomenwai Dajie)

MOVING TO/FROM BĚIJĪNG

If you're moving things like furniture or all your household goods, you'll need an international mover or freight forwarder. Only foreigners on working visas are permitted to move the contents of a flat or house abroad from Běijīng in one go. In Běijīng, contact one of the following international companies, but note that their rates are typically around US\$500 to US\$1000 per cubic metre:

Allied Pickfords (☎ 5870 1133; www.alliedpickfords.com.cn; Room 812, Bldg A, The Space International Centre, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu)

Asian Express (☎ 8580 1471/2/3; www.aemovers.com.hk; Room 1612, Tower D, SOHO New Town, 88 Jianguo Lu)

Crown Relocations (☎ 6585 0640; www.crownrelo.com; Room 201, West Tower, Golden Bridge Bldg, 1 Jianguomenwai Dajie, Cháoyáng)

Santa Fe (☎ 6497 0688; www.santaferelo.com; 2, Street No 8, Beijing Airport Logistics Zone)

NEWSPAPERS & MAGAZINES

Copies of popular imported English-language international magazines, such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Far Eastern Economic Review* and the *Economist* can be bought from the bookshops of four- and five-star hotels around Běijīng. These hotels also stock European magazines in French or German and foreign newspapers such as the *Times*, the *International Herald Tribune*, the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, the *Financial Times* and the *South China Morning Post*. The occasional censorship of touchy subjects (eg unrest in Xinjiāng) generally involves the ripping out of pages. Most English-language newspapers and magazines are accessible online from Běijīng.

Běijīng has a lively galaxy of English-language rags available free at most five-star hotels and expat bars and restaurants. The slick and confident *That's Beijing* (www.thatsbj.com) is well designed, well written and the best of the bunch. Others include *Time Out Beijing*, *City Weekend* (www.cityweekend.com.cn) and *Beijing This Month* (www.btmbeijing.com).

The *China Daily* (www.chinadaily.com.cn), the government's favourite English-language mouthpiece, is generally an unappetising blend of censorship and pro-government opinion, but it is improving and the weekend culture section, *Beijing Weekend*, is useful for arts listings, events and trips out of Běijīng. Among the countless other Chinese-language newspapers is the state's flagship paper, the *Renmin Ribao* (人民日报; People's Daily), and papers of more specialist leanings, such as the *Nongmin Ribao* (农民日报; Farmer's Daily).

For a country expected to shape the course of the 21st century, the media outlook in China (see p21) is grim indeed. The BBC has its excellent Chinese-language news website blocked around the clock and even the BBC news website (in English) is blocked.

Various embassies also have small libraries of newspapers and magazines in English and other languages. The Cultural and Educational Section of the British Embassy (Map p264; ☎ 6590 6903; www.britishcouncil.org.cn; 4th fl, Landmark Building Tower 1, 8 Dongsanhuan Beilu, Cháoyáng; ☎ 9am–5pm Mon–Fri) is worth visiting.

PHARMACIES

Pharmacies (药店; *yàodiàn*) are identified by a green cross. Several sizeable pharmacies on Wangfujing Dajie stock both Chinese (中药; *zhōngyào*) and Western medicine (西药; *xīyào*). You do not necessarily need a prescription for the drug you are seeking in Běijīng, so ask at the pharmacy first. In other parts of China, however, you will probably need a prescription issued by a doctor. As with many other large shops in Běijīng, once you have chosen your item, you are issued with a receipt which you take to the till counter (收银台; *shòuyǐntái*) to pay, and then return to the counter where you chose your medicine to collect your purchase. Note that many chemists are effectively 24-hour and have a small window or slit through which you can pay for and collect medicines through the night. Chemists stocking traditional Chinese medicine can be found all over town. The best known is **Tongrentang Yaodian** (Map pp268-9; ☎ 6308 5413; 24 Dazhalan Jie). Branches of **Watson's** (Map p264; 1st fl, Full Link Plaza, 19 Chaoyangmenwai Dajie; Map pp268-9; CC17, 19, CC21, 23 Oriental Plaza, 1 Dongchan'an Jie) also purvey medicines, but are more geared to selling cosmetics, sunscreens, deodorants and the like.

Quanxin Pharmacy (Quánxīn Dàoyàofáng; Map p262; ☎ 652 4123; 153 Wangfujing Dajie; ☎ 8.30am-10pm) Large pharmacy opposite St Joseph's Church.

Wangfujing Medicine Shop (Wángfújīng Yīyào Shāngdiàn; Map p262; ☎ 6524 0122; 267 Wangfujing Dajie; ☎ 8.30am-9pm) Come here for a large range of Western and Chinese drugs.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Kodak Express outlets are ubiquitous in Běijīng, where you can burn digital images to a CD for ¥15. There is a handy Kodak Express branch just off Tiananmen Square (Map pp268-9).

POST

Convenient post offices can be found in the CITIC building next to the Friendship Store, in the basement of the China World Trade Center, east of Wangfujing Dajie on Dongdan Ertiao, on the south side of Xichang'an Jie west of the Beijing Concert Hall and just east of the Jianguo

Hotel Qianmen, on Yong'an Lu. You can also post letters via your hotel reception desk, or at green post boxes around town. Large post offices are generally open daily between 8.30am and 6pm. Check the Information sections of the maps at the rear of this book for locations.

Letters and parcels marked 'Poste Restante, Beijing Main Post Office' will arrive at the **International Post Office** (Map p264; ☎ 6512 8114; Jianguomen Beidajie; ☎ 8am-7pm Mon-Sat), 200m north of Jianguomen subway station. Outsize overseas parcels should be sent from here; smaller parcels (up to around 20kg) can go from smaller post offices. Both outgoing and incoming packages will be opened and inspected. If you're sending a parcel, don't seal the package until you've had it inspected.

