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Your guide to being stationed in

KOREA

Stars and Stripes Community Publication



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**American
Red Cross**

Service to the Armed Forces

Across the Globe: Discover Your Local American Red Cross

The American Red Cross is committed to providing support and resources to members of our nation's military, veterans, Department of Defense personnel, and their families worldwide. From teaching life-saving skills and preparing families for natural disasters to providing workshops that address the unique challenges of military life and connecting families during emergencies, the Red Cross is always there.

Red Cross Emergency Messages

Available 24/7 through the Red Cross Hero Care Network, Red Cross emergency messages ensure that eligible personnel can connect with their loved ones during crisis, regardless of location. Red Cross messages can be initiated from the Hero Care App, by calling **+1 877-272-7337**, going online to **redcross.org/saf** or visiting your local Red Cross office during the duty day.

Training and Certifications

The Red Cross offers a range of training and certifications in lifesaving skills such as Adult and Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED, Basic Life Support and Babysitting and Child Care. These courses equip individuals with essential skills and contribute to building a resilient community.

Behavioral Health Workshops

The Red Cross conducts workshops to address various aspects of military life. Some workshops, led by licensed mental health professionals, provide techniques to improve communication and coping skills, the mind body connection, and relationships with others. Mindful Movement workshops, led by coaches, incorporate breathing, stretching and mindfulness. All workshops are free of charge, with some available as virtual offerings. Programs may be offered at the location and time of your choosing, including after hours or weekends.

Disaster Preparedness

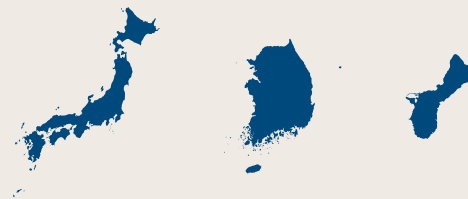
The Red Cross emphasizes disaster preparedness, offering free presentations to help families and military commands prepare for and respond to emergencies. From home fires to earthquakes and storms to evacuations, these sessions ensure individuals have the knowledge and skills to navigate disasters safely.



Volunteer Opportunities

Whether distributing care packages, serving those facing a crisis as a caseworker, facilitating workshops, participating in vocational medical training as a spouse, teaching CPR or disaster preparedness, or serving at military hospitals, volunteers are integral to the Red Cross mission and there are opportunities to serve in military communities around the globe.

In locations across Japan, South Korea, and Guam, the Red Cross is there!



The Red Cross is dedicated to supporting the entire military community, providing assistance wherever they may be serving.

Visit your local Red Cross office
or **redcross.org** to learn more.
Sign up as a volunteer today!



**American
Red Cross**

Service to the Armed Forces

In an Emergency, You Can Call the American Red Cross

In times of emergency, the American Red Cross helps our U.S. military communities worldwide communicate with their loved ones and helps facilitate their return home through our Hero Care Network “Red Cross Emergency Message” program. The Hero Care Network is free and available 24/7.

Eligibility includes:

- All active-duty military members
- All personnel working under the Status of Armed Forces Agreement (SOFA) including Department of War personnel, contractors and their family members

How it works:

Military families can initiate an emergency message either online, over the phone or through the Hero Care App. The Red Cross verifies the emergency and notifies the service member’s military command, so they can make an informed decision regarding the possibility of emergency leave. The Red Cross also connects eligible military members and veterans to financial assistance provided by Military Aid Societies. Assistance can include funds for emergency travel, emergency food, shelter and more.

“Coming from a military background, I like working alongside the military and helping these service members get back home for these emergencies because I know how important it is... to these families.”

Ciana Naputi has dedicated six years to supporting military families as a Hero Care caseworker. Knowing firsthand the impact Red Cross messages had on her own family fuels her empathy and dedication, ensuring everyone behind the call knows they are not alone. When families call the Hero Care Center, they’ll connect with someone like Ciana who truly understands their challenges, working around the clock to get their service member home.



We encourage families to prepare for emergencies ahead of time by visiting redcross.org/saf, downloading the **FREE** Hero Care App by scanning the QR code or calling a Hero Care specialist at **+1 877-272-7337**.

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Cover photo:
 Dan Romano took this colorful photo of Hyangiram Hermitage seaside temple in Yeosu in June 2025. Romano, who retired from the military and lives in Korea, encourages "everyone to get away from the installations and explore Korea and Pacific!"

KOREA

2026-2027

Welcome to the Pacific

Let Stars and Stripes help you get started on the right foot

Welcome to your temporary home away from home! Are you ready for the new adventure or do you feel like you're in over your head?

Whether you're excited about exploring or anxious about figuring out where to live, how to get on the road or even how to get started, we can help with that!

Moving can be stressful, but moving overseas adds another layer of difficulty that no amount of planning can prepare you for. Stars and Stripes is with you every step of the way!

We know you have questions, but rest assured, this magazine has most of the answers. Let this be the start of a beautiful journey together.

In the following pages you'll learn everything from how and where you can buy a car and getting a cellphone to local customs and how to use chopsticks.

And when you're done, don't forget to pick up a copy of Stars and Stripes Korea on base or visit us online at korea.stripes.com! Writer Hyemin Lee (learn more about her on Page 8) will keep you updated on fun activities, delicious restaurants and information you need to know so you'll be out and about in no time.

Our goal as your guide is to make sure you always have all the information you need and to support you throughout your time here. Without you, there is no Stars and Stripes.

We also want to hear from you! We share this space and all our community publications with our audience as you'll see with the neat photos submitted by readers on the cover and throughout this magazine. Have a story to tell or a photo you want to submit for an edition of our newspaper or a future cover of Welcome to the Pacific? Let us know!

We're in this together and can't wait to share this amazing country with you! Follow us on Facebook (Pacific Stars and Stripes), X (Twitter) (@StripesPacific) and Instagram (@Starsandstripespacific) as we continue to bring you the latest information and resources you don't want to miss.

Thank you for being a valued reader, and as they say here in Korea: "어서 오십시오!" (Welcome!)

*Denisse Rauda
 Publishing and Media Design Editor
 Stars and Stripes*

Background photo:
 Dillon Price snapped this great shot during an excursion to Gunsan.

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SCAN ME



HEY, TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF MY STORIES!



Let's start your Korean adventure!

Hi, I'm Hyemin (pronounced heh-min), your local guide to life in Korea. As a writer for Stars and Stripes, it's meaningful to me to support the U.S. military community in Korea and help them feel welcome from the start.

I've always loved exploring the world and connecting with people through stories. Before joining Stars and Stripes, I spent years creat-

ing cultural projects, and I also lived abroad. That's how I learned something simple but powerful: a new place becomes much easier to love when you understand the culture behind it.

That's what my stories are for. I cover the U.S. military community in Korea and share real-life tips on getting around, local customs and etiquette, and great weekend ideas when you're ready to ex-

plore beyond the base. Korea has deep history, amazing food and beautiful seasons.

My goal is to help you understand this country better, so you can make the most of your time here from your first weekend to your last. Ready to start your Korean adventure? Then let's begin the journey together!

-Hyemin Lee
lee.hyemin@stripes.com

Hyemin's quick local hacks

1. My go-to comfort meal in Korea is Korean BBQ.

You can easily find Korean BBQ restaurants (around \$20 per person). Wear comfy pants and don't eat a big lunch beforehand. You'll thank me later.

2. When you're invited to a Korean house, remember two things.

1. Take off your shoes indoors. 2. Say annyeong-haseyo (Hello) to elders with a small bow. You'll be the polite one instantly.

3. The fastest way to look respectful (without speaking Korean):

Use two hands when you give or receive something. If you want more etiquette tips, see Pages 17-19.

4. The most useful Korean word: Juseyo (please give me).

Use it when ordering, shopping or asking for help. If you want more phrases, see Pages 14-16.

5. Things Korea will spoil you with:

Convenience stores, late-night delivery, fast service and public transportation. Your standards back home may never recover.

6. My recommendation for a quick weekend plan:

One big city: Seoul. One big trip: Busan. Something only Korea can offer: Gyeongju. For more options, see Korea at a glance on Page 58-60.

You can also find my latest stories in our Stripes Korea paper on base (PX, commissary, bus stops and other high-traffic spots) and online at korea.stripes.com.

Travel



Marine paradise Busan



Ecological City Suncheon



Suwon Hwaseong Fortress



Namdaemun Market



Ikseon-dong Hanok Village



Seodaemun Prison

Seasonal travel guide



Hot spring in winter



Summer activities



Fall activities



Top holiday illuminations

Culture



Tips on making Korean friends

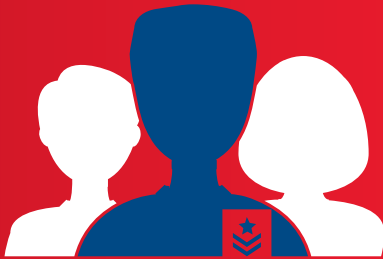


Age culture in Korea

More stories at korea.stripes.com



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Free ROK Cultural Immersion Program



Whether you're single, unaccompanied, or stationed with your family in Korea, it can take a few months to get comfortable in your new surroundings. Korea has many exciting activities, a rich cultural history and delicious food to sample, but where do you begin?

The ROK Cultural Immersion Program by the ROK-US Combined Forces Command (CFC) allows you to learn more about the country through travel, culture and cuisine with the help of experienced guides and in a group setting. The program started in 2020 and is open to U.S. service members, UNC troops, GS employees and their families stationed in Korea. This program is sponsored by the Korean government as part of the ROK-U.S. Alliance Strengthening Project. All expenses, including transportation, hotels, meals, and activities, are 100% free for eligible participants.

This program is specifically designed for the U.S. military community and UNC troops. So

before you sign up, it's crucial to understand its purpose.

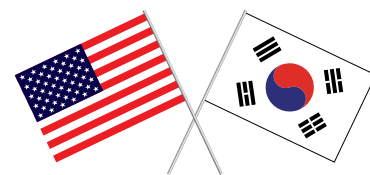
This program is not just about leisure or entertainment. It's also focused on providing a comprehensive understanding of Korean history, culture and also security with a military perspective. While exploring some famous destinations, you'll have a great opportunity to learn why you are serving in South Korea and how your service contributes to the national security of this country. It can be a motivating and educational experience. If you are with family, it can be even more enlightening for your kids, helping them understand the relationship with an allied nation and the role of U.S. and UNC troops in Korea.

Also, the knowledgeable Korean guides on this tour provide detailed explanations, and they are ready to answer any question regarding the destinations or anything else about Korea.

-Hyemin Lee



More about program



Honoring U.S., ROK national anthems

Honoring "The Star-Spangled Banner" is a sign of respect for our nation and the sacrifices made for our freedoms. Extending that same honor to the anthems of our allies is a powerful sign of our commitment to them. When outdoors during the U.S. and ROK national anthems, uniformed personnel are required to render a salute, while civilians should stand with their right hand over their heart. If you are in a vehicle on base, safely pull to the side of the road and stop until the music concludes. These customs are a daily opportunity to show honor for our country and our allies.



Rendering salutes to ROK officers

The military salute is a tradition of respect believed to date back to medieval knights, who would raise their visors to identify themselves and show an empty weapon hand. Today, this custom continues as a vital sign of mutual respect between allies. U.S. military personnel are required to render proper salutes to superior officers of the Republic of Korea (ROK) Armed Forces, and ROK forces extend the same courtesy in return.

Key information

Sponsored by the Korean government as part of the ROK-U.S. Alliance Strengthening Project, all expenses, including transportation, hotels, meals and activities, are fully covered for eligible participants. The program is conducted with the official approval of U.S. Forces Korea and recruitment of participants is overseen by USFK.

- **PARTICIPANTS:** Must be U.S. troops, UNC troops, GS employees working in Korea and their dependent family members.
- **DURATION:** 2 nights, 3 days (Tuesday to Thursday).
- **SESSIONS:** 9 sessions a year, usually held in spring and fall.
- **LOCATIONS:** Seoul-DMZ, East Coast-Seorak Mountain, Jeonju-Yeosu, Gyeongju-Busan (two different trips), and Jeju Island.
- **CONTACT:** As spots are limited, contact your leadership or inquire via email at: indopacom.humphreys.usfk.list.usfk-cultural-immersion-program@army.mil



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Korea through the ages

Historically, Korea's geographic location has made it susceptible to invasion. Despite a long history of invasions, Korea still retains its rich identity, culture and traditions.

As you spend more time here and get to know more about the country, you'll discover many interesting things regarding Korean behavior, culture, and customs of the past that still influence Korea's present. In addition, one cannot ignore the U.S.-Korea relationship and its influence when discussing Korean modern history.

Three Kingdoms Period and Goryeo Dynasty (circa 57 B.C to 1392)

In ancient times, Goguryeo, Silla, and Baekje kingdoms governed their territories and occasionally fought each other (Three Kingdom Period circa 57 B.C. to 668). At one point, Silla unified the three kingdoms (Unified Silla 668-935), but eventually, King Taejo Wang-geon would reunify them under the Goryeo Dynasty (918-1392). Throughout this period Korea remained a Buddhism-centric country.



Hunting Scene - Goguryeo Tomb Murals.

Joseon Dynasty (1392-1897)

In 1392, Goryeo would fall and Joseon Dynasty would rise with Yi Seong-gye, a former Goryeo military commander, at the helm. Teachings and moral standards of Confucianism, including loyalty to the king, social orders and more, would replace Buddhist ideologies. Much of today's traditional Korean culture is still influenced by the Joseon Dynasty. Korea's Hangeul alphabet would also be invented by King Sejong during this dynasty in the 15th century.



Scene of the Dano Festival by Shin Yun Bok.



Gojong of the Korean Empire by Chae Yong Sin.

Empire of Korea (1897-1910)

In the late 19th century, amid pressure from foreign powers, King Gojong proclaimed Joseon the "Empire of Korea" to strengthen national independence. This move proved fruitless after Japan defeated Russia in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) and soon annexed the Empire in 1910.

Colonial Period (1910-1945)

Under the Japanese Government-General of Korea, Koreans were brutally exploited and oppressed by Japan. The occupation lasted 35 years and ended with Japan's surrender to the Allies at the end of World War II on Aug. 15, 1945.



Seoul during Japanese occupation.

Photo courtesy of Mainichi Newspapers Company.

American Military Government (1945-1948)

Immediately after liberation, Korea was divided into two countries. The U.S. military forces took over Yongsan Garrison and governed South Korea.



Photo from NARA

Republic of Korea (1948-present)

The Republic of Korea was established on August 15, 1948, after UN-sponsored elections. On September 9, 1948, North Korea established the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Korean War (1950-1953)

War broke out on June 25, 1950, when North Korea, supported by the Soviet Union and

China, invaded the south. UN forces, under Gen. MacArthur's leadership, regained many regions taken by the North and defended South Korea.

On July 27, 1953, fighting ended with the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement. The armistice established the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) to separate the two Koreas. Since no peace treaty was ever signed, both countries are technically still at war, and both maintain conscription for citizens.

On October 1, 1953, South Korean and U.S. officials signed the Mutual Defense Treaty to protect the Peninsula and provide military aid. Over 70 years later, the commitment continues with about 28,500 U.S. military personnel stationed in South Korea.



Photo from NARA

Miracle on the Han River

After the signing of the armistice, South Korea faced a precarious situation as one of the poorest countries in the world. With strong domestic effort and U.S. support, Koreans rebuilt the country. The country turned toward agricultural production, exports and industrialization, resulting in rapid growth. Soon, South Korea's steel, automobile and shipbuilding industries grew quickly. This period of economic growth (1960s-1980s) is often referred to as the "Miracle on the Han River."

-Hyemin Lee



Photo courtesy of Korean Tourism Organization

Cultural lay of the land

The land of modern convenience

Koreans love making life more convenient and efficient. This trait is rooted in their work culture during the rapid economic growth post-Korean War. This has cultivated a strong work ethic, driving the development of high-quality services and advanced technology across the country. From high-speed internet and ubiquitous Wi-Fi networks to efficient transportation systems and speedy delivery services, Korea offers an abundance of modern conveniences. Moreover, many businesses operate 24 hours, particularly in Seoul, giving the impression that the city never sleeps.

Safety and privacy

South Korea is known as one of the safest countries with a low crime rate. Instances of theft and robbery are uncommon. Even if you leave your belongings unattended outside for hours, they will likely remain untouched as most people respect others' property. Also, walking around at night, especially with friends, feels quite safe. However, keep in mind, there are cameras all over Korea. Most drivers install a dashcam in their cars, and you'll find CCTV cameras in buildings and on streets. This may differ from the American perspective on privacy matters.

Affectionate expressions

Koreans often openly express affection towards their friends, which may be misinterpreted by Westerners as indicative of a romantic relationship. However, these actions merely reflect friendship or closeness. For example, Korean women commonly hold hands or walk arm in arm with their friends (known as Paljjang-팔짱). Similarly, young men often casually place their arms around each other's shoulders as a sign of camaraderie.

Korean names

Korean names typically consist of three syllables with the family name placed first and followed by the given name. The family name is inherited patrilineally, and women don't change their last name upon marriage.

The most common last names in Korea are Kim (Gim), Lee (Yi), and Park (Bak). Notably, over 21 percent of the population has Kim as their last name and Lee follows at 14 percent. Despite sharing the same last name, not everyone is related as the last name is differentiated with family clans.

Honorific titles

In Korea, honorific titles are more commonly used than names, especially when addressing those who are older or in higher positions. Ages can be used to determine social hierarchy, role and appropriate titles. While speaking English, these rules are typically not expected, but in Korean, it's important to know how to use honorifics.

Korean age system

When Koreans discuss their age, they likely refer to their Korean age, which is one or two years older than what you're accustomed to. Though the official records adopt only international standards since 2023, many Koreans still use the traditional age system. In this system, everyone is considered one year old at birth and gains a year on New Year's Day, regardless of their actual birthday. For example, a baby born on Dec. 31 would be considered two years old the next day.

Religion in the ROK

The constitution of South Korea guarantees freedom of religion. Public displays of religion are very common, not only in churches or temples, but also at subway stations or on the street.

While a majority of the population doesn't affiliate with any religion, around 20% identify as Protestant Christian, about 16% as Buddhist, and about 8% as Catholic. Christianity, though not traditional, is considered the major religion with numerous Protestant churches scattered across the country.

Historically, Buddhism was the national religion for over a thousand years, followed by Confucianism during the Joseon Dynasty. Today, Buddhism, Confucianism and native Shamanism still influence the minds and culture of Koreans.

-Hyemin Lee

Korean holidays 2026-27

*Seollal, Chuseok and Buddha's Birthday change dates every year as they are based on the Lunar Calendar.

Jan 1 **New Year's Day**
As in other countries, the first day of the New Year is celebrated. Many Koreans visit the coast or the mountains to watch the first sunrise of the year.

Feb 6-8 **Seollal (2027)**
Lunar New Year's Day (Seollal) is one of the most important traditional holidays of the year; the holiday is much more significant than January 1. Most businesses are closed, and people take several days off from work to visit their hometown to be with their family. On the day of Seollal, everyone gets up early, puts on their best clothes, and bows to their elders as a reaffirmation of family ties. Feasts are held with specially prepared food such as tteokguk (rice cake soup) and mandu guk (dumpling soup). Korean families enjoy spending time together by playing traditional games such as yutnori (traditional Korean board games), flying kites, or spinning tops.

Mar 1 **Independence Movement Day**
This day commemorates the Declaration of Independence proclaimed on March 1, 1919, while under Japanese colonization.

May 5 **Children's Day**
This day celebrates children and their parents' hopes for them to grow healthy and become good citizens. On this day, parents take their little ones to children's parks, amusement parks, zoos, or to the cinema for a full day of fun and games.

May 24 **Buddha's Birthday**
Falling on the eighth day of the fourth lunar month, elaborate and solemn rituals are held at many Buddhist temples across the country and lanterns are hung along streets leading to the temples.

Jun 6 **Memorial Day**
Memorial Day serves to honor the soldiers and civilians who have given their lives for their country. While memorial services are held nationwide, the largest ceremony takes place at the National Cemetery in Seoul.

Aug 15 **Liberation Day**
This day commemorates Japan's acceptance of the Allies' terms of surrender in 1945 and the following liberation of Korea.

Sep 24-26 **Chuseok**
Chuseok is one of the year's most important traditional holidays. It is celebrated on the 15th day of the eighth lunar month. Chuseok is often referred to as Korean Thanksgiving Day. It's a celebration of another successful harvest year. Family members come from all over the country for memorial rituals, called charye, at the graves of their ancestors.

Oct 3 **National Foundation Day**
This day commemorates the founding of the Korean nation by the legendary god-king Dangun. A simple ceremony is held at several regions throughout Korea, namely at Chamseongdan Altar on top of Manisan Mountain on Ganghwado Island; Dangunjeon Shrine in Gokseong, Taebaeksan Mountain, and Jeungpyeong, and at Dangunseongjeon Shrine in Seoul.

Oct 9 **Hangul Day**
Hangul Day is a commemoration held to remember the creation of Hangul, the country's native alphabet as proclaimed by the publication of Hunminjeongeum on this day in 1446.

Dec 25 **Christmas**
Christmas is observed as a national holiday in Korea as in many other countries. To celebrate the festive season, Christmas trees and lights can be seen all over Korea.

- Korea Tourism Organization

Speakin' Korean

Hangul (한글) is the Korean alphabet created by King Sejong the Great with assistance from his scholars in 1443. It consists of 24 letters, including 14 consonants and 10 vowels. Mastering Hangul is very easy and takes a short time. Following the lesson on this page can help you open the door to reading and writing Korean words and phrases!

Step 1. Let's learn 24 basic letters of the Korean alphabet

Most Korean letters can be pronounced in Romanization, making learning Hangul easy. However, a few English letters—F, R, V, and Z—have no direct equivalents in Korean pronunciation. These letters adopt similar Romanized sounds as follows: F=ㅍ(p) / R=ㄹ(l) / V=ㅅ(b) / Z=ㅈ(j).

14 Consonants

ㄱ	ㄴ	ㄷ	ㄹ	ㅁ
g/k	n	t/d	l/r	m
ㅂ	ㅅ	ㅇ	ㅈ	ㅊ
p/b	s	Silent/ng	ch/j	ch
ㅋ	ㅌ	ㅍ	ㅎ	
k	t	p	h	

10 Vowels

ㅏ	ㅑ	ㅓ	ㅕ
a(ah)	ya(yah)	eo(uh)	yeo(yuh)
ㅗ	ㅛ	ㅜ	ㅠ
o(oh)	yo	oo(u)	yoo(yu)
ㅡ	ㅣ		
eu	ee(i)		

Let's practice composing a Korean word

Each Korean syllable is formed by combining consonants and vowels. Consonants can come in both the initial and final positions. Particularly, the consonant “ㅇ” is silent when in the initial position, but when placed in the final position, it is pronounced as “ng.”

Consonant + Vowel	Example
ㅂ + ㅏ = 바	b + a = ba 바다: Bada (Sea/ocean)
ㄱ + ㅣ = 기	g + i = gi 기차: Gicha (Train)
ㅇ + ㅠ = 유	(silent) + yoo = yoo 우유: Ooyoo (Milk)
Consonant + Vowel + Consonant	Example
ㄹ + ㅏ + ㅇ = 랑	r + a + ng = rang 사랑: Sarang (Love)
ㄴ + ㅏ + ㅁ = 남	n + a + m = nam 남자: Namja (Man)

Step 2. Mastering of 40 letters

5 Double Consonants

ㄱ	ㄷ	ㅂ	ㅅ	ㅈ
kk/gg	tt/dd	pp/bb	ss	tch/jj

4 Complex Vowels

ㅐ	ㅑ	ㅓ	ㅕ
ae	yae(ye)	e(eh)	ye(yeh)

7 Compound Vowels

ㅘ	ㅙ	ㅚ	ㅜ	ㅝ	ㅞ	ㅟ
wa	wae	oe	weo	we	wi	eui

Let's practice reading Hangul!

- 예뻐요: Yeppeoyo (It's pretty)
- 괜찮아요: Gwaen-chanayo (It's fine)
- 깜깜해요: Kkamkkam-haeyo (It's dark)
- 왜 그랬어?: Wae geuraesseo? (Why did you do that?)

-Hyemin Lee

Is it hard for you to speak Korean? Everyone knows learning Korean will benefit their lives in many ways when living in Korea. However, the language is structured differently than English, so there are many new things to learn. Knowing where to start may be difficult, but I have you covered!

Here are some of the most basic and useful Korean phrases that can be used in many situations. I promise you'll be able to start communicating with Koreans after you study these lessons! Take a deep breath, and let's start!

Basic greetings and general speaking

These are the most basic and important phrases to learn to make conversation with Koreans.

- Using “yo” at the end of sentence makes a sentence formal.

Greetings

Hi / Hello

FORMAL Annyeong-haseyo (안녕하세요)

INFORMAL Annyeong (안녕)

Bye

FORMAL Annyeonghee ga-se-yo (안녕히 가세요)

*When you're staying and the other's leaving

Annyeonghee gye-se-yo (안녕히 계세요)

*When you're leaving and the other's staying

INFORMAL Annyeong (안녕)

Jal-ga (잘가)

Nice to meet you

FORMAL Manna-seo ban-gap-seum-nida (만나서 반갑습니다)

SEMI FORMAL Manna-seo ban-gawo-yo (만나서 반가워요)

INFORMAL Manna-seo bangawo (만나서 반가워)

General speaking

Nice to meet you / Please look after me

FORMAL Jal butak-deu-rim-nida (잘 부탁드립니다)

SEMI FORMAL Jal butak-haeyo (잘 부탁해요)

INFORMAL Jal butak-hae (잘 부탁해)

How are you?

(Only to someone you already know)

FORMAL Jal ji-nae-syeo-sseo-yo? (잘 지내셨어요?)

SEMI FORMAL Jal ji-nae-sseo-yo? (잘 지냈어요?)

INFORMAL Jal ji-nae-sseo? (잘 지냈어?)

Did you have a meal?

(Same as “How are you?”)

FORMAL Siksa ha-syeo-sseo-yo? (식사 하셨어요?)

SEMI FORMAL Bap meo-geo-sseo-yo? (밥 먹었어요?)

INFORMAL Bap meo-geo-sseo? (밥 먹었어?)

Have a good day

FORMAL Joeun haru bonae-seyo (좋은 하루 보내세요)

INFORMAL Joeun haru bonae (좋은 하루 보내)

Congratulations

FORMAL Chukha-haeyo (축하해요)

INFORMAL Chukha-hae (축하해)

Thank you

FORMAL Gamsa-hamnida (감사합니다)

SEMI FORMAL Goma-woyo (고마워요)

INFORMAL Goma-wo (고마워)

Sorry

FORMAL Joesong-hamnida (죄송합니다)

SEMI FORMAL Mian-haeyo (미안해요)

INFORMAL Mian-hae (미안해)

Hi!

Write Korean below



General speaking

Excuse me

- FORMAL** Silleh-hamnida (실례합니다)
Jamsi-manyo (잠시만요)
- INFORMAL** Jam-kkan-man (잠깐만)

Yes

- FORMAL** Neh (네)
- Ye (예)
- INFORMAL** Eung (응)

No

- FORMAL** Anim-nida (아닙니다)
Ani-yo (아니요)
- INFORMAL** Ani (아니)

Ok

- FORMAL** Geu-rae-yo (그래요)
Joa-yo (좋아요)
Al-get-seum-nida (알겠습니다)
- INFORMAL** Geu-rae (그래)
Joa (좋아)
Ara-sseo (알았어)

Right / Correct

- FORMAL** Majayo (맞아요)
- INFORMAL** Maja (맞아)

I'm fine / No problem

- FORMAL** Gwaen-chana-yo (괜찮아요)
- INFORMAL** Gwaen-chana (괜찮아)

Introducing yourself

- U.S.A.: Migook
- American: Migook-saram (미국사람) / Migook-in (미국인)
- U.S. military / troop (any branches): Migoon (미군)

I'm American.

Write Korean below



Let's learn 5 steps to introduce yourself when you first meet someone!

1. Hi / Hello

- FORMAL** Annyeong-haseyo (안녕하세요)
- INFORMAL** Annyeong (안녕)

2. My name is (your name)

- FORMAL** Je ireum-eun [John] imnida (제 이름은 존입니다)
- INFORMAL** Nae ireum-eun [John]-iya (내 이름은 존이야)

3. I'm (your name, position, identity)

- FORMAL** Jeo-neun [migook-in] imnida (저는 미국인입니다)
- INFORMAL** Na-neun [migook-in] iya (나는 미국인이야) (migook-in: American)

4. I'm from (your country, city)

- FORMAL** Jeo-neun [New York]-eh-seo wasseo-yo (저는 뉴욕에서 왔어요)
- INFORMAL** Na-neun [New York]-eh-seo wasseo (나는 뉴욕에서 왔어)

5. Nice to meet you

- FORMAL** Manna-seo ban-gap-seum-nida (만나서 반갑습니다)
- SEMI FORMAL** Manna-seo bangawo-yo (만나서 반가워요)
- INFORMAL** Manna-seo bangawo (만나서 반가워)

See more Speakin' Korean throughout!



Illustrations by Hyemin Lee

BASIC VOCABULARY

PLACE (장소)

- House/Home ----- Jip (집)
- Hospital ----- Byeongwon (병원)
- Restaurant ----- Sikdang (식당)
- School ----- Hakgyo (학교)
- Mart ----- Ma-teu (마트)
- Convenience store -----
Pyeon-ui-jeom (편의점)
- Airport ----- Gonghang (공항)
- Workplace ----- Jikjang (직장)

RELATIONSHIP (관계)

- Family ----- Gajok (가족)
- Friend ----- Chingu (친구)
- Lover/Partner ----- Yeonin (연인)
- Colleague -----
Jikjang-dongryo (직장 동료)
- Boss ----- Sangsa (상사)

OCCUPATION (직업)

- Teacher -----
Seon-saeng-nim (선생님)
- Student ----- Hak-saeng (학생)
- Guide ----- Ga-ee-deu (가이드)
- Military troop ----- Gun-in (군인)

KOREA-RELATED

- Korea ----- Han-guk (한국)
- Republic of Korea -----
Daehanminguk (대한민국)
- Korean -----
Hanguk saram (한국사람) /
Hanguk-in (한국인)
- Korean language -----
Hanguk-eo (한국어)

U.S.A.-RELATED

- U.S.A. ----- Mi-guk (미국)
- American ----- Miguk saram (미국사람) / Miguk-in (미국인)
- English ----- Yeong-eo (영어)
- U.S. military ----- Migun (미군)
- U.S. military base -----
Migun budae (미군 부대)

DATE RELATED

- Day ----- Yoil (요일) / Nal (날)
- Date ----- Il (일)
- Week ----- Ju (주)
- Month ----- Dal (달)
- Today ----- Oneul (오늘)
- Yesterday ----- Eoje (어제)
- Tomorrow ----- Naeil (내일)
- This month -----
Ibeon dal (이번 달)
- Last month -----
Jinan dal (지난 달)
- Next month -----
Daeum dal (다음 달)

NUMBERS (숫자)

- One ----- Hana (하나)
- Two ----- Dul (둘)
- Three ----- Set (셋)
- Four ----- Net (넷)
- Five ----- Da-seot (다섯)
- Six ----- Yeo-seot (여섯)
- Seven ----- Ilgop (일곱)
- Eight ----- Yeodeol (여덟)
- Nine ----- Ahop (아홉)
- Ten ----- Yeol (열)

PRONOUNS

- I -----
Na-neun (나는) /
Jeo-neun (저는) *formal
- My -----
Na-ui (나의) / Jeo-ui (저의) *formal
- Me -----
Na-reul (나를) /
Jeo-reul (저를) *formal
- He ----- Geu-neun (그는)
- She ----- Geu-nyeo-neun (그녀는)
- We ----- Oori-neun (우리는)
- They ----- Geu-deul-eun (그들은)
- This ----- I-geo (이거)
- That ----- Jeo-geo (저거)

INTERROGATIVE

- What -----
Mu-eot (무엇) / Mwo (뭐) *informal
- Who ----- Nuga (누가)
- When ----- Eonje (언제)
- Where ----- Eodi-seo (어디서)
- Why ----- Wae (왜)
- How ----- Eotteo-ke (어떻게)

VERBS

- Go ----- Ga-da (가다)
- Do ----- Hada (하다)
- Work ----- Il-hada (일하다)
- Drive ----- Unjeon-hada (운전하다)
- Meet ----- Manna-da (만나다)
- Love ----- Sarang-hada (사랑하다)
- Like ----- Joa-hada (좋아하다)
- Hate ----- Shireo-hada (싫어하다)
- Eat ----- Meok-da (먹다)
- Drink ----- Mashi-da (마시다)
- Sleep ----- Ja-da (자다)
- Buy ----- Sa-da (사다)
- Sell ----- Pal-da (팔다)

The wonders of won

Korea's colorful currency

Korean currency can be largely divided into four coins and four bills, with denominations of 10, 50, 100, 500 and 1,000, 5,000, 10,000, 50,000 won, respectively. While traveling, it's possible all you will notice is how quickly money seems to fly from your hands. However, if you take a closer look at the characters and designs on the bills, you will be greatly surprised! There are many tiny details about the important historical figures they present and their related tourist sites.

1,000 won

Korea's most common bill is the 1,000 won (about \$1) in a pretty blue color. The front of the bill features flowers, a hanok building, and a portrait of Toegye Yi Hwang, a greatly admired Confucian scholar, philosopher, and writer from the Joseon Dynasty.



5,000 and 50,000 won

The 5,000 won (\$5) and 50,000 won (\$50) bills have a special connection as the relationship between the two figures depicted is that of mother and son. Yulgok Yi I, the son, is a highly respected Confucian scholar, philosopher, and writer of the Joseon Dynasty. His mother, Shin Saimdang, is known as a poet and artist, but she is more famous for being a good wife and wise mother. She is also the only female figure on Korean currency.



10,000 won

The last Korean bill to examine is the green 10,000 won (\$10) bill. The figure on this bill is Joseon Dynasty's fourth king, King Sejong (1418-1450). He is known as being a monarch who, when it came to politics, always considered the needs of the people first. Thanks to this love of the people and his many achievements, the people began to attach the title "the great" to the end of his name.



Coins

Like Korean bills, Korean coins also have various images that represent the nation and its history. The smallest coin, worth 10 won, displays an image of national treasure Dabotap Pagoda. This stone pagoda is one of the nation's most fantastic structures and is located at UNESCO-designated Bulguksa Temple in the city of Gyeongju. The 50-won



coin has a single stalk of rice ready for harvest, while the 100-won coin features Admiral Yi Sun-shin (1545-1598) who almost single-handedly defeated the invading Japanese force in the Imjin War. The largest coin with a value of 500 won has a flying crane, which is the symbol for scholars. In addition to these four coins, there are two other coins no longer in circulation.

Currency converter
www.xe.com/
currencyconverter



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www.visitkorea.or.kr



Knowing how to count Korean won and how to use basic phrases for shopping will greatly improve your time in Korea!

Numbers (Sino)

- 1: Il(일)
- 2: I(이)
- 3: Sam(삼)
- 4: Sa(사)
- 5: Oh(오)
- 6: Yuk(육)
- 7: Chil(칠)
- 8: Pal(팔)
- 9: Gu(구)
- 10: Sip(십)
- 100: Baek(백)
- 1,000: Cheon(천)
- 10,000: Man(만)

Words

- This:** Igeo (이거)
That: Jeogeo (저거)
Different one: Da-reun geo (다른 거)
More: Deo (더)
To give: Ju-da (주다)
To buy: Sa-da (사다)

Korean money

- 100 won:** Baek won (백원)
1,000 won: Cheon won (천원)
10,000 won: Man won (만원)
100,000 won: Sip man won (십만원)
1,000,000 won: Baek man won (백만원)
10,000,000 won: Cheon man won (천만원)

Phrases

- Using "yo" at the end of sentence makes a sentence formal.
- Using "an" in front of a verb and adjective makes a negative sentence.
- **How much is this?**
Igeo eolmayeyo? (이거 얼마예요?)
- **Please give this to me / I'll take it**
Igeo juseyo (이거 주세요)
- **Do you have a different one?**
Da-reun geot-do isseo-yo? (다른 것도 있어요?)
- **Do you have more?**
Deo isseo-yo? (더 있어요?)
- **I'll buy it**
Salgeyo (살게요)
- **I won't buy it**
An-salgeyo (안 살게요)
- **I like this**
Igeo joa-yo (이거 좋아요)
- **Can I try on? (Only for clothes)**
Ib-eo bwado dwaeyo? (입어봐도 돼요?)
- **Can I try on? (Only for shoes)**
Sineo bwado dwaeyo? (신어봐도 돼요?)
- **Please give me a discount**
Kkakka-juseyo (깎아주세요)

How much is this?
Write Korean below



Illustration by Hyemin Lee

3,000 won.

Write Korean below

Giving gifts and tips

Americans affiliated with the military often have questions about giving gifts or tokens of gratitude to Korean people. Here are some helpful tips when it comes to gift giving in Korea.

GIFT-GIVING MANNERS

- When receiving or giving a gift, using both hands is a polite gesture that respects Korean culture, especially when you're dealing with someone older than you.
- Gifts are usually wrapped in beautiful wrapping paper with bright colors.
- Cash gifts should be put in an envelope.
- Reciprocity is expected in Korean culture. When you receive gifts from Koreans, you are expected to give something with a similar value in the same situation for them later. Giving an expensive gift can be a burden for the receiver.
- In Korea, showing a gesture of refusing to receive a gift is considered a polite manner. In some cases, although a Korean refuses to accept a gift at first, they may not really mean it. Try offering it at least a couple more times. However, there are some situations in the workplace that receiving gifts is forbidden by law. In that case, they'll let you know they can't accept your gift because of their work position.

WHEN TO GIVE

■ Expression of gratitude

If you want to show appreciation to those working hard or who have helped you by giving a gift, you can buy a small gift such as drinks, snacks or something in the realm of 3,000 won to 20,000 won.

■ Party or special event

When you are invited to a housewarming party, someone's business opening celebration, or a dinner invitation to a friend's home, it's appropriate (and expected) to bring a small gift of good quality like fruits, drinks, cake or flowers. Something from your country would be nice, too.

■ Cash gifts

At Korean weddings and funerals, guests are expected to give a cash gift. An acceptable amount is 50,000 won–100,000 won but you can give more if a person in the event is close to you.

■ Special birthdays

When Koreans turn one, 60, 70, and 80 years old, these birthdays are huge celebrations. Clothes are good gifts for a one-year-old baby, and a health supplement such as a product made of ginseng is good for elders. Cash gifts, however, are preferred for any birthday.

■ Holidays

On Chuseok and Seollal, Korean traditional holidays, it's common for Koreans to exchange gifts with close friends, coworkers or business partners. Companies give their employees SPAM, cooking oil or toiletries in a nice gift box. People usually exchange good quality gifts such as dietary supplements, seasonal fruit or premium Korean beef (Hanwoo).

On Christmas, parents give their children a gift and couples exchange gifts.

For Valentine's Day, women gift their partners chocolate. One month later, on March 14, men reciprocate and give candy or other sweets.

TIPS ON TIPS

In Korean culture, tipping is not customary. Although tipping is becoming more popular

in the service industry, and you may see tip boxes in cafés and bars, it isn't still expected. If you want to tip as a sign of gratitude for exceptional service, of course, it'll be appreciated, and it can range from 5,000 to 10,000 won. Make sure to hand the tip directly to the staff when tipping in Korea.

People also often tip when they want special attention from the staff. For example, when dining with a special guest at a good quality restaurant, tipping about 10,000 won can encourage a server to provide extra care such as refilling side dishes quickly and grilling the meat to perfection. In this case, it's best to give the tip at the beginning of the meal. However, remember that there's no pressure to tip anyone in Korea except in establishments on U.S. bases.

TP AT THE TABLE?

Whenever I invite my foreign friends to my place, one of the things that shocks them is toilet paper is everywhere, including on my desk and dining table. I usually put it in a nice container, but my friends still can't get over it and insist toilet paper is for the bathroom only.

Koreans use toilet paper for multiple purposes. It can be used to wipe tables, as a napkin and as tissue to blow your nose. Don't be surprised if toilet paper is used as a napkin when you dine out at small or old restaurants.

Also, when Koreans hold a housewarming party, toilet paper is one of the most common gifts to bring to the host. Giving toilet paper as a housewarming gift means you are wishing them good luck and fortune in the future.

-Hyemin Lee



- **Invitation:** Chodae (초대)
- **Gift:** Seonmul (선물)
- **Housewarming (party):** jip-deuri (집들이)
- **Thank you:** Gamsa-hamnida (감사합니다) Formal / Gomawoyo (고마워요) Semi-formal
- **Thank you for inviting me:** Chodae-hae jusyeseo gamsa-hamnida (초대해 주셔서 감사합니다)
- **This is a gift for you:** Igeon seonmul-ieyo (이건 선물이예요)
- **Thank you for the gift:** Seonmul gomawoyo! (선물 고마워요)



Illustration by Hyemin Lee

Minding your table manners

Each country has a different culture. When you live in a foreign country, if you take the time to learn the culture and manners to follow, it will be a great help in acclimating to your new home and making new friends.

Learning Korean table manners are an especially important and simple way to make a good impression on your Korean friends and coworkers.

Even if at first you struggle to master table manners in Korea, don't worry because

locals will be very understanding as long as you are trying to adapt to the culture.

Below are some important tips to keep in mind before dining out in Korea. Much of this knowledge is taught to Korean students in school.

Your friends will appreciate your effort and definitely be impressed when you show off your new skills!

- Hyemin Lee

Don't
eat rice with chopsticks!

Don't
bring the bowl up to your mouth!

General manners

- Greetings (When you eat food with Koreans, use these phrases)

BEFORE EATING: Jal meok-get-seum-ni-da (잘 먹겠습니다) I'm going to eat well

AFTER EATING: Jal meo-geo-sseum-ni-da (잘 먹었습니다) I ate well

Jal (잘): Well / Meok-da (먹다): To eat

These phrases are especially useful when you're offered food. If pronunciation is difficult for you, just say you will enjoy the food and thank the person offering the food in English. After the meal, don't forget to say that the food was delicious. Koreans will appreciate your effort to express your gratitude.

- Always wash your hands before eating. This step is important to Koreans, so most restaurants will bring wet tissues to the table at the beginning of the meal. Use the wet tissues to wipe your hands before digging in.

- Like in any other culture, making sounds and eating noisily will make others uncomfortable. Although talking at the table isn't considered good manners enjoying chatting is fine unless you talk with your mouth full of food. Don't clink bowls or make noise with spoon or chopsticks.