Letters take around a week to reach most overseas destinations. China charges extra for registered mail, but offers cheaper postal rates for printed matter, small packets, parcels, bulk mailings and so on.

Express Mail Service (EMS) is available for domestic and international destinations. Many post offices offer EMS. The main EMS office (☎ 6512 9948; 7 Qianmen Dajie) can be found south of Tiananmen Square.

Courier Companies

Several private couriers in Běijīng offer international express posting of documents and parcels, and have reliable pick-up service as well as drop-off centres:

DHL (☎ 6466 2211/6466 5566, 800-810 8000; www.dhl.com; 45 Xinyuan Jie, Cháoyáng) Further branches in the China World Trade Center and COFCO Plaza.

Federal Express (FedEx; ☎ 6561 2003, 800-810 2338; Hanwei Bldg, 7 Guanguhua Lu, Cháoyáng; office in Rm 107, No 1 Office Bldg, Oriental Plaza). FedEx also has self-service counters in Kodak Express shops around town.

United Parcel Service (UPS; ☎ 6505 5005; www.ups.com; Rm 1818, China World Tower 1, 1 Jianguomenwai Dajie).

RADIO

The BBC World Service can be picked up on 17760, 15278, 21660, 12010 and 9740 kHz. Reception can often be poor, however, and Voice of America (VOA) is often a bit clearer at 17820, 15425, 21840, 15250, 9760, 5880 and 6125 kHz. You can find

tuning information for the BBC on the web at www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/tuning, for Radio Australia at www.abc.net.au/ra, and for VOA at www.voa.gov. Crystal clear programmes from the BBC World Service can be heard online: follow the links on www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice.

China Radio International (CRI) is China's overseas radio service, and it broadcasts in about 40 foreign languages, as well as in *pütōnghuà* and several local dialects.

SAFETY

Generally speaking, Běijīng is a very safe city compared to other similarly sized cities in the world. Serious crime against foreigners is rare, although it is increasing as Běijīng's population expands due to huge migration by the nation's poor in search of employment.

You need to guard against pickpockets, especially on public transport and crowded places such as train stations. If you want to avoid opening wallets or bags on the bus, keep a few coins or small notes ready in an accessible pocket before launching yourself into the crowd. A money belt is the safest way to carry valuables, particularly when travelling on buses and trains.

Hotels are usually safe places to leave your stuff and in the older establishments each floor has an attendant watching who goes in and out. Staying in a dormitory carries its own set of risks, and while there have been a few reports of thefts by staff, the culprits are more likely to be other foreigners. Use lockers as much as possible.

The greatest hazard may well be crossing the road, a manoeuvre that requires great alertness. Driving standards are poor overall, traffic comes from all directions, while a reluctance to give way in any situation means drivers constantly compete with each other to make progress around town. If right of way is uncertain, drivers tend to dig their heels in and maintain their course. Safe crossing points are indicated by zebra crossing markings and/or pedestrian lights, although cars are not obliged to stop at zebra crossings and rarely do so. The green 'cross now' light doesn't necessarily mean that traffic won't try to run you down, as cars can turn right on a red light. In other words, learn to look in three different directions at once and be prepared to sprint.

Carry several forms of ID with you, including your passport. You will always need your passport to check into Chinese hotels, regardless of budget. It's a good idea to make photocopies of the visa and information pages of your passport, in case of loss. This makes the job of replacing your passport much simpler and faster.

SCAMS

Foreigners at Tiananmen Square or wandering Wangfujing Dajie are routinely hounded by pesky 'art students' either practising their English or roping visitors into going to exhibitions of over-priced art. They will try to strike up a conversation with you, but while some travellers enjoy their company, others find their attentions irritating and feel pressurised into buying art. Also be alert to similar types loitering around Tiananmen Square luring foreigners to expensive teahouses where they are left to foot staggering bills. See the Getting Into Town boxed text (p210) for details of the Capital Airport taxi scam. Also beware of fraudsters trying to sell you departure tax (now included in the price of your ticket) at Capital Airport.

TAXES

Four- and five-star hotels add a service charge of 15%, and smarter restaurants levy a service charge of 10%.

TELEPHONE

Both international and domestic calls can be made easily from your hotel room or from public telephones. Local calls from hotel room phones are free, although international phone calls are expensive and it is preferable to buy a phonecard (see Phonecards). Public telephones are plentiful. If making a domestic phone call, public phones at newspaper stands (报刊亭; *bàokāntíng*) and hole-in-the-wall shops (小卖部; *xiǎomàibù*) are useful; make your call and pay the owner (a local call is around five *jiǎo*). Most public phones take IC cards (see Phonecards, right).

Domestic long-distance rates in China vary according to distance, but are cheap. Card-less international calls are expensive (¥8.2 per minute or ¥2.2 for calls to Hong Kong and Macau), but calls made between

midnight and 7am are 40% cheaper than at other times; it's far cheaper to use an IP card (see Phonecards, right). Domestic and international long-distance phone calls can also be made from main telecommunication offices.

The country code to use to access China is 86; the code for Hong Kong is 852, and Macau is 853. To call a number in Běijīng from abroad, dial the international access code (00 in the UK, 011 in the USA), dial the country code (86) and then the area code for Běijīng (010), dropping the first zero, and then dial the local number. For telephone calls within the same city, drop the area code (区号; *qūhào*). If calling internationally from Běijīng or from China drop the first zero of the area or city code after dialling the international access code and then dial the number you wish to call.