- Never blow your nose at the table. When coughing or sneezing, turn your face to the side and cover your mouth with a napkin.

- Don't bring the bowl up to your mouth. This is a common practice in other Asian countries, but it is not a good table manner in Korea.

With spoon and chopsticks

- Don't grab a spoon and chopsticks at the same time.
- Don't use spoons to scoop side dishes. Spoons are for rice and soup.
- Don't eat rice with chopsticks. Chopsticks are for picking up food from main entrees and side dishes (banchan 반찬).
- Don't stick your spoon or chopsticks standing straight up in a rice bowl. This is only done as part of a traditional funeral ritual (Jesa 제사).

Sharing food with others

Don't
pick through the dish for specific things!

- Sharing is caring.

Communal dishes to be shared between people are a very common Korean practice. Sometimes even sharing soup together if you are close to a person is acceptable. If there is only one soup bowl on the table and you don't want to share it with others, you can ask to have an extra bowl.

- When you share a dish with others, don't hoard it like you're at a buffet. Take a couple of bites and then go back to grab more after finishing them.

- When sharing a communal dish, don't search through the dish for specific things.

- Don't shake off sauce over the dish. If you want to get rid of the marinated sauce, bring the food to your bowl first.

Korean Lesson

- **Meal:** Siksa (식사)
- **Food:** Eum-sik (음식)
- **Water:** Mul (물)
- **Spoon:** Sujeo (수저) / Sutgarak (숟가락)
- **Chopsticks:** Jeotgarak (젓가락)
- **Ladle:** Gukja (국자)
- **Tong:** Jipge (집게)
- **Scissors:** Gawi (가위)
- **Bowl / Plate:** Geu-reut (그릇)
- **Rice:** Bap (밥)
- **Soup:** Guk (국)
- **Side dish:** Banchan (반찬)

When eating with elders (Especially senior citizens)

- The oldest person sits at the head of the table or in the most comfortable seat.
- Younger people usually take an aisle seat to be able to serve the older ones or go bring more side dishes and water.
- When you have a meal with seniors, the oldest one should have the first bite before everyone else at the table begins eating.
- Try to adjust the meal time pace to the elder's speed and finish the meal only when the oldest person has finished eating first.
- When pouring or receiving a drink from an older person, be sure to use both hands. It's also polite to fill up their glass if it's empty.

Table setting and utensils

A typical Korean meal includes rice, soup, and three or four side dishes. If it's a big meal like dinner, this will also include an additional main entrée.

Each person at the table will usually receive their own soup and rice. The main dish will be in a communal plate at the center of the table with side dishes around it for everyone to share.

When the main entrée is soup, it's served in a big pot and each person serves their own individual bowl with a ladle. It's also common to share the soup in one pot with all the members of the table.

When there is meat or seafood, tongs and scissors are used to cut the food on the table instead of a knife.

Let's learn how to use chopsticks!



- 1 Place the upper part of the first chopstick between the thumb and index finger and put the lower part on a ring finger.
- 2 Grab the second chopstick between the index and middle finger and hold it with the thumb.
- 3 You don't have to move the first chopstick. Open and close the second chopstick to pick up food by using the index and middle finger.

Tips for dining out

Restaurant cultures vary across countries, and Korea also has its own unique ways. To have the best restaurant experience, check out these 5 helpful tips about Korean restaurant culture.

- 1 **No tipping:** Unlike some countries, tipping is not customary in Korea. When you're ready to pay, walk up to the cashier or counter to pay your bill. Simply say: "계산할게요 (Gyesan-halgeyo)," which means "I will pay" in Korean.
- 2 **Calling the server:** Many Korean restaurants have a small bell on the table to summon servers. The bell is usually placed at a corner or under the table. If you don't find a bell, you can raise your hand and say "저기요 (Jeogiyo)," which means "Excuse me" in Korean.
- 3 **Check business hours:** Some restaurants close for a break from 2 or 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Make sure to check the restaurant's hours on Naver Map before heading out, especially if you plan to dine during these hours.
- 4 **Unlimited side dishes:** One of the beauties of Korean dining is the variety of free, refillable side dishes served with meals. Feel free to ask the server for refills if you want more side dishes. Many restaurants also feature a self-service bar where you can help yourself with the side dishes and refill them without needing to call the server.
- 5 **Ask for a phone charger:** Most restaurants offer a free phone charging station. Even if they don't provide a specific charging service, it's very common in Korea to ask to charge your phone at the restaurant if needed. Feel free to ask the staff to charge your phone while enjoying your meal.

- Hyemin Lee

Jeogiyo

Speakin'
Korean

Useful Korean phrases at restaurants

- Excuse me: **Jeogiyo** (저기요)
- I'd like to order: **Jumun halgeyo** (주문할게요)
- I'd like to have this: **Igeo juseyo** (이거 주세요)
- Please give me more side dishes: **Banchan deo juseyo** (반찬 더 주세요)
- Can I charge my phone?: **Hand-phone chungjeon hal su isseoyo?** (핸드폰 충전 할 수 있어요?)
- I'll pay: **Gyesan-halgeyo** (계산할게요)
- Thank you: **Gamsa-hamnida** (감사합니다)



KIM BYOUNG JOON LEDAS

VARICOSE VEIN CLINIC

Kim Byoung Joon LEDAS Varicose Vein Clinic has been specializing exclusively in varicose vein treatment for over 20 years.

Patients from 38 countries have already chosen and trusted LEDAS for their varicose vein treatment.



22 years
of dedicated varicose vein treatment

28 years
of advanced practice and expertise in cardiothoracic surgery

Over **28,000**
LEDAS surgeries performed



LEDAS International Services

Specializing Exclusively in Varicose Veins

- 22+ years of treatment and research.
- 28,000+ surgeries performed.
- Minimally invasive & non-surgical treatments for one-day recovery.

Lifetime Guarantee

- Recurrence prevention program with continuous patient care.
- A lifetime guarantee on treatment results.

Medical Interpretation

- English, Russian, and Chinese interpretation.
- Medical records translation into English.

Insurance Claim Assistance

- Complete documentation for insurance claims.
- Direct Billing available upon prior agreement with the insurer.

Concierge Service

- Free Meet & Greet available upon request

CONTACT US

Address: 11th–13th Floor, Youngkwang Bookstore Building, 10 Seomyeonmunhwa-ro, Busanjin-gu, Busan, South Korea

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Email: kbjedaspm@gmail.com

Fax: +82 (0)51-816-7394

LEDAS Online Contacts



Homepage



Instagram



WhatsApp



LEDAS, the Global Standard in Varicose Vein Treatment



World-Class Medical Team & Cutting-Edge Equipment

- The first and only varicose vein specialty clinic to receive the Prime Minister's Commendation in Korea.
- Dr. Kim Byoung Joon, cardiothoracic surgeon with 28 years of expertise, personally oversees the entire treatment process.
- 100% registered nurses (RN) ensuring top-tier medical care.
- Philips EPIQ Elite super-premium ultrasound system for precision diagnostics & treatment.



LEDAS One-day System

- 4th-generation laser surgery & UGFS for optimal results.
- Minimally invasive procedure for same-day recovery and return to daily life.
- Recurrence prevention program & lifetime treatment guarantee.



Revision Surgery Clinic

- Varicose vein revision surgery is more complex than the initial procedure due to changes in vein structure after treatment. Scar tissue and altered blood flow require a more precise approach. However, at LEDAS, with advanced vascular ultrasound technology and expertise, these challenges are effectively managed, ensuring safe and successful treatment with a focus on patient comfort and recovery.

The Safest Medical Institution in the World



- JCI Accreditation (4x): one of only five JCI-accredited clinics in Korea.
- KAHF Accreditation (3x): by the Korean MOHW as a top-tier clinic for international patients.
- GHA Accreditation: Top 25 globally, recognized for excellence in international patient care.

Cosmetical Treatment & Wellness Program



- **Hand and Leg Cosmetical Vein Treatment** : A simple injection procedure for visible surface veins on an outpatient basis.
- **Immune-Boosting Vitamin Injections.**
- **Medical Compression Stockings:**
 - Personalized selection for the prevention of swelling and thrombosis during long-distance travels.



Do You Have Symptoms of Varicose Veins?

- Leg swelling by afternoon despite feeling normal in the morning.
- Twisted, bulging veins or spider veins on the legs.
- Heavy, tingling sensation after prolonged sitting or standing.
- Frequent leg cramps at night.
- Itchy ankles or skin discoloration on the lower legs.



Untreated Varicose Veins Can Lead to Serious Complications



If left untreated, it can lead to skin necrosis and ulcers, and the risk of deep vein thrombosis (DVT) increases 2–3 times during long flights.

Get your DoWEA homework done

The Department of War Education Activity is a PK-12 American school system for U.S. military, DOW civilian dependents and other eligible families. DoWEA Pacific manages on-base schools in Guam, mainland Japan, Okinawa and South Korea.

usually takes about seven to 10 days, while other methods could take several months. The sending school can also ship records to the commercial address of the DoWEA Pacific school. It is recommended that you confirm the current mailing address with the school.

Registration

Families can register online using the DoWEA Student Information System (DSIS). This system allows sponsors to complete required documentation and include uploads of required forms prior to arriving at the new duty location. Families may also complete their registration in-country upon arrival to the new PCS location. Visit the school website for office hours.

Enrolled students who are advancing to the next grade level will need to revalidate enrollment eligibility by providing required documentation along with any required and/or updated immunization records for each child.

Students preparing to enter kindergarten must be five years old by Sept. 1 of the enrolling school year. Students entering first grade must be six years old by Sept. 1 of the enrolling school year. Proof of your child's age must be provided through documentation such as birth certificate or passport.

For the universal pre-kindergarten (UPK) program, students must be four years old by September 1 of the enrolling school year. Contact the school directly to learn more about eligibility requirements and how to apply for UPK.

Records

Parents should hand-carry all academic, immunization and special education records if possible. Some schools may require records to be mailed. If so, send records via U.S. Postal Service Priority Mail to the military address of the receiving school. Sending priority mail to the Pacific

Student meal / free and reduced lunch program

All families with students enrolled in DoWEA Pacific schools are eligible to apply for the Free and Reduced Meal Program. Completing this application is an annual requirement for families, if eligible, to continue to receive either a free or reduced lunch. To find the correct Free and Reduced Meal Program point of contact for your family's school, please visit the DoWEA Pacific website.

To pay for school lunches, parents and sponsors will need to set up and fund a prepaid account with the agency that operates your school's lunch program. Contact your school for additional information.

School liaison officers

School liaison officers can help your family with transition issues. SLOs operate independently of DOW schools and have expertise in transition support.

Special needs children

If your child has special needs, be sure to research the available support options for your desired location. DoWEA schools follow student special education plans (IEPs) and are

committed to providing supports for students within the least restrictive settings. Services are provided to the greatest extent possible within inclusion environments as well as small group or individualized supports as needed.

However, many overseas locations are limited in their medical and educational resources. Specialized medical, mental health, or educational services may not be available to meet your child's unique needs. Parents should understand and take into consideration how limited services might impact the growth and development of their special needs child. DoWEA Pacific staff members are available to help parents of special needs children to make informed choices.

You can reach out to the District Special Education Instructional Systems Specialist (ISS) by contacting the DoWEA District Superintendent's Office in the location where you are considering your next assignment, or you can contact the Pacific Regional Special Education ISS at the DoWEA Pacific Director's Office. In addition, very helpful information for families can also be accessed through the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP).

Sites to visit

DoWEA registration information
www.Dodea.edu/registration-process.cfm



DoWEA-Pacific
www.Dodea.edu/Pacific



Exchange Student Meal Program
www.aafes.com/about-exchange/school-lunch-program/



Exceptional Family Member Program
www.militaryonesource.mil/efmp



Tutor.com (Free online tutoring for military families)
www.tutor.com/military



Home school support

DoWEA-Pacific schools offer auxiliary services to eligible military-connected families who choose to home school their children. Auxiliary services include use of academic resources, access to the library of the school, after hours use of school facilities, and participation in music, sports, and other extracurricular and interscholastic activities. Students whose eligibility category requires tuition may be charged for extra-curricular activities.

Home schoolers using or receiving auxiliary services must meet the same eligibility requirements as dependents enrolled in DoWEA schools who use or receive the same auxiliary services. Eligible home schoolers are not required to attend a specific number of courses to receive auxiliary services, including participating in extracurricular and interscholastic activities.

- DoWEA-Pacific



More info on
homeschooling

Celebrate April's
Month of the Military Child
with us!



Each year,
Stars and Stripes teams up with
DoWEA to give our wonderful military brats
a platform to be heard. Kids of all ages from
across Pacific bases submit stories, poems,
drawings and photos about what life is like as
a military child. These run in our community
newspapers in mainland Japan,
Okinawa, Guam and Korea in April.
They are also all published online.
We hope you and your children join in
on the fun.



Take advantage of on-base colleges

The DOW has contracted colleges and universities to provide in-resident college and graduate programs on military installations in mainland Japan, Okinawa, South Korea and Guam.

The current contracted institutions are:

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

Ranked No. 1 for Online Bachelor's Programs and Online Bachelor's Programs for Veterans by U.S. News & World Report, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University is committed to helping you achieve your educational goals. Professional advising staff at their nine locations in Japan, Okinawa, and South Korea can help you select the right degree to propel your career in the aviation, management, safety, logistics, engineering, and space industries. The school offers local and online courses to accommodate your busy schedule, and awards credit for applicable military coursework and certificates. Visit your local campus and speak to an academic advisor today!

University of Maryland Global Campus

UMGC is one of 12 regionally accredited, degree-granting institutions in the University System of Maryland (USM). The university brings quality higher education wherever the military

needs it, with cutting-edge degree programs and classes offered both online and on-site at military installations worldwide. As the first university to serve military overseas, UMGC has earned a global reputation for excellence. Headquartered in Adelphi, Maryland, UMGC has on-site classroom locations in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. Offering both undergraduate and graduate degree programs, UMGC Asia's mission is to provide top quality education and services to U.S. military communities in Asia and the Pacific.

Troy University

The University proudly counts some 60 flag officers among the ranks of its alumni, has a presence on or near over 30 military installations worldwide and participates in online learning programs with all service branches. For generations, Troy University has understood the needs of the military student and has built a military inclusive institution offering a broad range of high quality, very affordable undergraduate and graduate academic programs supported by outstanding student services. Contact your education center to learn what in-residence and distance-learning programs are available on your base.

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University:
worldwide.erau.edu/pacificmil



University of Maryland
Global Campus:
asia.umgc.edu



Troy University:
www.troy.edu/military



Education centers

Camp Humphreys
Bldg. 657
DSN: 755-3600

USAG Daegu
Henry Bldg S -1840
DSN: 763-4923
Carroll Bldg. T-236
DSN: 723-5406

K-16AB
Bldg. 302
DSN: 722-8402

Osan Air Base
Bldg. 789
DSN: 784-4220

Camp Casey
Bldg. 1757
DSN: 722-1397

U.S. Navy bases
1-833-330-MNCC
www.myeducation.
netc.navy.mil

Kunsan Air Base
Bldg. 1051
DSN: 782-5148

Military Tuition Assistance

If you've thought about going to college, but didn't know if you could afford it, then the Military Tuition



Read more

Assistance program may be just the benefit you need. The program is available to active duty, National Guard and Reserve Component service members. While the decision to pursue a degree may be a difficult one personally, TA can lessen your financial concerns considerably, since it now pays up to 100% of tuition expenses for semester hours costing \$250 or less.

After the completion of a course, an officer using TA must fulfill a service obligation that runs parallel with – not in addition to – any existing service obligation.

Coverage amounts and monetary limits

The Tuition Assistance Program may fund up to 100% of your college tuition and certain fees with the following limits:

- Not to exceed \$250 per semester credit hour or \$166 per quarter credit hour
- Not to exceed \$4,500 per fiscal year, Oct. 1 through Sept. 30

Tuition assistance vs. VA education benefits

While the TA program is offered by the services, the Department of Veterans Affairs administers a variety of education benefit programs. Some of the VA programs, such as the Post-9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Act of 2008, also known as the Post-9/11 GI Bill, can work well with the TA program, as it can supplement fees not covered by TA. In addition, the Post-9/11 GI Bill® funds are available to you after you leave the military. If your service ended before Jan. 1, 2013, you have 15 years to use this benefit. If your service ended on or after Jan. 1, 2013, the benefit won't expire. The TA program is a benefit that is available only while you're in the service.

Courses and degree programs may be academic or technical and can be taken from two- or four-year institutions on-installation, off-installation or by distance learning. An accrediting body recognized by the Department of Education must accredit the institution. Your service branch pays your tuition directly to the school. Service members need to first check with an education counselor for the specifics involving TA by visiting their local installation education office or by going online to a virtual education center. Tuition assistance may be used for the following programs:

- Vocational/technical programs
- Undergraduate programs
- Graduate programs
- Independent study
- Distance-learning programs

Eligibility

All four service branches and the U.S. Coast Guard offer financial assistance for voluntary, off-duty education programs in support of service members' personal and professional goals. The program is open to officers, warrant officers and enlisted active-duty service personnel. In addition, members of the National Guard and Reserve Components may be eligible for TA based on their service eligibility. To be eligible for TA, an enlisted service member must have enough time remaining in service to complete the course for which he or she has applied.

TA benefits and restrictions

Tuition assistance will cover the following expenses:

- Tuition
- Course-specific fees such as laboratory fee or online course fee

NOTE: All fees must directly relate to the specific course enrollment of the service member.

Tuition assistance will not cover the following expenses:

- Books and course materials
- Flight training fees
- Taking the same course twice
- Continuing education units, or CEUs

Mastering mass transit

By Hyemin Lee

You can easily reach almost any destination on the Korean Peninsula with minimal effort and at a reasonable cost, whether by train, taxi, bus, plane, or your privately owned vehicle. Here are the basics to help you get started!

Travel by train

In South Korea, you can reach most cities by train. In many cases, it can be easier than flying when traveling within the country and stations are convenient to access.

KORAIL vs SRT

- Two companies operate railway trains: KORAIL and SR (SRT).
- KORAIL runs both high-speed and regional trains while SRT mainly operates high-speed service on major routes.
- Routes can overlap but departure stations and schedules may differ, so check both when planning.
- In Seoul, KTX departs from Seoul Station or Yongsan, while SRT commonly uses Suseo.

SRT *-SRT-*



Website

Tips for finding your lost items



■ Type of trains

General Trains:

- ITX-Saemaeul
- ITX-Cheongchun
- Mugunghwa-ho

High-speed train:

- KTX (KORAIL)
- SRT (SR)

KorailTalk



Android



iOS



Website

■ How to use trains

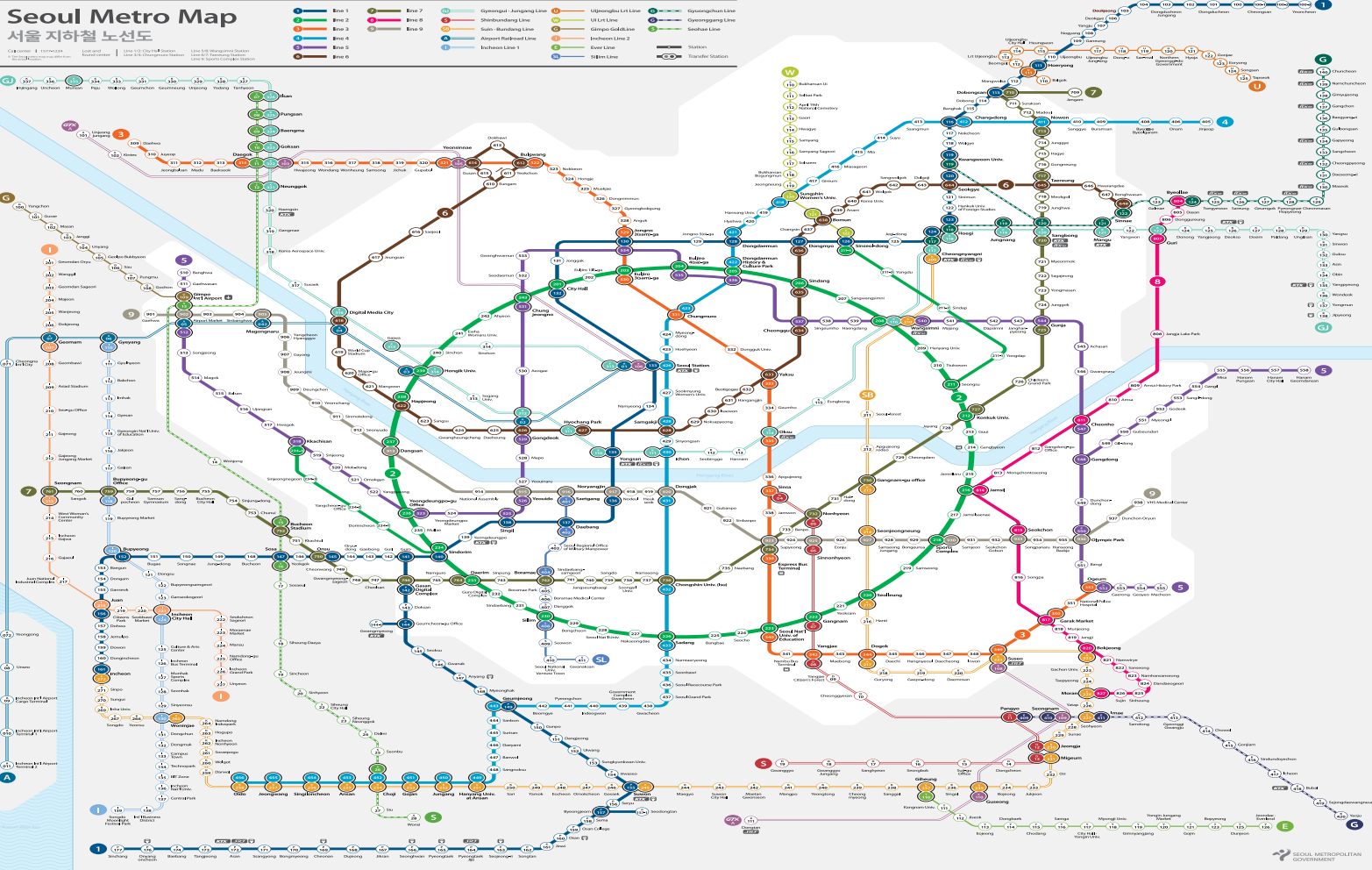
- KORAIL and SRT both offer booking service in English on the official app and website (KorailTalk / SRT). International cards are accepted.
- Buy your ticket before boarding whenever possible. Peak times (commuting hours, weekends and holidays) can sell out quickly, so booking early is recommended.
- If a ticket is sold out, check the other (Korail or SRT) or try a different time. You can also check for cancellations through the apps or buy a ticket at the station (ticket counter or machines).
- Some fees may apply when you cancel, and cancellation fees increase closer to departure.
- If you miss the train, refunds may still be possible at the ticket counter. However, refunds are not available after the train's scheduled arrival time at destination.
- Some station names look similar. Before you confirm your purchase, it helps to tap the station location in a map app to ensure you selected the right one.
- At train stations, you usually don't need to show a ticket to enter the station area. Go to your platform and board, but keep your mobile ticket/booking confirmation as train crew may check it onboard.

Things to know about a standing ticket

- 1 If all seat tickets are sold out, you have the option to purchase a standing ticket. These tickets are available at any train station, regardless of your departure and destination.
- 2 For SRT trains, it's recommended to secure a standing ticket in advance as they offer a limited number of standing tickets, which tend to sell out quickly during weekends or peak seasons.
- 3 The Mugunghwa trains usually feature a café car with unreserved seats, and many KTX or SRT trains have folding chairs between the entrance and corridors.

Seoul Metro Map

서울 지하철 노선도



Travel by subway

Several major cities operate subway systems with signs in both Korean and English. Taking the subway is a highly convenient choice for traveling within metropolitan areas. Seoul Metropolitan Subway has 24 lines and over 600 stations. Many metro lines in Seoul have several different train routes, which can be complicated, so always check carefully before boarding.

Areas: Seoul Metropolitan Area (Seoul, Incheon, Gyeonggi-do), Busan, Daegu, Daejeon, Gwangju

Hours: Approximately 5:30 a.m. - midnight

Fare: Adult fares usually start around 1,250–1,650 won per ride and vary by city and route. A single journey ticket is usually about 100 won more than using a transportation card.

Payment: Purchase a transportation card such as T-money a convenient store or buy a single journey ticket at the ticket vending machines.

Special Metro lines in Seoul

■ **Line 1 (Dark Blue):** Those working at Camp Casey, Osan Air Base, and Camp Humphreys may have the opportunity to use Line 1. It's the longest line, featuring various complex routes. Line 1 trains run from Soyosan, located north of Dongducheon (Camp Casey), to two different directions: Incheon or Seodongtan, with a separation point at Guro Station. Those returning to Osan Air Base or Camp Humphreys from Seoul should ensure to take trains toward "Sinchang" or "Cheonan." To navigate your trip with Line 1 correctly, check the schedule of the train through the app and make sure to get on the right train.

■ **Line 2 (Green):** This is the busiest metro line in the ROK, stopping at many famous destinations, including Jamsil, Gangnam, Hongdae, Dongdaemun, and Namdaemun (at City Hall Station). Make sure to board the right train, as going in the wrong direction for a full circuit will result in a very long ride to your destination.

Rules for priority seating on buses, trains



Download Subway Korea on your phone!

The Subway Korea app is helpful if you prefer seeing the full metro map at a glance. It can also show subway lines, routes, schedules and estimated travel time. For detailed directions, Naver Map or KakaoMap works well too.



Android



iOS



See TRANSIT on Page 28

Mindbridge Counseling Services

Touch your mind

We provide Psychology counseling (Individual, Family, Marriage) as well as Speech, Play, and Occupational therapy. Your path to well-being starts here.

“Ready to start your counseling journey at Mindbridge Counseling Services?”

Simply Call +82 10 2724 4426 to schedule an appointment or
Visit www.mindbridgecs.co.kr to request one online

We offer direct billing services for your convenience!



- Family members of active-duty service members can receive services without a referral
- Services include counseling, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and more



- Services are available based on GOB benefits
- Member ID required for eligibility verification



- Services are available after eligibility verification with Member ID
- Only the deductible is required



Scan QR code for more information ►

Consult now

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Mindbridge Counseling Services
Touch your mind

Live your best life with Mindbridge Counseling Services



Our Service

- Speech Therapy / Child Play Therapy / Occupational Therapy
- Psychology Counseling (Individual/Family/Marriage)
- Comprehensive Psychological Assessment (ADHD, Autism)
- Comprehensive Speech and Language Assessment

Mindbridge Counseling Services

*always put our client
satisfaction first.
Please check out
voice of our clients.*



Feedback from our client

My kido has developed self-esteem!

My son is now better speaking.

So glad to see my husband changing

I love location of this center
It is super close from my base!

All of staff are kind and professional

Client Satisfaction Survey



The survey was taken from 2023. 12. 1. ~ 12. 31. with total 89 participants

■ Very Satisfied ■ Not bad ■ Satisfied

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Mindbridge Counseling Services
Touch your mind



Continued from Page 25

Travel by bus

■ Regular buses

Regular buses provide a great alternative to subways or trains, especially for reaching destinations that are not accessible by train or subway.

Each city has its own bus system, and you can easily plan your journey using Kakao or Naver Map apps. These apps offer comprehensive information, including fares, detailed schedules, bus arrival times and estimated travel durations. This information is also displayed at bus stops.

Fare: In many cities, adult bus fares start around 1,300 won–1,700 won per ride (transportation card is usually cheaper than cash). Fares may vary by city and route.

Payment: A transportation card is the safest option. Some buses are card only and may not accept cash.

In Seoul, there are four different color-coded bus systems (bus numbers indicate specific routes):

Blue buses Operate on long-distance routes within Seoul.

Green buses Operate on short-distance routes, connecting blue buses and subway stations for transfers. Another type of green bus is the community bus, operating in small residential areas.

Red buses Express buses connecting Seoul, Incheon, and cities in Gyeonggi-do on long-distance routes.

Yellow buses Operate short-distance circular routes within the city and between sub-centers.

■ Express buses- ticket required

Taking an express bus is also a convenient and affordable alternative to railway trains. Depending on the departure and arrival locations, express buses can sometimes be even more efficient than trains. The bus routes from Incheon Airport to Pyeongtaek Station are also very useful for those working on Camp Humphreys. Bus only lanes help reduce delays, but travel times can still vary depending on traffic.

There are two main intercity bus services: Express Bus (Gosok) and Intercity Bus (Si-oe). Si-oe Bus and Gosok Bus. It's important to note that depending on the company, they use different terminals and websites. Due to this reason, there are often two express bus terminals in the same area within a few minutes distance from each other. So, be sure not to get confused about which terminal to head to depending on the destination.

Intercity vs. Express Buses

- Express (Gosok Bus): They usually run between major cities with fewer stops and depart from express bus terminals.

- Intercity (Siwoe Bus): They cover more regional destinations and may include more stops and depart from intercity bus terminals.

How to book

1. Use an official booking app and website.
 - Express (Gosok Bus): KOBUS (Both app and website are available, but the website is easier for English users)
 - Intercity (Siwoe Bus): Bustago or TxBus (T-money)
2. Search your route: Enter departure terminal/city, destination, date, time and passengers.
3. Pay and save your ticket: International cards are accepted for online/mobile payment.

Note: During weekends and holidays, seats sell out fast, but you can check again for newly canceled seats.

Learn how to use express buses



General guide



From Pyeongtaek to Seoul

Transportation card

A must-have item in Korea

Korea's public transportation system offers transfer discounts when you transfer to another bus or subway within 30 minutes. The number of discounted transfers is usually limited up to 4 times a day in Seoul Metropolitan Area and 2-4 times in other metropolitan cities depending on the region. To take advantage of this benefit, you must have a transportation card which offers a discount of about 100 won per ride in addition to the transfer discounts.

Several prepaid transportation card options are available, including T-money, EZL, Wowpass and more. However, the T-money card is the best option as it can be used across all regions in Korea for various purposes.

T-money cards can be used not only for buses, subways, and taxis, but also at convenience stores, High-Pass tollgates, parking lots and more.

T-money is available on Android (via mobile transit/payment services) and on iPhone (via Apple Wallet).

T-money card

Price: From 3,000 won (The price goes up depending on the design and type)

Top-up locations: convenience stores (GS25, CU, 7-Eleven, E-Mart 24 and more) and subway stations

■ How to use

1. Purchase a card at top-up locations and add 1,000 won to 90,000 won on the card.
2. Scan the card at a bus and metro when you enter. Make sure to scan it again



Examples of T-money card

before you exit to get a transfer discount.
*You can request a refund for the charged money at any time at top-up locations and T-money Town in Seoul Station. (A 500-won service fee is charged)

Travel by taxi

Note: Taxi fares and surcharges may vary by city and time.

Types of taxi

- **General (Ilban) taxi:** Fares start at 4,800 won for the first 1.6 km with an additional charge of 100 won for every 131 meters or 30 seconds. These taxis are usually white, silver and orange in color and many display Kakao T mark.
- **Deluxe (Mobeom) taxi:** The fare starts at 7,000 won for the first 3 km with an additional charge of 200 won for every 151 meters or 36 seconds. These taxis are usually black with a yellow sign on top. Many deluxe taxis are stationed at major hotels, subway, and bus stations.
- **Large taxi:** A large taxi can accommodate between 6 and 13 passengers. The fare system is the same as deluxe taxis.

Night Fare

It can be challenging to catch a taxi just before night fares begin as many drivers expect to be paid a higher rate, so it's important to be aware of the rules. Night fare rates and times vary depending on the region. In Seoul, the night fare applies from 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. with an additional charge of 20-40%. In Gyeonggi-do, the night fare starts from 11 p.m. to 4 a.m. with an additional charge of 30%. In other regions, night fares generally apply from 11 p.m. to 4 a.m. with a surcharge of 20-40%.

Payment options

Cash, transportation card and credit card (foreign credit cards are accepted)

Lights on a taxi

The roof sign on a taxi shows whether it's available or not. In Korea, it displays a Korean label, so it's best to check the word on the sign.

- 빈차 (Bincha): Available (you can hail it)

- 예약 (Yeoyak): Reserved (not available)
- 휴무 (Hyumu): Off duty (not in service)

How to grab a taxi

On the street

- Hail cabs on the street by waving your hands when the red light on the plate is visible.
- Line up at taxi stations. Most subway stations have taxi stations nearby.

On mobile

- **Kakao T:** The most widely used taxi-hailing app in Korea. You can request a taxi to your current location through the Kakao T app, and it also offers English service. Depending on the option you choose, you can pay the driver in person (cash or card) at your destination. This is helpful if you don't have a Korean payment method set up in the app.



How to use Kakao T

- **Uber:** In Korea, only licensed drivers with special plates can operate taxis, so car-sharing services are not permitted. All Uber drivers in Korea are legal taxi drivers. Although Uber is less common than Kakao T, it's available in major cities like Seoul and Busan.

On base

Exchange taxis are available on base, making life easier around bases. (Dial: 1544-9080)



Website

Travel by car

Traveling by car in ROK is very convenient thanks to Korean Navigation apps such as Kakao or Naver Map available in both English and Korean. They provide all necessary information including recommended travel routes, expected travel time, toll fees and more.

If you plan to drive on the highways with your POV, use the Hi-Pass system, allowing you to pay tolls without having to stop and count out money each time. The Hi-Pass system requires two items: an On-Board Unit (OBU – a card reader device) and a Hi-Pass card.

Places to buy:

- Online shopping malls (Gmarket, Coupang – both sites accept foreign credit cards)
- Most convenience stores (OBU – only at GS25 & Hi-Pass card – GS25, CU, E-Mart, 7-Eleven)
- Most rest stops (kiosk or inquire at the Information Center)
- Hi-Pass centers at most tollgates
- Hi-Pass Service in the Main PX (Bldg. 5700) on Camp Humphreys

OBU: Check if your vehicle already has an OBU installed as most vehicles produced in recent years come with one. If not, purchase a device, which generally costs around 40,000-50,000 won. Keep in mind that you need to register the OBU at Hi-Pass centers at tollgates or ask the OBU seller to handle the registration process for you. Registration requires your ID and vehicle registration with your name on it.

Hi-Pass card:

There are two types of cards: prepaid and auto-charge cards. Auto-charge cards require a Korean bank account, so the prepaid option may be easier for you. The card usually costs between 5,000 won and 6,000 won, and it can be topped up with amounts from 10,000 to 500,000 won. Top-up locations include convenience stores (GS25, CU, E-Mart, 7-Eleven) and rest stop kiosks, and mostly only cash is accepted.

Note: If you don't want to use the Hi-Pass system, you can always tap your T-money card at a tollgate.



Scan for the EV charging guide in Korea



See TRANSIT on Page 30



Continued from Page 30

Travel by plane

In the ROK, there are eight international airports and seven domestic airports. When traveling within Korea, various transportation options such as high-speed trains, buses, and cars are available, offering affordable prices and a wide choice of schedules. In some cases, domestic flights can be a good choice with a quicker travel time at an affordable price depending on the situation.

Moreover, you can enjoy very cost-effective travel around Asia from Korea. Round-trip journeys to numerous Asian countries, including Japan, China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Thailand, come at very reasonable prices, often below \$200. Don't miss the opportunity to explore the Pacific area and make the most of your time during your stay in Korea!

GPS apps

Kakao Map



Android



iOS



Naver Map



Android



iOS



Waze (on-base)



Android



iOS



International airport vs domestic airport

International airports: International airports include Incheon, Gimpo, Jeju, Gimhae, Cheongju, Daegu, Yangyang and Muan. Besides Incheon Airport that connects destinations worldwide, other international airports mainly serve flights to locations close to Korea, including domestic destinations, Japan, China, Taiwan, Thailand, the Philippines, as well as Guam and Hawaii.

Domestic airports: Domestic airports include Gunsan, Yeosu, Pohang Gyeongju, Ulsan, Wonju, Sacheon and Gwangju. These airports operate flights to Seoul, Jeju Island and other major cities. Travelers often use domestic airports to fly to Incheon or Gimpo airports for international travel.

Useful airports

Incheon International Airport: The largest airport in Korea with two terminals. Make sure to check which terminal to go to before heading to the airport.

Gimpo International Airport: Located in Seoul, it's a major airport after Incheon Airport.

Cheongju International Airport: Many use this airport when traveling from Camp Humphreys or Osan Air Base to Jeju Island. It operates domestic flights and some international routes.

Gunsan Airport: A small domestic airport located near Kunsan Air Base mainly used when traveling to Jeju Island.

Daegu International Airport: Mainly used for domestic flights and some international routes.

Gimhae International Airport: A hub for those seeking Busan from other cities. It operates numerous flights to domestic destinations and many international routes.

Tips for traveling to Jeju

Many travelers take domestic flights when heading to Jeju Island, and round-trip journeys typically range from 55,000 to 150,000 won. (Prices may vary by season.) Flights are a much cheaper and a quicker option than taking a ferry. You don't have to use international airports for flying Jeju, so plan your trip from the nearest airport. Also, car rentals at Jeju Airport are very affordable with costs starting from 25,000 won per day.

Let's practice together!

Let's say you're a newcomer who has never used public transportation in Korea. Let's make a trip plan together step by step.

Download Naver Map or Kakao Map

These apps will guide you what transportation to use and where to take them. You can also see the arrival time of buses, subways and trains. They are mostly very accurate.

Search the departure and arrival location

- For subways: Try to check the arrival time of the subway on the app, and make sure you're taking the right train in the right direction.

- For trains: Try to make a KorailTalk and SRT.

Leave the base and start your journey!

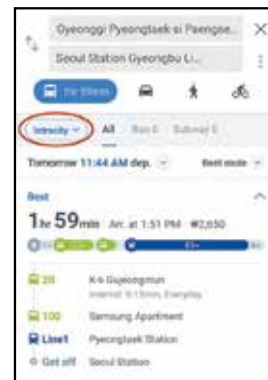
- 1) Take a taxi from your location directly to the station and buy a T-money card there. (Exchange taxi: 1544-9080)
- 2) Get a T-money card at a convenience store near your location and take a bus to get to the station!

Airport Express-AREX

Airport Railroad (Arex) connects Incheon Airport to other areas in Seoul, offering two types of train services: **Express trains** and **all-stop trains**. Express trains go directly to Seoul from Incheon Airport, taking only 43 minutes from Terminal 1 and 51 minutes from Terminal 2. The fare to Seoul Station is 13,000 won for adults and 9,500 won for children. Tickets can be purchased on-site or via a mobile device. All-stop trains stop at other destinations, including Gimpo Airport, Hongdae, and Seoul Station. Express trains require a ticket with reserved seat. All-stop trains can be paid with a transportation card like T-money.



Website



Buying & registering a POV on the ROK



The roads of Korea may offer plenty of adventure, but first get a car that will get you where you want to go and back.

To drive a privately owned vehicle (POV) in Korea, you need a United States Forces Korea driver's license. Active-duty personnel, civilian employees and family members age 18 and older are potentially eligible. The expiration date of USFK licenses depends on the person's "date eligible to return from overseas," or DEROS. For military personnel, licenses are normally good for two years. For Department of War civilians, it's up to five years.

U.S. military commands in Korea have varying policies regarding who may purchase vehicles. The registration process also varies, so check your local restrictions. Next, determine your needs and budget as well as such variables as length of duty tour and planned frequency of travel.

Insurance is required prior to registering a vehicle with USFK. When purchasing, discuss your needs in depth with an agent. It's best to have more than the minimum required coverage.

Finding vehicles to purchase is the easy part. On U.S. military bases, there is always someone

PCS-ing out and many are usually trying to sell their vehicles shortly before departing. These vehicles often have a sign in the window indicating their features and price. Many bases have designated areas for these vehicles, which are often called "lemon lots." This can be more than a mere moniker.

The risk of buying a used vehicle from a fellow SOFA-status person is that the vehicle may have had numerous owners, many of whom may have done minimal maintenance because they only planned to use it for a short time. Inspect it carefully. There is more to check than the required safety inspection items.

Many bases have Auto Hobby Centers that will inspect the vehicle for a nominal sum before you buy it. They advise you of the car's defects before you hand over your hard-earned cash. The centers can also conduct the official safety inspection and issue the certificate needed before you can register the vehicle.

The benefit of buying a used vehicle from a SOFA-status seller is that these vehicles are easy to register. Go with the current owner and registration to the Pass & Vehicle Registration office. You will need:

- Vehicle insurance policy
- USFK 134 EK driver's license (POV)
- Valid safety inspection

At Pass & Vehicle Registration, complete the application for registration and bill of sale. The office will cancel the old registration and transfer ownership. An authority will place a decal on the windshield, but the license plates remain the same.

A more reliable option is Military AutoSource. Vehicles come with an import license and bill of sale. Take the bill of sale to an O-4, GS-12, NF-4 grade or higher. Have that person sign as a witness. Take the documents to the registration office and fill out a registration application. The office will issue a decal and license plates. New vehicles don't require a safety inspection. You're ready to roll in a vehicle with a warranty, U.S. specs and an English-language owner's manual.

Unfortunately, your "follow-on" orders may not include vehicle shipment. It may also be difficult to get what your car is worth if you are forced to leave it behind.

Buying a used car off base is more complicated. Accompany the seller to the local government office (Yongsan Ward office in Seoul, Pyeongtaek City

office in the Camp Humphreys area) and deregister the vehicle. They will issue a bill of sale as well as a new license plate. Take it to Pass & Vehicle Registration on base with the same documents needed for a used vehicle purchased on base. They will issue a decal.

If you buy a new car off base, the dealer will provide you with a manufacturer's certificate. It's written in Korean, but ensure your name is correctly typed in English. In the space requiring your KID (Korean ID) number, put your Social Security number. If there are mistakes on the form, Pass & Registration will not issue a decal.

When delivery of the new car is made, a temporary license plate will be placed on the vehicle. The temporary plate is normally valid for 10 days, but may be valid for up to 30 days. You may be subject to fines if you fail to complete the registration process within that time. At the registration office, you will need:

- Manufacturer's certificate
- Temporary license plate
- Valid insurance policy
- USFK driver's license

License plates for a new car bought off base or one that has been deregistered must be issued by a Korean governmental authority.

On-base vehicle registration offices

Camp Humphreys

Bldg. 6400; Tel: 757-4001
Mon. - Fri.: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
(Closed for lunch 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.)

Camp Walker

Bldg. S-330, Rm 128A
DSN : 763-4708
Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
& 1 p.m.- 4 p.m.