Important city area codes within China include:

Běijīng	☎ 010
Chéngdū	☎ 028
Chóngqīng	☎ 023
Guǎngzhōu	☎ 020
Hángzhōu	☎ 0571
Harbin	☎ 0451
Hong Kong	☎ 852
Jǐ'nán	☎ 0531
Kūnmíng	☎ 0871
Nánjīng	☎ 025
Qīngdǎo	☎ 0532
Shànghǎi	☎ 021
Shìjiāzhuāng	☎ 0311
Tiānjīn	☎ 022
Xiàmén	☎ 0592

The English-language Běijīng *Yellow Pages* is available at most business centres, and you might find it provided in your hotel room; alternatively, you can go online at www.yellowpage.com.cn or pick up your own copy at 65 Jianguomennei Dajie (☎ 6512 0400).

Mobile Phones

Mobile-phone shops (手机店; *shǒujīdiàn*) such as China Mobile and China Unicom sell SIM cards which cost from Y60 to Y100 (numbers containing 4's are avoided

by the Chinese, making them cheaper), which include Y50 of credit. This can be topped up by buying a credit-charging card (充值卡; *chōngzhí kǎ*) for Y50 or Y100 worth of credits. Cards are also available from ubiquitous newspaper kiosks displaying the China Mobile sign.

The mobile phone you use in your home country should work (as long as it has not been locked by your network – check with your network); alternatively, buy a phone locally. The local per-minute, non-roaming city call charge for China Mobile is seven *jiǎo* if calling a landline and 1.50 *jiǎo* if calling another mobile phone. Receiving calls on your mobile are free from mobile phones and seven *jiǎo* from landline phones. Roaming charges cost an additional two *jiǎo* per minute, but the call receiving charge is the same. Overseas calls can be made for Y4.80 per minute plus the local charge per minute by dialling ☎ 17951 – then follow the instructions and add 00 before the country code. Otherwise you will be charged the IDD call charge plus seven *jiǎo* per minute.

If you have an English-speaking Chinese contact, mobile phones can be particularly useful for handing over to your non-English speaking taxi driver (or whoever you want to talk to). Just phone your friend, tell him/her what you want to say and hand the phone over to whoever you are trying to communicate with.

Phonecards

For domestic calls, IC (Integrated Circuit; IC 卡; *IC kǎ*) cards, available from kiosks, hole-in-the-wall shops, internet cafés and China Telecom offices, are prepaid cards in a variety of denominations that can be used in most public telephones.

Note that some IC cards can be used only in Běijīng (or locally, depending on where the card is purchased), while other cards can be used in phones throughout China, so check.

For international calls on a mobile phone or hotel phone, buy an IP (Internet Phone) card. International calls on IP cards (IP 卡; *IP kǎ*) are Y1.80 per minute to the USA or Canada, Y1.50 per minute to Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan and Y3.20 to all other countries; domestic long-distance calls are Y0.30 per minute. Follow the instructions on the reverse; English-language service

is usually available. IP cards come in various denominations, typically with a big discount (a Y100 card should cost around Y40). IP cards can be found at the same places as IC cards. Again, some IP cards can only be used locally, while others can be used nationwide, so it is important to buy the right card (and check the expiry date).

TELEVISION

The national TV outfit, Chinese Central Television (CCTV), has an English-language channel (CCTV 9) that is useful for news and programmes on cultural topics, but is markedly bland. Its news bulletins in English can be useful but only if you can't get hold of anything else, as there is the usual censorship and absence of true debate or objectivity. Most in-room TVs in hotels have CCTV 9. CCTV 4 also has some English programmes. Tourist hotels may have ESPN, Star Sports, CNN or BBC News 24. Sports programmes and live matches (eg English Premiership football) can be picked up on CCTV 5 (in Chinese) or on BJTV, otherwise you will have to find a bar with sports TV.

Satellite TV is simple to arrange for residents, with most customers going for pirate versions which cost around Y1600 for a one-off installation with no subsequent charge. Those purchasing the pirated version have to put up with periodic transmission loss, however, as broadcast codes are occasionally changed (requiring a few days to crack).

TIME

All of China runs on the same time as Běijīng, which is set eight hours ahead of GMT/UTC (there's no daylight saving during summer). When it's noon in Běijīng it's 4am in London, 5am in Frankfurt, Paris and Rome, noon in Hong Kong, 2pm in Melbourne, 4pm in Wellington, and, on the previous day, 8pm in Los Angeles and 11pm in Montreal and New York.

TIPPING

Běijīng is one of those wonderful cities where tipping is not the norm. This applies throughout China. Midrange restaurants and above have closed the gap with a serv-

ice charge (服务费; *fúwùfèi*), however, so there is no need to indulge them with a tip. Porters at upmarket hotels will, of course, expect a tip. Taxi drivers certainly do not expect a tip and will often refuse.

TOILETS

Travellers on the road relate China toilet tales to each other like soldiers comparing old war wounds. Despite proud claims to have invented the first flushing toilet, China has some wicked loos, but in a country of 1.3 billion, that is perhaps unsurprising. Over the last decade the capital has made its toilets less of an assault course of foul smells and primitive appliances, but many remain sordid. Make a beeline for fast-food outlets, top-end hotels and department stores for more hygienic alternatives. Toilet paper is rarely provided in streetside public toilets so *always* keep a stash with you. In some Běijīng hotels and buildings, especially old ones, the sewage system can't handle paper. As a general rule, if you see a wastebasket next to the toilet, that's where you should throw the toilet paper; otherwise the loo could choke up and flood.