Camp Carroll

Bldg. 946
DSN: 763-2575
Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Closed for lunch 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Camp Casey/Area I

Bldg. 2440, Maude Hall
Tel: 722-4033/1588/1583
Mon. - Thurs.: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Osan Air Base

Bldg. 1333
Tel: 784-4568
Walk-ins: Mon. Wed. Fri.:
1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
By appt.: Mon. Thurs.:
9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Kunsan Air Base

Bldg. 1310; Tel: 782-5678/4900
Mon.-Fri.: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
(Open during lunch)

Bloom Beyond the Uniform

YOUR TRANSITION STARTS WITH TAP



ABOUT TAP

The **Transition Assistance Program (TAP)** prepares Service Members for a successful transition from military to civilian life. Through counseling, workshops, and personalized guidance, TAP helps you explore career opportunities, pursue education, understand your benefits, and develop a plan for life after the military.

ELIGIBILITY

- 180 days active-duty service
- Separating within 18 months
- Retiring within 24 months
- Dependents of eligible participants

WHAT WE OFFER:

- Individual Transition Counseling
- Resume Assistance
- Financial Planning
- Interviewing Skills
- MOC Crosswalk
- VA Benefits and Services
- Employment and Career Workshops
- Entrepreneurship Workshop
- Higher Education Workshop*

*Some services are only available online.



CONTACT TAP

USAG Humphreys Maude Hall
Building 6400, Suite W-301

DSN: 757-2101

COMM: 050-3357-2101

HOURS OF OPERATIONS

Monday - Friday

0800-1700

Closed on U.S. Federal Holidays

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Where to buy a car

There are many car dealers in Korea anxious for military business.

BMW / MINI Military Sales help you to save up to 10% from MSRP for all U.S. military members when purchasing a BMW/MINI while stationed in Korea. Your choices can vary. Korean specs, as well as U.S. specs, are available depending on your status. Visit their office located in Yongsan (Across from Yongsan Garrison's Gate #8) and their Pyeongtaek office, located less than a mile away straight from Anjeong-ri Gate. You can also purchase Korean spec from each brand, and they offer them at special prices. For more details, go to www.bmwsskorea.com, Facebook and Instagram, or call 1577-2696 (BMW M).

Military AutoSource, which has served the military community abroad for more than 47 years, offers the finest Chrysler, DoWge, Jeep, Ram, Ford, Lincoln and Harley-Davidson vehicles to military personnel stationed here through independent sales representatives. Delivery to all bases in Korea. 010-3257-0331, www.militaryautosource.com

US Military Sales selling new U.S.-specification Volvos, will help you save thousands of dollars on Stateside MSRP. Their showroom is located near the Yoon Gate at USAG Humphreys, with additional sales offices at the U.S. Embassy Association Building at USAG Yongsan Garrison. They also take trade-ins and sell used cars. Call 010-3098-4507 for more information. www.usmilsales.com

Craigslist is growing more popular as a way to find a used car in Korea. The well-known site lists vehicles for sale by owners and dealers, and usually displays a photo of the car as well as basic details about it. seoul.craigslist.co.kr/cta/

Another popular website for cars is USFK Classifieds, a Yongsan-area dealer which claims to cater specifically to U.S. Forces Korea. Its easy-to-use site offers an inventory of early-to-late model cars priced in U.S. dollars, with more than 200 vehicles available at its consolidated dealership and access to many more. The firm offers on-base pickup to the dealership and full repair services. usfkclassifieds.co.kr/, 010-8222-5573

Off-base dealers

If you are not looking for a new luxury car to see you through your time in Korea, but want something a cut above what can be found in a lemon lot, here are some dealers who want your business:

Camp Humphreys area

Car Friend We believe the used cars we offer are the highest quality and ideal for your life needs. We are your CAR FRIEND who is with you from A to Z in everything about your vehicle. From purchasing to selling, washing, polishing, and coating in nationwide auto shopping services. 13, Paengseongbuk-ro, Paengseong-eup, Pyeongtaek-si, Gyeonggi-do

www.facebook.com/car.friend.2023, 010-7377-4977

Gorilla Motors (SOFA specialist), (010-8338-0026) Gyeonggi-do, Pyeongtaek-si, Songhwa-ri, 410-1 KR

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gorillamotors/>

Kang's Auto Sales & Service is only a 2-minute drive from Dongchang-ri Gate. They have been serving the Camp Humphreys community for more than 10 years. Tel: 031-691-2255 or 010-5691-6243; Address: 17911 80, Paengseongdaegyo-gil, Paengseong-eup, Pyeongtaek-si, Gyeonggi-do.

CarMax Humphreys is located about 5 minutes away, halfway between the Anjung-ri and Dongchang-ri Gates. They have been serving the Camp Humphreys community for more than 20 years.

www.carmaxcenter.com, 010-9217-9987

OMG Motors a self-styled foreign car specialist, is located less than half a mile from the main gate of Camp Humphreys. Though it started as a car repair facility, it has since branched out into used car sales. Ask for Lee, Sung Min. sites.google.com/site/omgmotors/services/home/omg-motors-used-car-sales, 031-655-7911

Osan Air Base area

H&K Best Used Car We have over 3,000 used vehicles in inventory for SOFA personnel. Free delivery to Osan & Humphreys area. Also, we have associated mechanics in your area. Easy SOFA register and insurance services.

Contact: MJ Hong at 010-6325-0794, or EunHee Kim at 010-7350-8987.

Daegu area

New Motor King Car Center Mr. Yun is a professional mechanic trained in all vehicles, including export models. Mr. Yun also offers used car purchase consultations and car rental reservation consultations.

053-472-8400 or 010-3531-4929 Mr. Yun, Jung-Ho, 71, E-cheon ro, namgu, Daegu. (Camp Henry, Gate #2)

Overlooked traffic laws

Navigating traffic laws is crucial when driving in Korea. As traffic laws are updated every year, some can be confusing. The following laws below are important to note, as they are frequently enforced by the police. Moreover, there are numerous enforcement cameras installed throughout Korea, so there are more chances of receiving a traffic violation.

Turning right at intersections

Due to an increase in traffic accidents caused by right-turning vehicles, a traffic law for a mandatory stop at intersections has been enforced. Penalty: typically 40,000 won–60,000 won and 15 penalty points.



• **Red light:** Regardless of pedestrians, drivers must make a full stop at the stop line. Then, after ensuring

of oncoming traffic and pedestrians, a right turn can be made.



• **Green light:** When there are no pedestrians, drivers can make the right turn very slowly.

Drivers must yield to pedestrians on the crosswalk.



Speed in school zones

School zones are designated sections within a 300-500 meter distance around kindergartens, elementary schools and hagwon private educational institutions. These zones are very common and traffic violations within them come with stricter punishments.

The speed limit in school zones is 20 or 30 km/h, with some areas allowing an increase to 40-50 km/h only at night in limited areas. Even when there are no pedestrians around, drivers must comply with the speed limit and make full stops at all crosswalks within the school zones. Be extra careful as these zones tend to have enforcement cameras monitoring traffic at all times. Parking in school zones is also prohibited.

Besides practicing extra caution in school zones, apps like Naver and Kakao Map can provide driving assistance and speed limit warnings to help you navigate the areas safely.

Bus-only lanes

Avoid using bus-only lanes during designated times since CCTV cameras and traffic police are actively monitoring. These lanes are marked with blue lines and labeled with "버스전용 (bus only)" in Korean. Violating the rule can result in fines and penalty points.

Bus-only lanes in cities: Only large buses or vehicles with 36 or more seats can use these lanes.

Median lanes: Located on the central line, these lanes operate 24/7 and general vehicles are strictly prohibited from entering.

Side lanes: Located at the edge of roads near sidewalks, they operate on time restrictions (blue single line: 7 a.m. – 10 a.m. & 5 p.m. – 9 p.m. on weekdays) or all-day restrictions (blue double line: 7 a.m. – 9 p.m. on weekdays). *Dotted line allows general vehicles to enter temporarily for right turns or entering side streets.

Bus-only lanes in highway: Located on some sections of Gyeongbu Expressway, the first lane marked in blue is designated as a bus-only lane.

Time: 7 a.m. – 9 p.m. (Every day except Seollal and Chuseok) / 7 a.m. – 1 a.m. (During Seollal and Chuseok holidays)

Eligible vehicles: Cars with 9 or more passengers and van with 6 or more passengers.



Learn more about bus-only lane rules



Camp coordinates

Travel base to base



Left: Soldiers of the Eighth Army Culinary Team host a culinary showcase at the Morning Calm Center at Camp Humphreys on Feb. 13, 2026. Photo by Sgt. Martin Nalls/U.S. Army **Right: Spouses of soldiers assigned to the 2d Infantry Division/ROK-U.S. Combined Division gather to celebrate Lunar New Year at the Dragon Hill Lodge in Yongsan on Feb. 6, 2026. Photo by Pak, Chin -U/ U.S. Army**

1. Camp Casey

Main Gate

37.918040, 127.057350

Back Gate

37.925532, 127.056886

2. Camp Hovey

Main Gate

37.899094, 127.081405

5. Suwon AB

Main Gate

37.245278, 127.013889

6. Osan AB

Main Gate

37.080194, 127.049566

Back Gate

37.088056, 127.050556

ROK AF Gate:

37.073690, 127.031325

7. Camp Humphreys

Millett (Anjeong-ri) (Main Gate)

36.957500, 127.044444

Pedestrian (Walking Gate)

36.958611, 127.043056

Yoon(Dongchang-Ri) Gate

36.969069, 127.036924

Charlton(Hamjeong-ri) Gate

36.951211, 127.018627

Galer (CPX) Gate

36.950561, 127.037816

Adams(DoWu-Ri) Gate

36.962167, 126.99010

8. Kunsan AB

Main Gate

35.849964, 128.603474

Back Gate (North Gate)

35.850362, 128.599148

Hammer Gate

35.921366, 126.643584

9. Camp Walker

Gate #4 Pedestrian (Walking Gate)

35.839611, 128.592393

Gate #6

35.841468, 128.583313

Gate #7

35.840556, 128.59222

10. Camp Henry

Gate #1

35.849964, 128.603474

Gate #2

35.850362, 128.599148

3. USAG Yongsan

Gate #1 (Dragon Hill Lodge) Pedestrian Only

37.534610, 126.980435

Gate #3 (Noksapyeong Station) Pedestrian Exit Only

37.534805, 126.984699 – no longer in use

Gate #5 (AAFES Gas station) Pedestrian Only

37.533209, 126.988484

Gate #6 (Commissary Gate)

37.527222, 126.990833

Gate #7 (Main Gate / Escort Gate)

37.527304, 126.991765

Gate #16 ("MP" Gate) Pedestrian Exit Only

37.537778, 126.974167

4. K-16 AB

Main Gate

37.457925, 127.107546

13. Camp Mujuk

Main Gate

35.960479, 129.426320

14. Chinhae Naval Base

Main Gate

35.155520, 128.655829

Busan

BSC-Busan Storage Center

Main Gate: 35.131389, 129.060000

Pier #8

Main Gate: 35.119685, 129.072296

Gimcheon

DLA-Defence Logistics Agency

Main Gate: 36.155556, 128.257778

11. Camp George

Main Gate

35.849867, 128.595222

12. Camp Carroll

Gate #1:

35.988611, 128.414167

Gate #2:

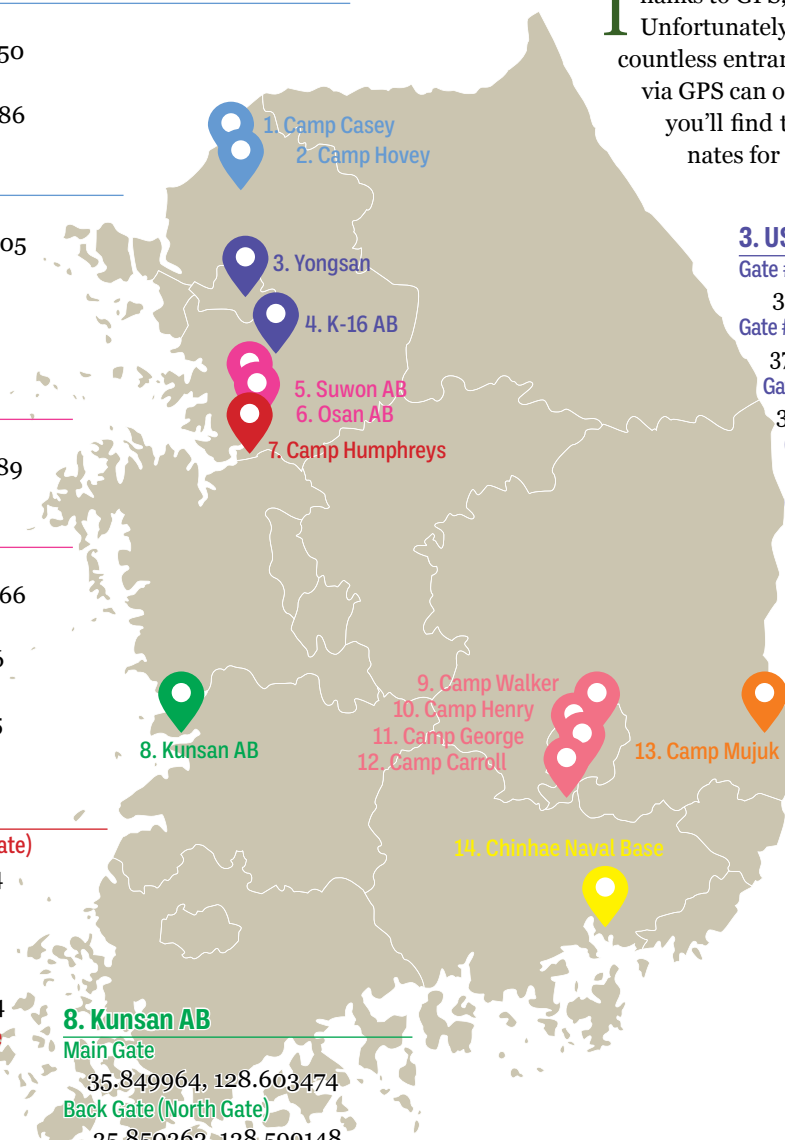
35.988611, 128.41055

Gate #3:

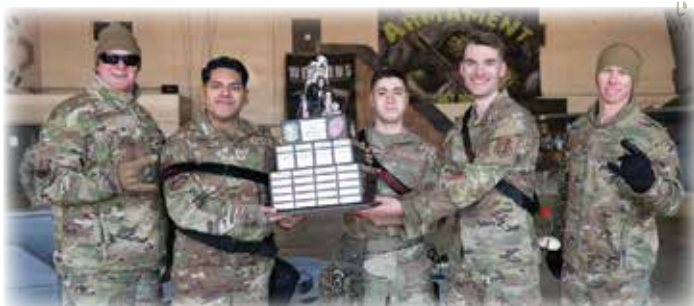
Closed

Gate #4:

36.003611, 128.414167



Thanks to GPS, getting lost is nearly a thing of the past. Unfortunately, with military bases and the sometimes countless entrance gates, finding your exact destination via GPS can often prove harder than it should. Below, you'll find the exact latitude and longitude coordinates for many of the gates located in Korea.



Col. Kenneth Beebe III, far left, and Chief Master Sgt. Michael Clark, far right, and the winners of the 4th Quarter Ammo Bomb Building and Loading Competition at Osan Air Base on Jan. 8, 2026. Photo by Staff Sgt. Dustin Braaten/U.S. Air Force

Space-A travel

A way to see the world

Space Available travel offers a way for Armed Services personnel, their dependents, retirees and others who support the mission to see the world on a budget... if the timing is right. Below is what you need to know about this great privilege.

What is Space-A?

It is a program that allows authorized passengers to occupy surplus seats after all cargo and space-required duty passengers have been accommodated.

What do I need to qualify?

- Qualified travelers must have completed the proper procedures and have the required documentation for travel.
- Active duty must be on leave before they can register for Space-A.
- Dependents of active duty flying unaccompanied need an Unaccompanied Command Sponsorship from his or her spouse's commander. The letter is valid for one round trip travel via military aircraft, describes the reason for travel and the

category of passenger travel.

- Also mandatory for travel: military ID cards, passports, social security numbers and emergency contact information at the final destination.

How much does it cost?

Most flights offered through the Air Force's Air Mobility Command (AMC) or the Navy and are usually free of charge.

Patriot Express flights are commercial, so a small tax (usually under \$30) is charged per seat and per leg.

Where can I go on Space-A?

Common destinations include the Continental U.S. states, Hawaii, Alaska, Germany, England, Spain, Italy, Japan, South Korea and Guam. Flights may even go to South and Central America, Africa and Australia.

When is the best time to fly?

The best time to obtain seats is when DoWEA schools are in session.

Because the program is a privilege, it is imperative to understand the circumstances may

change due to mission mobility. Flying exactly where you want to go at the time or day you want to fly is not always possible. So, if you have a specific itinerary for your destination or your return, you may want to reconsider using Space-A for those travel plans.

Where can I register?

There are many ways. In-person registration can be completed at the terminal's helpdesk or self-help kiosks. You can also register via email, fax or online through www.takeahop.org. Registration is allowed for up to five departure airports and five countries of destination.

What happens after I register?

Once registered, your information remains active for either 60 days, or for the duration of your leave orders or authorization of flight, whichever occurs first. Print a copy of your registration to keep on hand at the terminal. The time and date stamp of your registration determines your position and priority within your Space-A category.

On flight day, decide which terminal you think would be the best chance for Space-A departure and head out. It helps to phone the terminals that you requested for departure and to monitor recent schedules.

What are the categories?

Each passenger is assigned a passenger category for travel. These categories designate the order by which you may be boarded on Space-A flights. The following list is generalized:

- Emergency travel on a round-trip basis in connection with serious illness, death, or impending death of a member of the immediate family.
- Environmental Morale Leave (EML) and dependents.
- Active duty ordinary Leave and dependents; convalescent leave; permissive TDYs; unaccompanied dependent of deployed servicemember for more than a year.
- Unaccompanied dependent of deployed servicemember on EML status.
- Unaccompanied military dependent of non-deployed servicemember.
- Retirees, Reservists.

What baggage can I bring?

- Two pieces of checked baggage; 70 lbs each; up to 62 linear inches in size. (families can pool baggage allowances)
- Carry-ons must fit in overhead bins (if available) or under your seat
- Travel light as baggage weight could be restricted for your flight.

PACIFIC LOCATIONS

OKINAWA

KADENA AB

733 AMS, Unit 5145
Box 10
Phone: 634-5806
/ 098-962-6487



MAINLAND JAPAN

MISAWA AB

Bldg. 943
Phone: 315-226-2370/2371
Commercial: 011-81-176-77-2370/2371



MCAS IWAKUNI

Bldg. 727
Phone: 315-253-5509



YOKOTA AB

Bldg. 80
Phone: 315-225-5660/5661/5662



KOREA

OSAN AB

Bldg. 648
Phone: 315-784-6883



KUNSAN AB

Bldg. 2858
Phone: 063-470-4666



GUAM

ANDERSEN AFB

Bldg. 17002 Unit 14008
Phone: 671-366-5165



NAF ATSUGI

Bldg. 206
Phone: 0467-63-3118



Quick links to ease travel

Make reservations on the AMC Space-A Travel page



FAQS



AMC Pet Travel Site



Travel site for military, DoW & veterans



SIM cards and cell phones

So, you've just PCS'd to Korea, and now you need to get a new cell phone or a SIM card. Well, first off, they have those here, so you're in luck. Now, where do you start? As you've likely already noticed, most bases in Korea already have a branch where you can get a phone without leaving your installation. There are definitely benefits to staying on base, but just because it's the easiest, doesn't mean it makes the most sense for your situation. There are plenty of off-base locations throughout the country, but if you do go this route, you might consider bringing someone who can speak Korean. In Korea, there are three main providers: SK Telecom, LG U+ and Korea Telecom (KT). Here is a quick breakdown if you want to weigh your options.

SK Telecom

SK Telecom operates several authorized stores with signs that say "T World" or "SK 텔레콤 (Telecom)" as well as a customer call center exclusively for foreigners. Please call the customer center beforehand in order to find out which stores provide interpretation services, since not all of them do.

Korea Telecom (KT)

KT operates three service centers throughout Seoul and a customer call center exclusively for foreigners. The most representative KT center, located in Gwanghwamun, provides mobile phone subscription manuals in foreign languages. Moreover, in partnership with BBB Korea, the center offers consultation in 17 different languages.



Discounts with mobile membership

Many service members sign up for phone services with on-base shops associated with KT and LG U+. Here's an important tip: Don't forget to ask the staff for a membership card!

For locals, it's a must to download a mobile carrier's membership app and create an account to get exclusive perks, including discounts at convenience stores, bakeries, movie theaters, amusement parks, coffee shops, and more.

However, members affiliated with the U.S. military may face challenges using the app if they don't have an alien registration number, which is not mandatory for those under SOFA.

Instead, simply ask the staff at the shop to issue you a membership card. Upon receiving the card, you'll also get a brochure with detailed information in English about the benefits.

How to get the card

KT: Visit a shop and staff will provide you membership card on the spot. (ID required)

LG U+: Visit a shop and show your ID card. Then provide an off-base address (You can use a Korean friend's address). They will send the card to the off-base address within a week. Alternatively, you can order the card via phone call (080-850-1891).

LG U+

Formerly known as LG Telecom, LG U+ is owned by the LG Corporation.

The company is known for its G series of smartphones as well as a variety of other electronics including TVs. With roughly 20% of the market, the No. 3 mobile service in Korea trails its two main rivals.

Korean translator app

Even if you don't speak Korean, there's no need to worry because there is a perfect solution: Naver Papago! In other foreign countries, Google apps usually come in handy, but in Korea, Naver apps take the lead due to their efficiency and specialization for daily local life. Naver Papago was created to understand the variances of the Korean language, including variations in grammar and order. With this app, you can be sure to have the most accurate translations.



directly, the app provides immediate translations. The "Conversation" feature is especially convenient for translating two languages in real time during the conversation.

Text translation

"Image" and "Study Camera" allow you to translate text by taking a photo. The "Image" feature is great for translating signs on stores, road signs, books, and any text-based content. The "Study Camera" works the same but is optimized for those who want to learn the translated language. This feature automatically divides the translated text into words and sentences, allowing you to understand them one by one and save them in your word list. Keep in mind that when using "Study Camera," you should capture text without mixed languages. Also, for accurate translation, it's important to select the translation scope of the image correctly.

Other features

Additionally, you can save translated words or sentences by marking them with a star to put them in "Favorites." You can review these words when

1330 Helpline

If you still find using the translator challenging, call the 24-hour helpline 1330 operated by Korea Tourism Organization when you need language assistance. Agents provide interpretation services and necessary information for problem solving. Simply dial 1330 on your phone or use Live Chat.

Live chat



Learn more about 1330 Helpline



Naver Dictionary

This app is useful for learning Korean vocabulary for those studying Hangul. It offers various meanings and example sentences for each word with pronunciation. By creating an account, you can save the words in your customized word book. The auto play feature of the word book reads and repeats the entire list of saved words, including words and example sentences.

This feature makes studying vocabulary very efficient.

needed in the future. Also, downloading the Offline translation feature allows you to use Papago anytime, even without an internet connection.

- Hyemin Lee



Conversation translation

The "Voice" and "Conversation" features are designed for translating sentences or conversations. Whether you input text or speak

Law and order

While in the Republic of Korea, all U.S. military and civilians under the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between Korea and America are subject to both U.S. and Korean laws as well as U.S. Forces Korea regulations. While many Korean laws are similar to those back home, some local laws, regulations and legal customs may catch you off guard.

Your base chain of command or legal office should be the first place you go with legal questions or concerns.

Here are a few local laws and legal customs you might want to consider:

Black marketing

U.S. regulations and Korean customs laws prohibit U.S. personnel from transferring duty-free goods to persons not entitled to duty-free privileges, except under limited circumstances. Duty-free goods are those imported into Korea by a SOFA person, brought in through the APO or obtained at post exchanges, commissaries, shoppettes and Class VI stores.

Transferring includes selling, bartering, pawning, loaning and giving a gift; however, gifts of duty-free goods are permitted, if the gift is under \$50 and is not alcohol or

tobacco, was not purchased from a commissary and is not a subsistence item. Service members may also be required to show continued possession or lawful disposition of high-value duty-free purchases. If there is a question about a proposed transfer, prior approval from the command should be obtained.

Counterfeit products

Many “brand name” items can be purchased cheaply in Korea, but they may be counterfeit; and if so, they may be confiscated when taken or mailed back to the U.S. personnel on leave to China or Southeast Asian countries may be tempted to purchase “bargain” goods that may be seized by Korean customs officials if they are determined to be counterfeit upon re-entry to Korea. And there have been cases of Korean prosecutors seeking criminal indictment for smuggling when large quantities of counterfeit goods were involved.

Drug stores

Korean drug stores and similar establishments are off-limits to U.S. personnel. This restriction is imposed because some controlled substances under U.S. law can be pur-

Illegal things in Korea

Narcotics
Korea has strict laws against narcotics. Possession and/or use of any type of narcotics, including marijuana, is illegal.

Pornography
Distributing or producing obscene material is illegal in Korea, and many porn sites are blocked. Viewing or possessing illegal sexual content such as child sexual abuse material or explicit deepfakes is also punishable.

Verbal assault
Insulting or defaming someone can be punishable in Korea including publicly or online if the message can be shared.

chased without prescription in Korean drug stores.

Traffic accidents

Traffic in Korea is different than in the U.S. It is not uncommon for children to play in the streets, people to cross the street outside a crosswalk without looking or drivers to do the unexpected. Under Korean law, drivers are responsible for the safety of pedestrians and other drivers.

If a driver is involved in an accident, it will almost always be considered his/her fault and may be treated as a criminal offense.

In case of an accident not involving a fatality where the damage or injury is paid for, the Korean government will usually not press charges unless alcohol, fleeing the scene, gross negligence (extreme care-

lessness or recklessness) or another major traffic offense is involved. The command can assist the service member in making a settlement; and no action should be taken which could aggravate the Koreans.

If an accident occurs, the driver should stop immediately. If the Koreans believe a driver has attempted to flee the scene, they are more likely to begin criminal proceedings. Anyone who is injured, or may be injured, should be transported to a hospital. The military police (MPs) should be notified immediately so they can conduct their own investigation. If the driver cannot gain access to a telephone, he or she should ask the Korean police to call the MPs.

– Compiled from media and U.S. Forces Korea sources

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Drinking in Korea

When U.S. troops are mentioned in Korean media, issues relating to alcohol often come up. Learning both legal and cultural norms around alcohol consumption can help you maintain healthy drinking habits while respecting your host country. Here is what you need to know about drinking in Korea.

Drinking age rule

In Korea, people can legally buy alcohol and tobacco starting Jan. 1 of the year you turn 19. In other words, even if you are still 18, you may purchase them from the beginning of that year.

However, USFK (United States Forces Korea) policy states that the drinking age for those under SOFA including service members, civilian employees, contractors and their dependents is 21 years old, both on and off base.

Open container rule

In Korea, public drinking is common and generally allowed, so you'll see people drinking in parks or on the street. However, some local governments restrict drinking in designated alcohol-free zones, and fines may apply.

However, for those under SOFA with USFK, an open

container of an alcoholic beverage in public isn't allowed unless it's a public area intended for the consumption of alcohol, according to USFK policy.

Alcohol is available at convenience stores, grocery markets, supermarkets, restaurants, and bars, with no restrictions on the time or quantity you can purchase. You must show your I.D. to prove your age, as selling alcohol to minors can result in severe penalties for business owners.

Due to Korea's relatively lenient alcohol consumption laws, many might drink excessively. Remember that if you're going to drink, do it responsibly and always have a designated driver.

Don't drink and drive!

As it is in the States, driving under the influence is against the law in Korea. The blood alcohol concentration (BAC) limit in Korea is 0.03% and penalties for driving while intoxicated can vary.

Drunk driving penalties include imprisonment of up to five years or fines from five million to 20 million won. More severe punishments apply if a driver causes injury to others. Police frequently conduct BAC checks on the road without



prior notice. Bottom line: If you drink, don't drive!

Because BAC can rise quickly and varies by person, even one drink may put you over 0.03%.

Road Traffic Act - Article 44

(Prohibition on Driving under the Influence)

- No one shall drive a car, tram, or bicycle while under the influence of alcohol.
- Police officers may measure a driver's alcohol level using a breathalyzer if deemed necessary for traffic safety, or if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a driver is under the influence. The driver must comply with the measurement.
- If a driver disputes the breathalyzer results, they may be required to provide a blood sample or undergo other testing methods.
- The standard for being considered under the influence of alcohol is a BAC of 0.03% or higher.

Drinking etiquette

When having a drink with Koreans, it is common to order a bottle of soju or beer and share it in glasses. It is a polite gesture to fill each other's cups, and it is usually respectful for younger people to pour drinks for older people first. If someone's glass is empty, it is courteous to ask if they want more and refill it.

When drinking with elderly Koreans, it is polite to pour the drinks while holding the bottle

with both hands, one tilting the bottle and the other supporting it. If an older person is pouring drinks for you, hold your glass with both hands.

In Korea, using both hands to give or receive something is a sign of respect for elders. Also, when drinking, it is polite to slightly turn your head to the side rather than facing an elderly person directly.

Hangover relief

In Korean convenience stores, you'll find many hangover drinks and supplements for sale that contain herbs or ingredients like oriental raising tree fruit or taurine, as these are thought to help prevent you from feeling like crap after drinking.

These "cures" may help prevent hangovers by reducing alcohol absorption and supporting the breakdown. They are usually taken about 30 minutes before drinking for best results. They may not completely prevent hangovers but may help reduce symptoms.

Convenience stores carry both hangover supplements in drink and pill form, so it's up to the preference of the consumer. Popular hangover drinks are Morning Care (모닝케어) and Heotgae Condition (헛개 컨디션). Popular hangover supplement pills are Condition-hwan (컨디션환) and Sang-que-hwan (상쾌환).

- Hyemin Lee



Photo by Matthew Keeler/Stars and Stripes



Smoking regulations, etiquette

Although the smoking rate has been trending down in South Korea, you'll still see office workers and others congregating for a nicotine fix near designated smoking areas around the country.

Government officials have long been cracking down on cigarette-use and vaping, so there are many laws and etiquette for smokers to follow. If you plan to smoke tobacco while in South Korea, make sure to keep these in mind before lighting up.

Smoking age

In Korea, people can legally purchase alcohol and tobacco starting Jan. 1 of the year they turn 19. However, according to DoW policy, for U.S. military personnel, DoW civilian employees and their dependents, the legal age is still 21 for purchasing and consuming alcohol and tobacco products.

Items affected by smoking laws

Smoking regulations apply to all tobacco products for smoking, sucking, inhaling or chewing. This includes cigarettes, electronic cigarettes or vapes (using either tobacco or nicotine liquid), pipe tobacco, leaf tobacco and other related products.

Non-smoking areas

Indoor smoking

Most public indoor areas, including restaurants, cafés, internet cafés (PC bangs), rest stops, accommodations, concert halls, government buildings, hospitals, public transportation, schools, educational facilities and sports centers are non-smoking zones. These areas must display a no-smoking sign. Smoking is only allowed in designated smoking areas, which may or may not be installed depending on the location.

Outdoor Smoking

Smoking is not illegal on the streets, even in front of restaurants or cafés, unless there are no-smoking signs. However, you will rarely

see people smoking while walking on the street, near entrances or in crowded areas out of courtesy to others.

High-traffic areas like subway entrances, bus stops, parks, and plazas are usually designated non-smoking zones by local governments. Outdoor smoking regulations vary by district, so always check for no-smoking signs before lighting up.

In Seoul, for example, areas like Yeouido Han River Park,

Gwanghwamun Plaza and Cheonggyecheon Plaza are designated as non-smoking zones, but you will find smoking booths nearby. Smoking at all cultural heritage sites, nature parks and areas adjacent to forests is also prohibited.

Strictly protected non-smoking areas

Strict anti-smoking rules also apply within a 30-meter radius of educational institutions like kindergartens, day-care centers, elementary, middle, and high schools. Many of these have CCTV and locals are encouraged to report those who violate the rule to the public health center, so avoid smoking in these areas.

Fines

Fine for smoking in a non-smoking area: 100,000 won.

Fine for littering cigarette butts in public: up to 200,000 won. (It may vary by district.)

– Hyemin Lee



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What SOFA means for you

The United States-Republic of Korea Status of Forces Agreement is an international agreement designed to serve the mutual interests of the U.S. and the ROK, and to protect the basic rights of U.S. citizens who are subject to its provisions.

Personnel of the U.S. Armed Forces on active duty in Korea and their dependents are covered by the U.S.-ROK SOFA. U.S. civilians employed by, serving with or accompanying U.S. Armed Forces and their dependents are also covered by the U.S.-ROK SOFA.

Persons in Korea to perform contracts or render services exclusively for the U.S. Armed Forces are designated invited contractors or technical representatives. They and their dependents are afforded SOFA protections.

SOFA status personnel must abide by Korean laws except where the SOFA explicitly supersedes or abridges Korean laws. Examples are the waiver of passport and visa requirements for active duty military personnel and exemptions from Ko-

rean taxes on wages and salaries paid to SOFA status personnel by the U.S. government.

SOFA Article VII established the principal that SOFA status personnel are obliged to respect the laws of the Republic of Korea and to abstain from any activity inconsistent with the spirit of the agreement and, in particular, from any political activity.

SOFA Card

All U.S. Forces Korea personnel should carry an HQ USFK, SOFA Card (USFK FL 1EK) at all times. The SOFA Card is designed to assist USFK personnel in the event they become involved with Korean law enforcement officials. The ROK authorities have agreed in cases of apprehension, to promptly notify the USFK authorities in order for the apprehended person to communicate with a representative of the U.S. government.

Civil court jurisdiction

The Korean courts have civil jurisdiction over all USFK personnel regardless of nationality. USFK military and civilian employees and their dependents

can sue and be sued in Korean civil courts in cases concerning breach of a lease, support of illegitimate children, failure to pay just debts and damages and injuries from an accident. A Korean civil court judgment generally can be enforced against the money and personal property of USFK personnel while in Korea or when relocated in the U.S.

However, Korean civil court judgments cannot be enforced if the cause of action arises out of the official duties of USFK personnel or if a claim was paid in settlement. Whenever an official Korean judicial document is received by USFK personnel on any civil action, they should immediately consult with a USFK legal assistance officer.

Criminal jurisdiction

Your SOFA standing is not a "Get Out of Jail Free" card. Korea has exclusive or primary jurisdiction over almost all offenses committed in Korea by U.S. service members. The U.S. has exclusive jurisdiction only when no crime has been committed under Korean law; the

U.S. has primary jurisdiction only in those limited instances when the alleged offense is solely against the property or security of the U.S., is solely against the person or property of another person covered by the SOFA or arises out of any act or omission done in the performance of official duty.

Unless an alleged offense falls within one of these exceptions, Korea has exclusive or primary jurisdiction even where the offense occurs on a military installation. The U.S. always requests the Korean government to waive jurisdiction in cases involving U.S. military members where Korea has primary jurisdiction. If Korea elects not to exercise jurisdiction or does not respond within a given time period, the U.S. military may exercise jurisdiction. Korea is most likely to exercise jurisdiction over serious violent crimes (murder, rape, robbery, etc.), serious black-marketing offenses, hit-and-run driving and attempts to commit such offenses.

– U.S. Forces Korea

HQ, UNITED STATES FORCES KOREA SOFA CARD

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

구원 요청

There has been a traffic accident.

교통 사고가 났습니다.

Please notify Korean police and US military police.

한국 경찰 및 미군 헌병대에 연락해 주십시오.

Please call an ambulance or doctor.

구급차나 의사를 불러 주십시오.

Where can I find a telephone?

전화가 어디에 있습니까?

STATEMENT OF SOFA STATUS:

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FOR THE COMMANDER

사령관의 명에 의하여:

**EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS –
USFK DSN 911 (MP/Fire/Ambulance)**

1. Carry this card at all times. If you are apprehended by or become involved with Korean law enforcement authorities, SHOW your ID CARD and THIS CARD.

2. OBEY ROK AND U.S. LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL INSTRUCTIONS.

3. If you are involved in an accident:

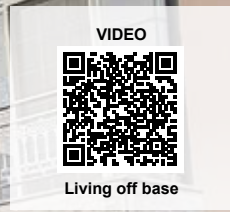
- Attend to injuries, if any. Take steps to prevent any further accident from occurring at the scene.
- Telephone the nearest civil and/or U.S. military police office (See below for telephone numbers to reach U.S. facilities).
- DO NOT LEAVE THE SCENE until authorized to do so by the police.

4. If you are detained by Korean authorities:

- Show the Korean authorities the statement of SOFA status (to the left) and request that the nearest U.S. military police be notified.
- Cooperate with Korean authorities at all times.
- You may refuse to sign any statement that you cannot read or understand.

**COMMERCIAL TELEPHONE NUMBERS TO U.S. FACILITY
05033 + DSN last six digits (ex. 05033-24-4258)**

Off-base living



If you decide that base living just isn't for you, there are many off-base options available. But, with the option to live off base comes some rules and regs to consider. Here are some things to keep in mind if you plan to sign a lease off base.

Property manager/maintenance: Your realtor is your property manager and POC for all maintenance problems. Your realtor is the liaison between you and your landlord. You should be able to contact them whenever you need their assistance. It is also a requirement for all realtors to speak English.

Utilities: Your realtor will provide your utility bills and usage. Your base housing office can translate your bills for you if needed.

Lease negotiations: Once you have signed a lease in the housing office, the realtor/landlord and leasee cannot request changes to the signed lease. This is a signed contract! No lease negotiations will be

done outside of the housing office. If your realtor/landlord is asking for additional money that was not on your signed lease or asks to modify your signed lease in any way without approval from your housing office, contact housing.

Military clause: Your lease agreement will contain a military clause. A military clause alerts the tenant that they are protected under the Service Members Civil Relief Act. **The act provides protection, such as terminating a rental agreement prior to the end of the lease term for reasons such as permanent change of station, deployments exceeding 90 days, separation from active duty or offer of government quarters.**

Joint Domicile (JD) and Military to Military (Mil to Mil) Statement Reminder: I understand that if my spouse PCS's, retires, departs, or separates, I am still obligated to fulfill my lease contractually between the landlord and myself at the same rent cost until expiration of lease.

As stated, if one service member remains they are contractually obligated to fulfill lease to term and Military Clause does not apply to remaining service member.

Renewal lease (same unit):

- Go to your realtor – they will provide you the renewal lease (with their stamp) for you to bring to HSO to renew your lease.
- *Note: If you are extending your DEROS (i.e. AIP, medical etc.) bring orders/amendments that states your new DEROS.

Leasing a different unit:

- Obtain realtors list from housing office (if not using same realtor)
- Once you have found a place to live, it's mandatory that you schedule a safety inspection at the base housing office. Once scheduled, inform your realtor of date and time.
- Also, schedule a lease signing at the housing office after safety inspection, either same day (in the afternoon) or next day. This is

to ensure your realtor provides the housing office a property deed and includes it with your safety inspection report.

- Bring clearance verification from old unit (to ensure the landlord cleared you!)

Renters Insurance

- Protect yourself and your personal property (household goods, etc.)
- Renters insurance may be the most overlooked asset by residents!
- Landlords have insurance, but only for their buildings; Landlords are not responsible for protecting the renter's personal property.
- The U.S. government does not provide or take responsibility for personal property insurance.
- Off-post residents are strongly encouraged to secure personal property insurance for their protection in both private sector and on-base housing.

– U.S. Forces Korea

Non Combatant Evacuation Operations



Photo courtesy of U.S. Army

Frequently asked questions

1. What is a Non Combatant Evacuation?

Non Combatant Evacuation is a standard U.S. response to hostilities and natural disasters which might endanger our citizens. One of the primary goals of NEO training is to ensure we can do this task successfully under real-world circumstances.

2. Who is my NEO Warden?

Each unit has a designated NEO Warden. Please contact your chain of command to find out who is your NEO Warden. NEO Wardens are available to update your NEO packets, demonstrate use of the ICAPS mask and answer any questions you might have about a potential evacuation.

3. Can registration be completed on-line?

All potential evacuees must contact their NEO Warden to update their packets, information and items in their NEO kits. Contact your NEO warden today to ensure you are ready.

– U.S. Forces Korea

Talking Trash

In South Korea, residents living off-post are required to comply with government regulations regarding trash disposal. Failure to comply may result in fines of up to 1 million won. When moving into a new place, inquire with your landlord for guidelines as waste management practices can differ depending on the houses, each with its designated waste disposal site.

NOTICE: Off-post residents are strictly prohibited from disposing of trash in on-post dumpsters.

Garbage bags

General and food waste disposal require the use of designated plastic garbage bags which are available for purchase in various sizes at grocery and convenience stores. Note that these bags are only valid within the district they are purchased as each district has its own designated bags.



ORANGE (food)



WHITE (standard)



Trash types

General waste

- All non-recyclables and non-food waste.

- Garbage bags: 5L-75L (Between 130 won to 2,000 won)

Food waste

In most cases, food waste requires the use of purchased garbage bags. However, some apartments may collect food waste without using garbage bags. Food waste is utilized to make animal feed or biogas, so it's important to sort them properly from inedible items such as tea bags, bones, seeds, hard fruit peels like pineapple, onion skins, corn silk, shells (egg shell, nutshell, seashell and more), toxic items like globe-fish toxin that must be disposed of as general waste.

- Garbage bags: 1.5L to 20L (Between 40 won to 500 won)

Recyclables

Sort recyclables based on the available recycling bins at waste disposal sites. If bins aren't installed at the disposal site, use transparent plastic bags. Ensure items are empty, clean, and free of labels or lids before disposal.

Paper: Including boxes, newspapers, printer paper, flyers and paper cups.

Glass: Should be empty and cleaned out.

Metal/Cans: Crush cans, pierce gas-containing canisters and separate plastic lids.

Plastic: Dispose of heavily contaminated containers with general waste.

Vinyl: Remove stickers. Contaminated items should go into general waste.

Clothing: Donation bins in residential areas accept clothes, curtains, bags and shoes. Severely damaged items should be discarded in general waste.