Hyperventilate before tackling toilets on the older trains, or enter with a strong cigarette.

Remember:

men 男
women 女

TOURIST INFORMATION

In a land where everything disconcertingly has its price and awareness of the needs of international visitors was always inadequate, China never got the hang of tourist offices. The local chain of **Beijing Tourist Information Centers** (Běijīng Lǚyóu Zìxún Fúwù Zhōngxīn; ☎ 9am-5pm) – with uniform turquoise façades – is an attempt to get its act together. English skills there are limited, but you can grab a free tourist map of town, nab handfuls of free literature and, at some branches (eg Cháoyáng), rustle up train tickets. Preparations for the 2008 Olympics should surely see an injection of investment and trained staff. Useful branches include:

Beijing Train Station (Map pp268–90; ☎ 6528 4848; 16 Laoqianju Hutong)

Capital Airport (☎ 6459 8148)

Cháoyáng (Map p264; ☎ 6417 6627, 6417 6656; chaoyang@bjta.gov.cn; 27 Sanlitun Beilu)

Dōngchéng (☎ 6512 3043, 6512 2991; dongcheng@bjta.gov.cn; 10 Dengshikou Xijie)

Fèngtái (☎ 6332 3983; fengtai@bjta.gov.cn; Zhongyan Hotel lobby, Guangwai Dajie)

Hàidiàn (☎ 8262 2895; haidian@bjta.gov.cn; 40 Zhong-guancun Dajie)

Xíchéng (Map pp266-7; ☎ 6616 0108, 6612 0110; xicheng@bjta.gov.cn; 1st fl, Keji Guangchang, Xidan Beidajie)

Xuānwú (Map pp266-7; ☎ 6351 0018; xuanwu@bjta.gov.cn; 3 Hufang Lu)

The **Beijing Tourism Hotline** (☎ 6513 0828; ☎ 24hr) has English-speaking operators available (press '1' after dialling the number) to answer questions and hear complaints. **CITS** (China International Travel Service; Map p264; ☎ 8511 8522; www.cits.com.cn; Rm 1212, CITS Bldg, 1 Dongdan Beidajie) is more useful for booking tours.

Hotels can offer you advice or connect you with a suitable tour, and some have useful tourist information desks (such as the Fangyuan Hotel, p183) which can point you in the right direction.

Some bars also informally address themselves to the needs of travellers: Passby Bar (p143) has travel-oriented staff who are keen to help, as long as you order a drink or two.

TRAVELLERS WITH DISABILITIES

If you are wheelchair-bound or have a mobility disability, Běijīng will be a major obstacle course. Pavements are often crowded and in a dangerous condition, with high curbs preventing wheelchair access. Many streets can be crossed only via an underground or overhead walkway with many steps. You will also have to stick to the main roads, as cars and bicycles often occupy the pavements of smaller alleys and lanes, forcing pavement users on to the road. There are no lifts in the subway, where escalators usually only go up. Getting around temples and big sights such as the Forbidden City and the Summer Palace can be very trying for those in wheelchairs. A ramp may be found at the entrance to a

sight, but there may be no further ramps within the complex you are visiting. It is recommended that you take a lightweight chair so you can collapse it easily for navigating around obstacles or loading into the back of taxis.

Those with sight, hearing or mobility disabilities must be extremely cautious of the traffic, which almost never yields to pedestrians. Most, but not all, hotels will have lifts, and while many top-end hotels do have rooms for those with disabilities as well as good wheelchair access, hotel restaurants may not.

VISAS

A visa is required for the People's Republic of China (PRC), but at the time of writing visas were not required for most Western nationals to visit Hong Kong or Macau.

For most travellers, the type of visa is an L, from the Chinese word for travel (*lǚxíng*). This letter is stamped right on the visa.

Visas are readily available from Chinese embassies and consulates in most Western and many other countries (see p220 for a list of these). A standard 30-day, single-entry visa from most Chinese embassies abroad can be issued in three to five working days. Express visas cost twice the usual fee. You normally pay up front for the visa, rather than on collection. You can get an application form in person at the embassy or consulate, or obtain one online from a consular website. A visa mailed to you will take up to three weeks. Rather than going through an embassy or consulate, you can also make arrangements at certain travel agencies. Visa applications require at least one photo.

When asked on the application form, try to list standard tourist destinations such as Běijīng and Chéngdé; if you are toying with the idea of going to Tibet or western Xinjiāng, just leave it off the form as it might raise eyebrows; the list you give is not binding in any way.

A 30-day visa is activated on the date you enter China, and must be used within three months of the date of issue. The 60-day and 90-day visas are activated on the date they are issued. Although visas valid for more than 30 days were once difficult to obtain anywhere other than in Hong Kong,

90-day visas are now becoming easier to obtain abroad.

Be aware that political events can suddenly make visas more difficult to procure.

A Chinese visa covers virtually the whole of China, although some restricted areas exist (eg Yixiàn in Ānhuī province) which will require an additional permit from the Public Security Bureau (PSB), at a cost. In addition to a visa, permits are also required for travel to Tibet.

When you check into a hotel, there is a question on the registration form asking what type of visa you hold. The letter specifying what type of visa you have is usually stamped on the visa itself. There are eight categories of visas, as follows:

Type	Description	Chinese name
L	Travel	lǚxíng 旅行
F	Business or student (less than 6 months)	fāngwèn 访问
D	Resident	dīngjū 定居
G	Transit	guòjìng 过境
X	Long-term student	xuéshēng 学生
Z	Working	gōngzuò 工作
J	Journalist	jìzhě 记者
C	Flight attendant	chéngwù 乘务

Getting a Visa in Hong Kong

Hong Kong is still a good place to pick up a visa for China.

Almost any travel agent can obtain one for you or you can apply directly to the **Visa Office of the People's Republic of China** (☎ 852-3413 2300; 7th fl, Lower Block, China Resources Centre, 26 Harbour Rd, Wan Chai; ☎ 9am-noon & 2-5pm Mon-Fri). Visas processed here in one/two/three days cost HK\$400/300/150. Double/six-month multiple/one-year multiple visas are HK\$220/400/600 (plus HK\$150/250 if you require express/urgent service). Be aware that US and UK passport holders must pay considerably more for their visas. You must supply two photos, which can be taken at photo booths in the MTR (Mass Transit Railway) and at the visa office for HK\$35.

Visas for China can be arranged by **China Travel Service** (CTS; ☎ 852-2522 0450; Ground fl, China Travel Bldg, 77 Queen's Rd Central; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat, 9.30am-12.30pm & 2.30-5pm Sun) or more cheaply at many other

Hong Kong travel agencies, including **Phoenix Services Agency** (☎ 852-2722 7378; info@phoenixtrvl.com; Room 1404-5, 14th fl, Austin Tower, 22-26A Austin Av, Tsim Sha Tsui; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat) and **Traveller Services** (☎ 852-2375 2222; www.taketraveller.com; Room 1813 Mirimar Tower, 132 Nathan Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat).

Residence Permit

The 'green card' is a residence permit, issued to English teachers, foreign expats and long-term students who live in China. Green cards are issued for a period of six months to one year and must be renewed annually. Besides needing all the right paperwork, you must also pass a health examination (for which there is a charge). If you lose your card, you'll pay a hefty fee to have it replaced.

Visa Extensions

The Foreign Affairs Branch of the local **Public Security Bureau** (PSB; Gōngānjū) – the police force – handles visa extensions.

The **PSB main office** (Běijīngshì Gōngānjū Chūrùjìng Guǎnlìchù; Map p262; ☎ 8402 0101; 2 Andingmen Dongdajie; ☎ 8.30am-4.30pm Mon-Sat) is in Dōngchéng. The visa office is on the 2nd floor on the east side of the building – take the escalator up. You can also apply for a residence permit here.

Visa extensions vary in price, depending on your nationality. US travellers pay Y185, Australians pay Y100, Canadians pay Y165 and UK citizens pay Y160; and prices can go up or down. Expect to wait up to five days for your visa extension to be processed. You can obtain passport photographs here (Y30 for five).

First-time extensions of 30 days are easy to obtain and are issued on any tourist visa, but further extensions are harder to get and might give you only a further week. Offices of the PSB outside Běijīng might be more lenient and more willing to offer further extensions, but don't bank on it.

The penalty for overstaying your visa in China is up to Y500 per day. Some travellers have reported having trouble with officials who read the 'valid until' date on

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their visa incorrectly. For a one-month tourist (L) visa, the 'valid until' date is the date by which you must enter the country, not the date upon which your visa expires. Your visa expires the number of days for which your visa is valid after the date of entry into China (but note that you must enter China within three months of the date the visa was issued). Sixty- and 90-day visas are activated on the day they are issued.

Visa extensions can also be obtained for a fee through private visa services in Běijīng. The legality of these services is questionable, and most of them seem to operate through private connections with the PSB. Although some foreigners have used these services without incident, you are taking a risk. Look in the classified section of the expat mags for listings, or try to get a personal recommendation from someone.

WOMEN TRAVELLERS

Women travellers generally feel safe in Běijīng. Chinese men are not macho and respect for women is deeply ingrained in Chinese culture.

As with anywhere else, you will be taking a risk if you travel alone. A self-defence course can equip you with extra physical skills and boost your confidence before your trip. Taking a whistle or alarm with you would offer a measure of defence in any unpleasant encounter. Calling home regularly can reassure your family that you are safe.

If travelling to towns outside Běijīng, stick to hotels near the city centre. For further tips, consult www.oculartravel.com,

which has a very useful section for women travellers. Another useful website is www.journeywoman.com.

Tampons (卫生棉条; *wèishēng miántiáo*) can be found almost everywhere. It may be advisable to take supplies of the pill (避孕药; *biyùnyào*) although you will find brands like Marvelon at local pharmacies; morning after pills (紧急避孕药; *jīnjí biyùnyào*) are also available. Male condoms (保险套; *bǎoxiǎntào*) are widely available.

WORK

In recent years it has become easier for foreigners to find work in Běijīng, although Chinese-language skills will naturally increase your options.

Teaching jobs that pay by the hour are usually quite lucrative. If you have recognised ELT qualifications, such as TEFL and/or experience, teaching can be a rewarding and profitable way to earn a living in Běijīng. International schools offer salaries in the region of Y6000 to Y10,000 per month to qualified teachers, with accommodation often provided. More basic (and plentiful) teaching positions will offer upwards of around Y100 per hour. Schools regularly advertise in the English culture magazines, such as *That's Beijing*; you can visit its classified pages online at www.thatsbj.com.

There are also opportunities in translation, editing, the hotel industry, copywriting, acting, modelling, photography, bar work, sales and marketing and beyond. Most people find jobs in Běijīng through word of mouth, so networking is the key.

Pronunciation 236
Social 236
Practical 237
Food 239
Emergencies 239
Health 239
Glossary 240

Language ■

Language

It's true – anyone can speak another language. Don't worry if you haven't studied languages before or that you studied a language at school for years and can't remember any of it. It doesn't even matter if you failed English grammar. After all, that's never affected your ability to speak English! And this is the key to picking up a language in another country. You just need to start speaking.