Large size waste

Large waste disposal stickers are required when disposing of electronics, furniture and other large items. These



Illustration by Hyemin Lee

- **Garbage:** Sseu-le-gi (쓰레기)
- **Food waste:** Eum-sik-mul sseu-le-gi (음식물 쓰레기)
- **Large size waste:** Daehyeong-pyegimul (대형폐기물)
- **Recycle:** Jae-hwal-yong (재활용)
- **Separate trash:** Bullisugeo (분리수거)
- **Garbage bag:** Sseu-le-gi bongtu (쓰레기 봉투)
- **Trash can:** Sseu-le-gi-tong (쓰레기통)
- **Please give me a garbage bag:** Sseu-le-gi bongtu juseyo (쓰레기봉투 주세요)
- **Please give me food waste bags:** Eum-sik-mul sseu-le-gi bongtu juseyo. (음식물 쓰레기봉투 주세요)
- **Please give me a large waste disposal sticker:** Daehyeong-pyegimul sticker juseyo (대형폐기물 스티커 주세요)
- **Please give me a bigger size:** Deo keun geollo juseyo (더 큰 걸로 주세요)

stickers cost between 2,000 to 20,000 won, depending on the size and weight of the item. For example, suitcases may cost 2,000 won and pianos could be around 15,000 won. If you reside in an apartment, check with the security office first as they may handle disposal for residents.

Once you obtain the sticker, you should arrange pickup service. Then, attach the sticker visibly to the item and dispose of it in the designated site or in front of your house. Stickers are often stolen, so cover them with tape and take a photo as proof. Also, keep the purchase receipt.

How to get stickers

1.) Community Service Center or District Office:

Visit the nearest district office (9 a.m.-6 p.m. Mon. - Fri.), provide item details and your address for pick-up when purchasing the sticker.

2.) Convenience stores or supermarkets:

Not all, but many stores sell these stickers. Staff can show

you a chart of the items and assist with selection. Call the number on the sticker to arrange pick-up.

3.) Online: Visit your district office website and search for "대형폐기물" (Large waste) in Korean. Select the item, purchase and print the sticker. However, you may need assistance from a local as it's only available in Korean and a Korean bank account is required.

4.) Free pickup service for electronic waste:

This service is only available for electronics, not furniture. For small items, pick-up requires at least five items. You can arrange for pick-up via website and phone, but it's only available in Korean.

- Phone: 1599-0903 (8 a.m.-6 p.m. Mon.-Fri.)
- Online: <https://www.15990903.or.kr/portal/main/main.do>



- Hyemin Lee

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Using proper pet-etiquette

If you decide to bring a pet to or adopt one in Korea, it's important to be aware of essential etiquette and legal regulations regarding pet ownership. Some violations can result in fines. As the population of those raising a pet is increasing, the rules are getting a little stricter. Here are some things to know so you and your furry friend can enjoy your time on the Peninsula.

Things to know

- All dogs must be registered to a local office. SOFA status personnel are required to follow base rules.
- When outside, you must use a leash or a pet carrier. Violation of this rule may result in a fine between 200,000 won to 500,000 won. The leash should not exceed 2 meters in length, and the pet carrier must be securely closed to prevent escape.
- When outside, be prepared with waste bags and tissues to clean up after your dog. A failure to follow the regulation can result in a fine of up to 500,000 won.
- In multi-unit housing, apartment buildings, studio apartments and dorms, pets must be on a leash or in a pet carrier.
- Since local housing is mostly apartment-style living, you'll notice there aren't many large dogs around. Koreans are not accustomed to large breeds, so to avoid terrifying neighbors, use extra caution when taking your big furry buddy out.

No-pet zones

- National parks don't allow pets to enter except service dogs.
- Many beaches may have restrictions on pet entry. Certain coastal areas like Dadohae Sea, Hallyeo Sea, and Taean Coast are designated as national parks, where pet entry is legally prohibited. Even in non-national park beaches, there may be signs prohibiting pets during the summer vacation season (July to August). If you plan to swim with your dog during the summer, it's recommended to check if the beach is pet friendly. Some dog-friendly beaches include Ggotji Beach in Taean, Myeongsa Beach in Geoje Island, and Gwangjin Beach in Yangyang.
- Most local parks are good places to take a pet for a walk, but some parks and playgrounds have signs

prohibiting pets.

- Also, most restaurants, cafes, and many convenience facilities don't allow pet entry unless it's a service dog. So, it's important to check before going to specific places with your pet.

Dangerous dog breed restrictions

American Pit Bull Terriers, Tosa, American Staffordshire Terriers, Rottweilers, Staffordshire Bull Terriers and mixed-breed dogs with these breeds are categorized as the five dangerous dog breeds in Korea.

- For these breeds, you must use a muzzle as well as a leash when taking them outside. Violation can result in a 3,000,000 won fine.
- The following areas restrict the entry of the dangerous dogs: kindergartens, nurseries, elementary schools, special schools for disabled children, facilities for the elderly, facilities for the disabled, children's parks and children's play facilities.

Off-leash pet playgrounds

Check out these pet playgrounds near U.S. bases where your pets can freely run and make some friends! Proof that your dog is registered is required. Please note that some of parks may restrict the entry of the five dangerous dog breeds.

Modumaru in Agro-Ecological Park near Camp Humphreys

- Hours: 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. (Nov.-Feb.) / 9:30 a.m.-6 p.m. (Mar.-Oct.) / Closed on Mondays
- Address: 1033 Sukseong-ri, Oseong-myeon
- Admission: Free



Ichung Leports Park near Osan Air Base

- Hours: 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. (Closed on Mon. and holidays)
- Address: 149 Janganut-gil, Pyeongtaek-si
- Admission: Free



Dalseo Pet Playground near the bases in Daegu

- Hours: 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. (Mar.-Oct.) / 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Nov.-Feb.) / Closed on Mon. and holidays
- Address: San 28 Jang-dong, Dalseo-gun, Daegu
- Admission: small dogs - 2,000 won / big dogs - 3,000 won



VIDEO



Volunteering at Osan's animal shelter

How to travel with your pet

We all love our furry friends! Traveling with a pet is a great way to share some nice memories with Fido, but be prepared for some minor inconveniences along your journey. In South Korea, every transport company has particular rules regarding pets, so it's important to plan ahead. If you've traveled with pets before or are just beginning to, you'll want to take note of the tips below.

Train

Korail and SRT trains allow cats and dogs smaller than 23.62 inches long on their express or slower trains. However, your pet must fit comfortably in a pet carrier under the seat in front of you or on your lap.

The carrier must not exceed 45cm x 30cm x 25cm for Korail and SRT's carry-on requirements and the total weight of the carrier and pet must be less than 22 pounds.

Among the list of prohibited pets or animals are fighting dogs, such as pit bull terriers, Dobermanns and German shepherds, as well as rodents, reptiles, and birds of prey. None of these rules apply to registered service dogs as they are allowed on the train for passengers with disabilities.

Follow the rules

- Your carrier must be covered.
- Carry your pet's vaccination certificate and card at all times.
- Your pet must remain in the carrier.
- Avoid blocking aisles or doorways with the pet carrier.
- Etiquette: Bathe your furry travel companion and control feed 4 to 5 hours before boarding a train.

TIP: Though the KTX's first-class ticket (for an adult) is more spacious and a little more expensive, it could be a good choice if you want some space for the carrier. If you've spent enough time on the rail system in Korea, you may have noticed many pet lovers place their travel kennel at the end of a train car or spacious luggage space between first-class and business-class train, standing close by them.

Subway

Subway pet policies vary by city and lines, but small pets in a carrier are usually allowed. Check the operator's website if you need more information

Express bus

Most of the bus companies allow only small pets weighing under 11 pounds on board and only if they are in a carrier. Some companies' policies state they reserve the right to refuse pets on their vehicles. If your pet is allowed on the bus, make sure they're on their best behavior as drivers have discretionary power.

- Hyemin Lee

Spouse employment

Eighth Army and personnel managers want to make sure military spouses have as many opportunities as possible to achieve employment while serving with their service member in the Far East Region. Eighth Army has made strides to ease the process of hiring military spouses such as policies emphasizing spouse preference in hiring procedures. These policies include use of an “expedited referral list” and authorizing candidates for select Eighth Army positions to complete drug testing and physical examinations AFTER they arrive to the peninsula rather than beforehand – with exceptions being for positions which are Testing Designated Positions and those with mandatory requirements for physical examinations.

People can also drop by in person to the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center in Bldg. 6420, next to the One Stop Bldg., if they have questions.

Army Community Service offices around the peninsula also have an Employment Readiness Program what offers info on contractor jobs, employment classes and career advice.

The best way for spouses to apply for jobs is still www.USAJOBS.gov. Spouses can build their resumes, attach documents and also use settings to build automated job referrals. Once a search is built, the system will automatically send job opening announcements via email. Be sure to select the “military spouse preference” option.

U.S. Army Garrison-Humphreys Army Community Service has information on home-based business opportunities and requirements including classes and applications. Home Base Business Training is provided every second and fourth Friday of each month at Army Community Service (ACS) from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. The program guidance is U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys Policy Letter #78, which is signed by the U.S. Army Garrison-Humphreys commander. ACS is located on the first floor in Bldg. 6400 (Maude Hall), room B107. Call DSN 315-757-2369 for more information.

Spouses who are permitted to telework back to their private sector companies located in CONUS does not trigger SOFA visa issues. Republic of Korea employment permits are required if the military spouse



Photo by U.S. Army

is working on the Korean economy, but not for telework for CONUS located companies.

Daegu employment info

For USAG Daegu and Area IV community members interested in employment opportunities and learning more, visit the Army Community Service office at the Soldier Support Center on Camp Walker and sign up for the Spouse Newcomers Orientation held the 2nd Thursday of every month. There is also a separate Employment Readiness Workshop held the same day each month in the afternoon.


The spouse orientation starts at 9 a.m., a meal is provided to attendees at lunch, and the employment workshop begins at 12:30 p.m. Community members may choose to attend one or both.

For more information or to register for one of the upcoming employment readiness program events, workshops or job fairs, visit ACS or call 0503-363-4497 or DSN 763-4497. To search for federal jobs in USAG Daegu and Area IV, go to www.usajobs.gov and type “Taegu” in the location block.

Job fairs

Local USFK communities regularly host post sponsored job fairs which enable employment opportunities to happen on the spot in some cases. Common employers at job fairs include: US Army Civilian Employment, DOW Civilian employment, NAF Employment, AAFES, Community Bank, DeCA, DoWEA, Invited Contractors, local MSEP vendors. There are normally no registration requirements and the events are free. Participation is normally limited to CAC cardholders only.


Contact your local ACS for more on job fairs:


- **Area I/II/III:** Mr. Eric Burton at: eric.d.burton.civ@mail.mil.
- **Area IV:** Camp Walker ACS Room 211, Bldg. 330 & DSN 763-4426
- <https://daegu.armymwr.com/programs/army-community-service/employment-readiness> 
- **Osan:** Airmen & Family Readiness Center - Bldg. 769, 784-5440


– U.S. Forces Korea


Websites to check out


Federal civil service jobs are just one category of employment on installations throughout Korea. See the below websites on how to apply for jobs around the peninsula.

Federal jobs (including commissary): 

Army and Air Force Exchange Service jobs: 

Army Non-Appropriated Fund positions: 

Air Force Non-Appropriated Fund positions: 

USAG Humphreys Army Community Service: 

Military health care in Korea

Moving to Korea is an exciting assignment filled with new opportunities, experiences and adjustments. One of the first questions many arriving service members and families ask is simple: How does health care work overseas?

The good news is that U.S. military beneficiaries stationed on the Korean Peninsula have access to a comprehensive health care system that combines American military medicine with one of the most advanced civilian health networks in the world. Through Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs) operated by the Army, Air Force, and Navy – along with TRICARE Overseas host nation providers and hospitals – patients receive coordinated, high-quality care designed to support readiness while keeping families healthy throughout their tour.

Here's what to expect when receiving care in Korea.

Primary care

Active-duty service members and command-sponsored family members are assigned a Primary Care Manager (PCM) and receive routine care through the Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) model.

Primary military medical facilities supporting families include:

- **Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital (BDAACH)** - USAG Humphreys (Area III)
- **51st Medical Group** - Osan AB (Area III)
- **Camp Walker (Wood) Army Health Clinic** - USAG Daegu (Area IV)

Additional Army, Air Force, and Navy clinics across Korea primarily support service members assigned to non-command-sponsored locations or readiness-focused missions.

Installations are geographi-



Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital.

cally organized into Areas I–IV, and patients typically receive care at the facility supporting their duty station. While services and facility sizes vary by installation, beneficiaries can expect consistent standards of care and integrated referral support.

Under TRICARE Prime Overseas, active-duty service members and eligible family members receive care at military facilities whenever available. Retirees, non-command sponsored families, and TRICARE Select Overseas beneficiaries may receive care at MTFs on a space-available basis.

Specialty care and referrals

When specialty care is unavailable at a local MTF, patients are referred through TRICARE to another military facility or a Korean network hospital.

Korea's healthcare system is internationally recognized for advanced technology and high clinical standards. TRICARE partners with numerous accredited Korean hospitals,

many employing physicians trained in the U.S. or internationally.

For command-sponsored TRICARE Prime beneficiaries, care at Korean network hospitals is typically seamless, with no copays or deductibles when proper referrals are obtained.

TRICARE Select beneficiaries and non-command sponsored patients should expect to pay upfront for off-post care and submit claims afterward for reimbursement, although many hospitals now process insurance claims directly.

Dental care

Military dental clinics primarily support active-duty readiness requirements.

Family members generally receive dental care off post using the same insurance plans they would use in the U.S. Korean dental providers are widely regarded for high-quality care, and many dentists hold U.S. or international certifications.

Orthodontic care is typically obtained off post unless treatment is required for active-

duty service members.

Scheduling appointments

Most military medical and dental clinics in Korea operate appointment-based systems. Appointments are required for most services except emergencies or designated walk-in clinic hours.

Below are the major appointment lines. BDAACH and affiliated outlying clinics use a centralized system, allowing patients to schedule appointments for all supported clinics through one number.

Major appointment lines

- **BDAACH Central Appointment Line**
DSN: 737-CARE (2273) /
COMM: 0503-337-2273
Hours: Mon–Fri, 7:15 a.m.–4:45 p.m. (excluding federal holidays)
- **51st Medical Group**
Osan AB
DSN: 784-DOCS (3627) /
COMM: 0505-784-3627
- **8th Medical Group**
Kunsan AB



Care at Korean hospitals

Seeking care in a foreign country can feel intimidating, but Korean hospitals routinely care for U.S. military beneficiaries and are well equipped to support international patients.

Most Korean network hospitals:

- Are accredited by Joint Commission International or the Korean Hospital Association
 - Operate international clinics with English-speaking staff
 - Provide interpreter services during business hours
 - Offer modern facilities comparable to U.S. hospitals
- TRICARE Prime beneficiaries must obtain referrals before visiting Korean hospitals unless seeking urgent or emergency care. Prime claims are typically processed directly, while TRICARE Select beneficiaries should be prepared to pay upfront and submit reimbursement claims.

Active-duty personnel are encouraged to wear civilian attire when visiting host nation facilities.

Understanding cultural differences in Care

Healthcare delivery in Korea may differ from what patients experienced in the U.S. These differences reflect cultural practices rather than differences in quality of care.

Patients may notice:

- Hospital meals and

accommodations differ from U.S. hospitals.

- Longer inpatient stays may be standard for certain conditions.
- Physicians may take a more directive role in treatment decisions.
- Nurses follow physician orders rather than practice independently.
- Visitation policies may differ during certain procedures.
- Shared hospital rooms are common.

Communication styles may also feel more formal or concise. Patients are encouraged to ask questions respectfully and communicate needs early, especially regarding comfort or pain management.

Despite these differences, Korean healthcare professionals share the same commitment to patient safety and recovery found in U.S. medical systems.

Language support and patient assistance

Translation assistance is available

24/7:

- *International SOS*: Call 080-429-0880 and request an interpreter
- *MyCare Overseas App*: Provides translation tools and telephonic language support

Transportation and practical tips

Many Korean hospitals offer courtesy shuttle services for patients. Patients should check with the hospital's international clinic for schedules and parking validation if driving a privately owned vehicle.

A connected system of care

Military medical teams work closely with TRICARE and Korean network hospitals to ensure continuity of care across the peninsula.

Whether visiting a military clinic on post or a partner hospital off post, beneficiaries can expect modern medicine, professional providers, and integrated support designed to maintain readiness, resilience and family well-being throughout their assignment in Korea.

Helpful Resources



BDAACH & Outlying Clinics



BDAACH Patient Guidebook



51st Medical Group (Osan AB)



8th Medical Group (Kunsan AB)



Branch Health Clinic Chinhae



TRICARE Overseas

DSN: 782-CARE (2273) /
COMM: 0505-782-2273

Branch Health Clinic Chinhae

DSN: 763-5415 / COMM:
0505-763-5415

Emergency care

Brian D. Allgood Army

Community Hospital is the only MTF in Korea with a 24/7 emergency department. Patients are seen based on medical urgency, with priority given to conditions involving risk to life, limb, or eyesight.

Those not located near Camp Humphreys should proceed to the nearest Korean hospital

emergency room.

Most Korean emergency departments coordinate English-language assistance. Interpretation services are also available through TRICARE's overseas contractor:

International SOS:
080-429-0880

On-post emergencies:
Dial **911**

Off-post emergencies in Korea: Dial **119**

-Jean Han
BDAACH Public Affairs



Erumi Multi-Specialty Dental Group

Erumi Dental Clinic, located in Seomyeon, Busan, is a large comprehensive dental center with over 30 years of experience. Our team of approximately 100 dental professionals—including 16 dentists across nine specialties and experienced dental hygienists—provides comprehensive and specialized dental care.

★
30
YEARS
SINCE 1996
★

★
16
Dentists
★

★
67
Dental Chairs
★

Floor Directory & Department

17F Reception / Payment / Main Waiting Area

16F Orthodontics

15F Advanced General Dentistry
(Implants / Cavity Treatment)

14F Prosthodontics / Conservative Dentistry
(Crowns / Implants / Dentures)

13F Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
(Implants / Wisdom Tooth Extraction)

12F Oral Medicine
(Disorder Treatment / Tooth Grinding / Snoring)

11F Pediatric Dentistry

10F Periodontics / Preventive Dentistry
(Gum Treatment / Scaling)

8F Staff Lounge

7F Digital Dental Laboratory





Trusted Dental Clinic Recognized Globally & Locally

- (USA) TRICARE Designated Provider: Insurance benefits applicable.
- (Korea) Officially Designated Dental Clinic for the Government-operated Korea Veterans Hospital.



Large Multi-Specialty Dental Group

- Specialized Care by 16 Dental Specialists: Orthodontics, Operative Dentistry, Pediatric Dentistry, Prosthodontics, Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, Periodontics, Oral Medicine, and Advanced General Dentistry.
- Specialized Pediatric Orthodontics: Collaborative system between Pediatric Dentists and Orthodontists.
- All clinical staff are government-licensed dental hygienists.



Efficient One-Stop Care System

- Comprehensive Care: From cavities and prevention to orthodontics and implants—all under one roof.
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- Patient-Centered Efficiency: Minimizes unnecessary movement and redundant testing.



Invisalign Orthodontics (Published in 2023)

- Quintessence Korea
- Author: Dr. Young-jin Jeon, Chief Director of Erumi Dental Clinic



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- No.1 Nationwide in Invisalign Cases (2018 & 2019)
- Invisalign Black Diamond Provider

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Explore Korea's true flavor

In Korea, there is no end to what people can see and experience, but trying Korean food is on the top of most visitor to-do lists! So let's explore some of the dishes that are sure to impress you with Korea's true flavor!

Bibimbap: Rice with nutrient-packed flavor



Bibimbap, or cooked rice mixed with vegetables, sautéed beef, and twigak (dried seaweed or vegetables fried in oil) is one of the definitive Korean dishes in the eyes of Koreans and also globally. There are three common beliefs about the origin of bibimbap. One theory is that

it stemmed from the practice of mixing bap (cooked rice) with other dishes used for the ancestral rite of eumbok. Others say that bibimbap originated from mixing leftovers together as a midnight snack on Lunar New Year's Eve. The last theory is that farmers out working the fields would each bring a portion of food to be mixed together and divided evenly.

Samgye-tang: Rejuvenate yourself during the sweltering summer



Samgye-tang is made by simmering a whole young chicken stuffed with ginseng, hedysarum root, jujubes, and sweet rice.

Considered an energy-boosting dish best eaten on hot days, it is a classic Korean dish that has become popular among international diners as well. Many restaurants even add samgye-tang to their menu during the summer, an example of its popularity. Japanese author Murakami Ryu and Chinese film director Zhang Yimou have both given extensive praise to the dish.

Bulgogi: Sweet treats for special days

Bulgogi is prepared by marinating thin slices of beef before grilling them. In the past, the royal court and yangban (nobles) in Seoul called it neobiani, meaning "wide meat slices." Traditional grilled meat dishes in Korea originated from a dish called maekjeok. Maek was the name of the northeast region of China, and is also a reference to Goguryeo, one of the earliest Korean kingdoms. Maekjeok is made with barbecued beef skewers, and according to folklore, evolved into present-day bulgogi through the introduction of grills, which made skewers obsolete.



Naengmyeon: Cool and refreshing noodle soup

Naengmyeon, cold buckwheat noodles, is considered a summer food, but that wasn't always the case. It used to be enjoyed over a warm ondol floor (subfloor heating system) during the freezing winter temperatures. The broth was made with the brine of dongchimi (radish water kimchi) scooped out of a large jar half-buried in the ground during the winter. Although its origin



remains unclear, based on the fact that buckwheat was introduced by the Mongol Empire during the Goryeo Dynasty, it is theorized that Koreans first began eating it around that time.