Learn a few key phrases before you go. Write them on pieces of paper and stick them on the fridge, by the bed or even on the computer – anywhere that you'll see them often.

You'll find that the people of Beijing appreciate travellers trying to speak a little Mandarin, no matter how muddled you may think you sound. So don't just stand there, say something! If you want to learn more Mandarin than we've included here, pick up a copy of Lonely Planet's comprehensive but user-friendly *Mandarin Phrasebook*.

PRONUNCIATION

Pinyin

In 1958 the Chinese adopted a system of writing their language using the Roman alphabet, known as *Pinyin*. Pinyin is often used on shop fronts, street signs and advertising billboards, but very few Chinese are able to read or write it.

A few consonants in Pinyin may cause confusion when compared to their counterparts in English:

c	as the 'ts' in 'bits'
ch	as in 'chop', but with the tongue curled back
q	as the 'ch' in 'cheese'
r	as the 's' in 'pleasure'
sh	as in 'ship', but with the tongue curled back
x	as the 'sh' in 'ship'
z	as the 'dz' sound in 'suds'
zh	as the 'j' in 'judge', but with the tongue curled back

Tones

Chinese is a language with a large number of words with the same pronunciation but a different meaning; what distinguishes them are 'tones' – rises and falls in the pitch of the voice on certain syllables. The word *ma*, for example, has four different meanings depending on tone:

high tone	mā (mother)
rising tone	má (hemp, numb)

falling-rising tone	mǎ (horse)
falling tone	mà (to scold, to swear)

Mastering tones is tricky for newcomers to Mandarin, but with a little practice it gets a lot easier.

SOCIAL

Meeting People

Hello.	Ní hǎo.	你好
Goodbye.	Zàijiàn.	再见
Please.	Qǐng.	请
Thank you.	Xièxie.	谢谢
Thank you very much.	Tài xièxie le.	太谢谢了
Yes.	Shìde.	是的
No. (don't have)	Méi yǒu.	没有
No. (not so)	Búshì.	不是
Do you speak English?	Nǐ huì shuō yīngyǔ ma?	你会说英语吗?
Do you understand?	Dǒng ma?	懂吗?
I understand.	Wǒ tīngdèdǒng.	我听得懂
I don't understand.	Wǒ tīngbudǒng.	我听不懂

Could you please ...?	3	sān
Nǐ néng bunéng ...?	4	sì
你能不能 ...?	5	wǔ
repeat that	6	liù
chóngfù	7	qī
repeat more slowly	8	bā
màn diǎnr shuō	9	jiǔ
write it down	10	shí
xiě xiàlái	11	shíyī
	12	shíèr
	13	shí sān
	14	shí sì
	15	shí wǔ
... yǒu shénme yúlè huódòng?	16	shí liù
... 有什么娱乐活动?	17	shí qī
locally	18	shí bā
bēndì	19	shí jiǔ
this weekend	20	èrshí
zhège zhōumò	21	èrshí yī
today	22	èrshí èr
jīntiān	30	sānshí
tonight	31	sānshí yī
jīntiān wǎnshàng	40	sìshí
	50	wǔshí
	60	liùshí
	70	qīshí
	80	bāshí
	90	jiǔshí
gay venues	100	yībǎi
tóngxìngliàn chángsuǒ	200	liǎngbǎi
places to eat	1000	yīqiān
chīfàn de dìfang	2000	liǎngqiān
pubs	10,000	yīwàn
jiǔbā	20,000	liǎngwàn
	100,000	shíwàn
	200,000	èrshíwàn

Going Out

What's on ...?	
... yǒu shénme yúlè huódòng?	
... 有什么娱乐活动?	
locally	
bēndì	本地
this weekend	
zhège zhōumò	这个周末
today	
jīntiān	今天
tonight	
jīntiān wǎnshàng	今天晚上

Where are the ...?

... zài nǎr?	
... 在哪儿?	
clubs	
jùlèbù	俱乐部
gay venues	
tóngxìngliàn chángsuǒ	同性恋场所
places to eat	
chīfàn de dìfang	吃饭的地方
pubs	
jiǔbā	酒吧

Is there a local entertainment guide?

Yǒu dāngdì yúlè zhǐnán ma?	
有当地娱乐指南吗?	

PRACTICAL

Question Words

Who?	
Shuí?	谁?
What?	
Shénme?	什么?
When?	
Shénme shíhou?	什么时候?
Where?	
Nǎr?	哪儿?
How?	
Zěnmeyàng?	怎么?

Numbers & Amounts

1	yī/yāo	一/幺
2	èr/liǎng	二/两

3	sān	三
4	sì	四
5	wǔ	五
6	liù	六
7	qī	七
8	bā	八
9	jiǔ	九
10	shí	十
11	shíyī	十一
12	shíèr	十二
13	shí sān	十三
14	shí sì	十四
15	shí wǔ	十五
16	shí liù	十六
17	shí qī	十七
18	shí bā	十八
19	shí jiǔ	十九
20	èrshí	二十
21	èrshí yī	二十一
22	èrshí èr	二十二
30	sānshí	三十
31	sānshí yī	三十一
40	sìshí	四十
50	wǔshí	五十
60	liùshí	六十
70	qīshí	七十
80	bāshí	八十
90	jiǔshí	九十
100	yībǎi	一百
200	liǎngbǎi	两百
1000	yīqiān	一千
2000	liǎngqiān	两千
10,000	yīwàn	一万
20,000	liǎngwàn	两万
100,000	shíwàn	十万
200,000	èrshíwàn	二十万

Days

Monday	xīngqīyī	星期一
Tuesday	xīngqīèr	星期二
Wednesday	xīngqīsān	星期三
Thursday	xīngqīsì	星期四
Friday	xīngqīwǔ	星期五
Saturday	xīngqīliù	星期六
Sunday	xīngqītīān	星期天

Banking

I'd like to ...		我想 ...
Wǒ xiǎng ...		
change money		
huàn qián		换钱
change travellers cheques		
huàn lǚxíng zhīpiào		换旅行支票
cash a cheque		
zhīpiào		支票

Excuse me, where's the nearest ...?

Qǐng wèn, zuìjìn de ... zài nǎr?

请问, 最近的 ... 在哪儿?
automatic teller machine
zìdòng guiyuánjī
自动柜员机
foreign exchange office
wàihuì duìhuànchù
外汇兑换处

Post

Where is the post office?

Yóujú zài nǎr?

邮局在哪里?

I'd like to send a ...

Wǒ xiǎng jì ...

我想寄 ...
letter 信
xìn
fax 传真
chuánzhēn
package 包裹
bāoguó
postcard 明信片
míngxìnpiàn

I'd like to buy (a/an) ...

Wǒ xiǎng mǎi ...

我想买 ...
aerogram 航空邮简
hángkōngyóujiàn
envelope 信封
xìnfēng
stamps 邮票
yóupiào

Internet

Is there a local internet café?

Běndì yǒu wǎngbā ma?

本地有网吧吗?

Where can I get online?

Wǒ zài nǎr kěyǐ shàng wǎng?

我在哪儿可以上网?

Can I check my email account?

Wǒ chá yíxià zìjǐ de email hù, hǎo ma?

我查一下自己的email户, 好吗?

computer 电脑
diànnǎo
email 电子邮件 (often called 'email')
diànzìyóujiàn
internet 因特网/互联网
yīntè wǎng/hùlián wǎng
(formal name)

Phone & Mobile Phones

I want to make ...

Wǒ xiǎng dǎ ...

我想打 ...
a call (to ...)
diànhuà (dào ...)
打电话 (到 ...)
a reverse-charge/collect call
duìfāng fùfèi diànhuà
对方付费电话

Where can I find a/an ...?

Nǎr yǒu ...

哪儿有 ...?

I'd like a/an ...

Wǒ xiǎng yào ...

我想要 ...
adaptor plug
zhuǎnjiēqì chātóu
转接器插头
charger for my phone
diànhuà chōngdiànqì
电话充电器
mobile/cell phone for hire
zūyòng yídòng diànhuà
租用移动电话 or
zūyòng shǒujī
租用手机
prepaid mobile/cell phone
yùfù yídòng diànhuà
预付移动电话 or
yùfù shǒujī
预付手机
SIM card for your network
nǐmen wǎngluò de SIM kǎ
你们网络的SIM卡

I want to buy a phone card.

Wǒ xiǎng mǎi diànhuà kǎ.

我想买电话卡

Transport

What time does ... leave/arrive?

... jǐdiǎn kāi/dào?

... 几点开/到?
the bus 汽车
qìchē
the train 火车
huóchē
the plane 飞机
fēijī
the boat 船
chuán

When is the ... bus?

... qìchē jǐdiǎn kāi?

... 汽车几点开?
first 头班
tóubān
next 下一班
xià yí bān
last 末班
mòbān

Is this taxi available?

Zhèi chē lā rén ma?

这车拉人吗?

Please use the meter.

Dǎ biǎo.

打表

How much (is it) to ...?

Qù ... duōshǎo qián?

去 ... 多少钱?

I want to go to ...

Wǒ yào qù ...

我要去 ...

this address

zhège dìzhǐ

这个地址

FOOD

breakfast 早饭
zǎofàn
lunch 午饭
wǔfàn
dinner 晚饭
wǎnfàn
snack 小吃
xiǎochī
eat 吃
chī
drink 喝
hē

Can you recommend a ...?

Nǐ néng bunéng tuījiàn yíge ...?

你能不能推荐一个 ...?

bar/pub 酒吧/酒馆
jiǔbā/jiǔguǎn
café 咖啡馆
kāfēiguǎn
restaurant 餐馆
fànguǎn

Is service/cover charge included in the bill?

Zhàngdān zhōng bāokuò fúwùfèi ma?

帐单中包括服务费吗?

For more detailed information on food and dining out, see p40.

EMERGENCIES

It's an emergency!

Zhèshì jǐnjí qíngkuàng!

这是紧急情况!

Could you help me please?

Nǐ néng bunéng bāng wǒ ge máng?

你能不能帮我个忙?

Call the police/a doctor/an ambulance!

Qǐng jiào jǐngchá/yīshēng/jiùhùchē!

请叫警察/医生/救护车!

Where's the police station?

Jǐngchájú zài nǎr?

警察局在哪儿?

HEALTH

Excuse me, where's the nearest ...?

Qǐng wèn, zuìjìn de ... zài nǎr?

请问, 最近的 ... 在哪儿?

chemist 药店
yàodiàn
chemist (night) 药店 (夜间)
yàodiàn (yèjiān)
dentist 牙医
yáyī
doctor 医生
yīshēng
hospital 医院
yīyuàn

Is there a doctor here who speaks English?

Zhèr yǒu huì jiǎng yīngyǔ de dàifu ma?

这儿有会讲英语的大夫吗?

Symptoms

I have (a/an) ...

Wǒ ...

我 ...
diarrhoea 拉肚子
lādùzi
fever 发烧
fāshāo
headache 头疼
tóuténg

GLOSSARY

apsaras – Buddhist celestial beings, similar to angels
arhat – Buddhist, especially a monk who has achieved enlightenment and passes to nirvana at death
bēi – north; the other points of the compass are *nán* (south), *dōng* (east) and *xī* (west)
bīngguǎn – tourist hotel
bixi – mythical tortoise-like dragons often depicted in Confucian temples
biyùn tāo – condom
Bodhisattva – one worthy of nirvana but who remains on earth to help others attain enlightenment
bówùguǎn – museum
búpiào – upgrade
CAAC – Civil Aviation Administration of China
cāntīng – restaurant
catty – unit of weight, one catty (*jīn*) equals 0.6kg
CCP – Chinese Communist Party, founded in Shànghǎi in 1921
Chángchéng – the Great Wall
cheongsam (Cantonese) – originating in Shànghǎi, a fashionable tight-fitting Chinese dress with a slit up the side
chop – see *name chop*
CITS – China International Travel Service; the organisation deals with China's foreign tourists
CTS – China Travel Service; CTS was originally set up to handle tourists from Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and overseas Chinese
CYTS – China Youth Travel Service
dǎ zhé – discounting
dàdào – boulevard
dàfāndiàn – large hotel
dàjiē – avenue
dǎnwèi – work unit, the cornerstone of China's social structure
dàshà – hotel, building
dàxué – university
ditiě – subway
ditiě zhàn – subway station
dōng – east; the other points of the compass are *běi* (north), *nán* (south) and *xī* (west)
dòngwùyuán – zoo
fāndiàn – hotel or restaurant
fēng – peak
fēng shuǐ – geomancy, literally 'wind and water', the art of using ancient principles to maximise the flow of *qi*, or vital energy
Fifth Generation – a generation of film directors who trained after the Cultural Revolution and whose political works revolutionised the film industry in the 1980s and '90s
gānxǐ – dry-cleaning
gé – pavilion, temple (Daoist)

gōng – palace
góngfū – kungfu
gōnggòng qìchē – bus
gōngyì – crafts
gōngyuán – park
gūjū – house, home, residence
gúwán – antiques
hé – river
hú – lake
huàjù – theatre
huàndēngpiàn – colour slide film
Huí – ethnic Chinese Muslims
hútōng – a narrow alleyway
jiāng – river
jiǎo – see *máo*
jiàotáng – church
jícúncù – left-luggage counters
jiē – street
jié – festival
jīn – see *catty*
jīngjù – Beijing opera
jiùdiàn – hotel
jū – residence, home
kàngjūnsù – antibiotics
kāoyādiàn – roast duck restaurant
kuài – colloquial term for the currency, *yuán*
Kuomintang – Chiang Kaishek's Nationalist Party, the dominant political force after the fall of the Qing dynasty
lama – a Buddhist priest of the Tantric or Lamaist school; it is a title bestowed on monks of particularly high spiritual attainment
lǎowài – foreigner
lín – forest
líng – tomb
lóu – tower
lù – road
lǚguǎn – cheap hotel
luóhàn – see *arhat*
máo – colloquial term for *jiǎo*, 10 of which equal one *kuài*
mén – gate
miào – temple
mù – tomb
name chop – a carved name seal that acts as a signature
nán – south; the other points of the compass are *běi* (north), *dōng* (east) and *xī* (west)
páilou – decorated archway
pedicab – pedal-powered tricycle with a seat to carry passengers
Pinyin – the official system for transliterating Chinese script into the Roman alphabet
PLA – People's Liberation Army
Politburo – the 25-member supreme policy-making authority of the CCP

PRC – People's Republic of China
PSB – Public Security Bureau; the arm of the police force set up to deal with foreigners
Pǔtōnghuà – the standard form of the Chinese language used since the beginning of the 20th century and based on the dialect of Běijīng
qì – flow of vital or universal energy
qiáo – bridge
qìgōng – exercise that channels *qi*
qílín – a hybrid animal that only appeared on earth in times of harmony
qīngzhēnsī – mosque
rénmín – people, people's
Renminbi – literally 'people's money', the formal name for the currency of China; shortened to RMB
ruǎn wò – soft sleeper
ruǎn zuò – soft seat
shān – hill, mountain
shāngdiàn – shop, store
shěng – province, provincial
shì – city
shìchǎng – market
Sixth Generation – a generation of film directors whose dour subject matter and harsh film style contrasts starkly against the lavish films of the Fifth Generation
sì – temple, monastery
sīchóu – silk
sīhéyuàn – courtyard house
tǎ – pagoda

tàijiquán – the graceful, flowing exercise that has its roots in China's martial arts; also known as taichi
tíng – pavilion
tripitaka – Buddhist scriptures
wǎngbā – internet café
wúshù – martial arts
xī – west; the other points of the compass are *běi* (north), *nán* (south) and *dōng* (east)
xī yào – Western medicine
xiàn – county
xiàng – statue
xiyī – laundry
yángróngshān – cashmere
yáng – positive, bright and masculine; the complementary principle to *yīn*
yīn – negative, dark and feminine; the complementary principle to *yáng*
yīng wò – hard sleeper
yìng zuò – hard seat
yuán – the Chinese unit of currency; also referred to as RMB (see also *Renminbi*)
Yuècái – Cantonese
zhāodàisuǒ – basic lodgings, a hotel or guesthouse
zhēng – 13- or 14-stringed harp
zhīwùyuán – botanic gardens
zhōng – middle, centre
zhōng yào – herbal medicine
zōngtái – hotel reception

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