Kimchi: Over 1,500 years of fermented tradition



Kimchi is a fermented dish made with vegetables and a variety of seasoning ingredients. There are over 300 varieties, but when it was first made prior to the Three Kingdoms Period (AD 57-668), it required a very simple recipe of salting and storing napa cabbage in a ceramic container for fermentation. In the old days, kimchi was an important source of vitamins in the winter, when fresh vegetables were unavailable. What was originally a simple salted pickle has now become a complex dish requiring assorted seasonings and varying according to climate, geographical conditions, local ingredients, methods of preparation and preservation.

Sundubu-jjigae: The best source of protein



Sundubu starts out being made in the same manner as ordinary tofu; first boiling soymilk then coagulating it by adding brine. But it leaves out the later steps of draining and pressing the lumpy bean curds, giving it an easy-to-digest silky, light texture. In Chodang Maeul, a village famous for its sundubu, clean water from the East Sea is used as brine for thickening. It started when Chodang Heoyeop, a magistrate of Gangneung region during the mid-sixteenth century of Joseon Dynasty, discovered that the water from a spring in the front yard of his office tasted so fresh that he made tofu from the spring water and used sea water instead of brine. The name Chodang was then adopted from Heoyeop's pen name.

Mandu: A dish dating back to the Goryeo Dynasty



Mandu (dumpling) is made by placing a filling of ground meat and vegetables onto a round, thinly rolled wrapper and sealing the edges. They were initially prepared for ancestral rites or banquets and enjoyed as a special dish for cold winter days. When discussing the origin of Korean dumplings, a famous folk song called "Ssanghwajeom" (dumpling shop) from the Goryeo Dynasty is frequently mentioned. The song describes how a group of Uyghurs arrived and opened up dumpling shops, and also how the people of the day greatly enjoyed the dish. Some people refer to the song and joke that a Mongol who opened a dumpling shop in 1279 may have been the first foreign investor to live in Korea.

Galbi-jjim: Soft and tender, the quintessential holiday food



Galbi-jjim (braised short ribs) is made from the finest and most expensive cut of beef. As such, galbi-jjim is usually eaten on special occasions or holidays, when family members come together. Korean cooking consists of a large number of braised dishes that require considerable culinary skill. Galbi-jjim is one such dish, growing in popularity among international diners as well. When making galbi-jjim, the fat on the short ribs is carefully removed before braising. Carrots, ginkgo nuts and chestnuts are added, and finally pyogo (shitake mushroom) and egg garnish are sprinkled on top to complete the preparation process. Glazed with soy sauce, galbi-jjim not only has a rich taste, but a mouth-watering visual presentation.



Jeyuk-bokkeum: Plenty to share with while sizzling hot

Jeyuk-bokkeum (spicy stir-fried pork) is one of the best-known dishes cooked with gochu-jang. It is a stir-fried dish with thick slices of pork shoulder marinated in hot gochu-jang and minced ginger. Before the 1950s, it was reportedly made using only scallion, black pepper, and soy sauce, but the current form of gochu-jang-marinated jeyuk-bokkeum is believed to have appeared sometime afterwards. Because it is a hearty yet inexpensive meat option, young people on limited budgets favor jeyuk-bokkeum. Youngsters often list it as their favorite food, and many Korean mothers will talk about how their son can “finish a pound of jeyuk-bokkeum in one sitting.”

Japchae: A classic dish on festive days

Japchae (glass noodles with sautéed vegetables) is made by boiling glass noodles, then draining and mixing them with stir-fried spinach, carrots, mushrooms, beef and onions. The term japchae is a combination of jap, meaning “mix, gather, or plentiful” and chae, meaning “vegetables.” Thus, it can be translated as “assorted mixed vegetables.” No Korean festivity is complete without japchae. It has long been perceived as a luxurious and elegant dish, and was always served on birthdays, weddings and 60th birthday celebrations. Japchae was first created in the 17th century when King Gwanghaegun hosted a palace banquet. It is recorded in the Gwanghaegun Ilgi (Daily Records of King Gwanghaegun’s Reign) that Yi Chung, one of the king’s favorites, had the habit of personally presenting unusual dishes to the king. Gwanghaegun relished these dishes so much that he would not start a meal until they arrived. Among these unique dishes was japchae, which the king favored over all the rest.



Gimbap: A full meal in a single roll



Gimbap is made by spreading white rice on a sheet of gim (dried laver), layering it with spinach, pickled radish, carrots, egg, and beef, and then rolling it up like sushi. It was in the 1960s and 70s that the gimbap we know today - rolled up into a cylindrical form - became popular. This rice-roll was the default picnic lunch for annual spring and autumn school outings. Many Koreans fondly remember eating the end pieces of the rolls while their mothers prepared gimbap on the morning of school field trips.

Tteok-bokki: The most popular snack

Originally, tteok-bokki was not a spicy dish. In the royal courts of Joseon, it was prepared by simmering beef, carrots, onions, pyogo (shitake mushroom) and other ingredients together with rice cakes in soy sauce. The colorful ingredients made it visually appealing as well as nutritional. It is believed that tteok-bokki seasoned with spicy gochu-jang paste first appeared in the 1950s and became widely popular later during the 1970s.



BY HYEMIN LEE

In Korean culture, statements before and after a meal are important. So is complimenting the person offering you something to eat. Also, at most restaurants you can get unlimited refills for most side dishes, so don't hesitate to ask for more!

- I'm going to eat well (Greeting before eating)
Jal meok-get-seum-nida (잘 먹겠습니다)
- I ate well (Greeting after eating)
Jal meo-geo-sseum-nida (잘 먹었습니다)
- Enjoy your meal / food
Ma-sit-ge deu-se-yo (맛있게 드세요)
- It's really delicious
Neomu ma-sisseo-yo (너무 맛있어요)

- What's this?
Igeon mwo yeyo?
(이건 뭐예요?)

- Can I have this? / I'll have this one
Igeo juse-yo (이거 주세요)
- Can I have more of this?
Igeo deo jusil su isseo-yo?
(이거 더 주실 수 있어요?)

- Excuse me (When you call a waiter/waitress)
Yeogi-yo (여기요)

I'm going to eat well!
(Greeting before eating)

Write Korean below

It's really delicious.

Write Korean below



Illustration by Hyemin Lee

Dakgangjeong: Second to none and goes with any drink

Dakgangjeong is made by deep-frying chicken coated with flour. The fried chicken is then smothered in a sweet sauce that has been boiled down to a thick consistency. The dish, sold at Jungang Market, is unique in that it is served cold. The dakgangjeong is so famous because of its sweet and spicy taste, and despite being served cold, it is not soggy, but crisp and chewy.



– Korea Tourism Organization

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USO strengthens troops and families

Since 1941, the USO has provided America's love and support to our service members and their families no matter where they go. The USO strengthens the wellbeing of our military community by keeping them connected to family, home and country. USO Korea offers center amenities to help relax and unwind as well as a wide variety of programs and services to keep you and your family connected to the things you often miss from back home.

Whether it is cultural activities or celebrating major holidays, there are programs available for everyone in the family. Coffee Connections allows spouses to relax in a comfortable setting, network, share advice, learn about local events and make new



friends. Holiday events can include Lunar New Year luncheons, Valentine's Day Crafts, Holiday Story Times and much more! To see the full scope of their amenities, events, and operating hours, check out the USO Korea website at <https://korea.uso.org/> or the USO Korea Centers' Facebook pages and Instagram accounts.

Facebook.com/USOKorea
Instagram: @usokorea

Rest and relaxation

Air conditioning/heating, clean restrooms, board & table games, playing cards, massage chairs, sleeping & quiet area, special event space, toiletries, sports lounge and library.

Food and beverages

Coffee & tea, water, snacks and food programs.

Multimedia & gaming

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Connectivity

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Travel services & gifts

Local information, transportation information, JSA tours by Hanatour ITC.

*Amenities may differ slightly from location to location

USO Korea lounges

- Rodriguez Range Lounge
Rodriguez Live Fire Complex, Building #01378
- Warrior Base Lounge Building #S-266, 2F
- Camp Carroll Lounge Building #139, 1F



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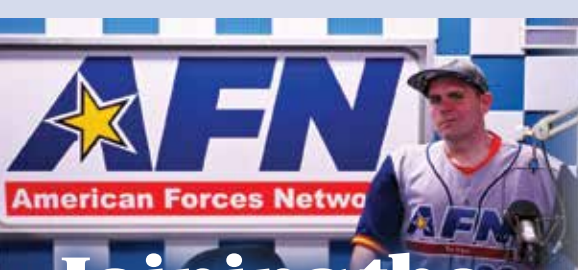
USO Mobile App: To learn about USO programs and services near you, make sure to download the USO Mobile App, for both iPhone and Android.



Learn more about USO Korea at korea.uso.org



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Joining the AFN Family

From a young age, I've always loved to entertain. I enjoy talking with people, listening to their stories, and sharing those stories with the world. Early on, I even aspired to create a commercial that would premiere during the Super Bowl. After graduating high school, I studied TV and radio production at a local community college, but at the time lacked the drive to pursue a career in the field.

Following a short battle with cancer, remission, and a weight loss of more than 130 pounds, I decided to join the military. During processing, recruiters noticed my associate's degree in TV and radio production and believed I would be a perfect fit for the broadcast journalism career field.

My first assignment was in a Public Affairs shop at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D. While there, I learned about the AFN mission through my technical school peers. I was amazed to discover that part of our career field involves interviewing base leaders, key agencies, and even traveling celebrities

— sharing their stories with audiences around the world.

My first personal experience with AFN came during my initial assignment in South Korea. Living off base, access to live sports and familiar television programming was essential in helping me stay grounded so far from home. With my decoder set up, I watched 2 a.m. Philadelphia Eagles kickoffs and continued cheering on my other Philadelphia sports teams.

For most viewers, commercials are simply a snack break—but for me, they became an invaluable source of information. AFN programming uniquely combines marquee sports and television events with command messaging and safety information, reaching Department of War personnel across the INDOPACOM area of responsibility.

When AFN Go was released, it made life during my Korea assignments even easier. The app allowed listeners to tune in without a traditional radio, offering channels dedicated to sports, news and specialized music programming.

During my second assignment in Korea, AFN expanded its digital offerings even further with live and video-on-demand television programming and movies with the AFN Now app. Suddenly, I could watch live or on-demand broadcasts of the NFL, NBA, NHL, MLB, UFC and more — anytime, anywhere.

Now, as the AFN Tokyo Station Manager at Yokota Air Base in Japan, my dream of creating that

Super Bowl commercial came true when I saw spot that I helped produce air during Super Bowl 58. Ever since, I constantly encouraged people to download AFN Go and AFN Now for free from Google Play or the Apple App Store, or to visit MyAFN.DoWmedia.osd.mil. The MyAFN website provides program schedules, answers to frequently asked questions, access to streaming radio and television and even podcasts.

We at AFN are very personal media, maybe the most personal media. Whether in your car, home, office and really anywhere in Asia, AFN is there with you. Wherever you are stationed in the

Pacific, you can always count on our AFN Pacific station managers and radio DJs to remain the gold standard by being engaged with local communities and connected to their audiences. The AFN Pacific team is proud to deliver the world's most deserving audience the very best in entertainment, news and sports.

As AFN continues to evolve, we encourage you to help us better meet your needs by providing feedback. Visit MyAFN.DoWmedia.osd.mil and click the "Contact Us" tab to share your thoughts, access TV and radio schedules, and stay up to date on programming changes.

As always, AFN is here for you.

— *Master Sgt. Timothy Dischinat,*
AFN Tokyo Station Manager

USO Camp Casey

Bldg. 2648

Beside the Casey Bus Terminal

DSN: 722-0378

Facebook.com/CASEYUSO

Instagram: @usocasey



USO Camp Humphreys - Maude Hall

Bldg. 6400, Room P103 & H105

DSN: 757-8025/6

Maude Hall was previously known as One Stop

Facebook.com/uso.humphreys

Instagram: @usohumphreys



USO Osan AB

USO Camp Humphreys - Maude Hall

USO Camp Humphreys - Sentry Village

USO Camp Humphreys - Sentry Village

Bldg. P301

Across the street from the 21D Museum

DSN: 755-3713

Facebook.com/uso.humphreys

Instagram: @usohumphreys



USO Camp Walker

USO Camp Walker

Bldg. 318

Across the street from the PX

DSN: 763-1431

Facebook.com/USO.CampWalker

Instagram: @usowalker_

USO Osan AB

Bldg. 916, across from Chili's

DSN: 784-0469

Facebook.com/USOatOSAN

Instagram: @uso_osan_ab



Korea at a glance

Wondering where to begin your adventure in ROK during your stay? Here is a list of the top must-explore cities offering all the beauty Korea has to offer. Also, check out the four host cities of U.S. military bases and their top attractions. Go explore and make the best out of your time here!

- Hyemin Lee



Incheon Bridge.
Photo courtesy of Korea Tourism Organization

SEOUL
Page 60

DMZ Paju



Though this border city of the two Koreas is popular for the Demilitarized Zone tour, Paju is also known as a city of art and culture surrounded by beautiful nature. It's a famous destination for a day trip among families and lovebirds.

Top Attractions

- DMZ attractions (Third Tunnel, Dora Observatory & Panmunjeom/JSA tours)
- Imjingak Pyeonghwa (Peace) Nuri Park
- Majang Lake Suspension Bridge
- Gamaksan Suspension Bridge
- Heyri Art Village & Provence Village
- First Garden (theme park)



DMZ.

Jeonju



Jeonju stands as a beautiful historical city surrounded by picturesque traditional houses (hanok), and is also home to tasty local foods such as bibimbap. It's a perfect destination for backpackers traveling by rail since three major trains (Mugunghwa, ITX-Saemaoul, KTX) stop at Jeonju Station. Many of the city's attractions are in small districts, making it a good place for a walking trip.

Top Attractions

- Jeonju Hanok Village
- Gyeonggijeon Shrine
- Jeonju Hyanggyo (Confucian school)
- Jaman Mural Village
- Deokjin park (Famous for lotus flowers)
- Nambu Outdoor Market

Guide to Jeonju



Hanok village.



Incheon

With Incheon International Airport and Incheon Port, the city functions as an international hub for industry, logistics, and tourism. The city is renowned for its 168 islands, numerous beaches, historical landmarks, and a wide array of leisure activities.

Top Attractions

- The Memorial Hall for Incheon Landing Operation
- Paradise City Cimer Spa
- Songdo Central Park
- Incheon Chinatown
- Wolmido Island & Wolmi Theme Park
- Eulwangri Beach



Suncheon

Known as the "Ecological City," Suncheon is home to nature preserves with scenic landscapes. It also features a 600-year-old folk village and beautiful mountain temples, making the city a blend of culture, nature and history.

Top Attractions

- Suncheonman Bay Nature Reserve
- Suncheonman Bay National Garden
- Nagan Eupseong Folk Village
- Suncheon Open Film Set
- Songgwangsa Temple
- Seonamsa Temple



Suncheonman Bay Nature Reserve.



Explore Suncheon City!

Host city of U.S. military bases

Dongducheon



Located on the frontline, the city was once home to a significant U.S. military population due to its importance in national defense and security. However, the numbers have greatly decreased after relocation. From Bosan Station, you can easily access Seoul by subway, but make sure to check the schedule in advance as trains arrive at intervals of 10 to 30 minutes.

U.S. bases: Camp Casey, Camp Hovey

Attractions nearby

- Jihaeng Station (Downtown)
- Mt. Soyosan
- Freedom Protection Peace Museum
- Shinsegye Department Store Uijeongbu
- Pocheon Herb Island
- Pocheon Art Valley



Pocheon Art Valley. Photo courtesy of Korea Tourism Organization



Pyeongtaek

Host city of U.S. military bases

With its rich flatlands, proximity to Seoul, and Pyeongtaek Port, it has become a hub for U.S. military base installations after the nationwide relocations from places like Yongsan and Dongducheon.

Industrial complexes also attract a significant foreign population to the city.

U.S. bases: Camp Humphreys, Osan AB

Attractions nearby

- Songtan Special Tourist District
- Tongbok Market
- Sosa-beol District (trendy neighborhood)
- Sopung Garden & Baramsae Village
- Jinwicheon Recreation Area
- Pyeongtaek Agro-Ecological Park
- Pyeongtaek Port (Marine Center, Main Street cafe)
- Starfield Anseong
- Anseong Farmland



Photo courtesy of Pyeongtaek Agro-Ecological Park



Jeju Island

Korea's largest island, Jeju is the only tropical area in Korea. The island is a popular domestic holiday vacation spot due to its breathtaking landscapes, untamed nature and many attractions.

Top Attractions

- Hallasan National Park
- Cheonjiyeon Waterfalls
- Jeju Olle Trail
- Bijarim Forest
- Seongsan Ilchulbong (Sunrise Peak)
- Udo Island
- Manjanggul Cave
- Panpo port (Snorkeling spot)



Culture

Education

Transportation

Private vehicles

Legal

Living

Food

Leisure

Online



Chuncheon

The city is home to Dak-galbi (spicy stir-fried chicken), and a popular destination for leisure trips with a variety of theme parks and natural attractions. Enjoy Chuncheon year-round as it has water activities to cool off in the summer and access to ski resorts the winter. Nearby, smaller counties like Gapyeong also have great water sports sites to check out.

Top Attractions

- Nami Island
- Gangchon Rail Park
- Soyang-gang River Skywalk
- Elysian Ski Resort
- LEGOLAND Korea
- Garden of Morning Calm (Gapyeong)



Nami Island.



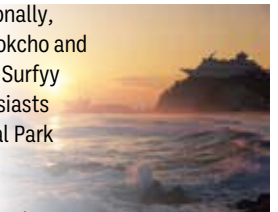
Gangneung

Gangneung features dozens of beaches with clean blue water and white sand of the East Coast. Additionally, many travelers extend their trip to Sokcho and Yangyang after visiting Gangneung. Yangyang's Surfry Beach is a summer hotspot among young enthusiasts while Sokcho is renowned for Seoraksan National Park and hot springs.

Top Attractions

- Jeongdongjin Beach (Famous for sunrise viewing)
- Gangmun and Geumjin Beach (Surfing)
- Anmok beach (Coffee street)
- Daegwallyeong Natural Recreation Forest

The sunrise in Jeongdongjin beach.



Gyeongju

This historic city is the ancient capital of the Silla Kingdom, one of the oldest cities of Korea with over a thousand years of history. The whole city is surrounded by numerous cultural heritage sites. Spring or fall is the best time to visit the city to see the beautiful assets surrounded by colorful flowers and leaves.

Top Attractions

- Woljeonggyo Bridge
- Cheomseongdae Observatory
- Daereungwon (park of royal tombs)
- Donggung Palace and Wolji Pond
- Bulguksa Temple
- Seokguram Grotto



Seokguram of Silla. Photo courtesy of Cultural Heritage Administration



3 cool activities in Gyeongju



Guide to Gyeongju



Andong

Andong is often referred to as a center of Korea's traditional spirit, Confucian heritage and seonbi culture. The city proudly preserves many traditions and history from the Joseon Dynasty. Visitors can experience being a traditional scholar through Seowon (Confucian Academy) stay programs.

Top Attractions

- Hahoe Folk Village
- Dosan Seowon and Byeongsan Seowon (Confucian Academy)
- Bongjeongsa Temple
- Jjimdak (braised chicken) Street



Andong Hahoe Folk Village.



Gunsan

Host city of a U.S. military base



Gunsan's transportation options include a local airport, trains and intercity buses, making it easy to reach other cities. The city's modern history district features preserved streets and museums from the late Joseon period into the early 20th century. Sites from the occupation period point to Gunsan's complex past as a port used to transport rice and other resources to Japan.

U.S. base: Kunsan AB

Attractions nearby

- Eunpa Lake Park (trendy neighborhood)
- Bieung Mapaji-gil Road (Coastal trail near the base)
- Geumgang Wetland Ecological Park
- Sinheung-dong Japanese House (Time Travel Village)
- Gunsan Modern History Museum (Time Travel Village)
- Jinpo Maritime Theme Park (Time Travel Village)
- Teddy Bear Museum Gunsan
- Gyeongam-dong Railroad Town.

Gyeongam-dong Railroad Town. Photo courtesy of Gunsan City



Busan

Busan is Korea's second-largest city and a favorite coastal destination. Known for its beaches and water activities, the city also offers lively markets, scenic hikes, temples and hot springs.

Top Attractions

- Haeundae Beach
- Gwangalli Beach
- Haedong Yonggungsa Temple
- Jagalchi & Gukje Market
- Gamcheon Culture Village
- Huinnyeoul Culture Village
- Songdo Yonggung Suspension Bridge
- UN Memorial Cemetery



Guide to Busan



Haeundae Beach vs. Gwangalli Beach



Gwangalli Beach.

Geoje Island - Tongyeong

These two cities along the South Sea boast the breathtaking scenery of Hallyeo Maritime National Park with numerous stunning attractions such as cable car rides and cruise tours. Being just 40 minutes apart, many explore both cities together.

Top Attractions

- The Hill of Wind
- Oedo-do Botania
- Hakdong Black Pearl Pebble Beach
- Geoje POW camp
- Geoje Sea World
- Mt. Mireuksan (Cable car, luge ride)
- Hansando Island



The Hill of Wind. Photo courtesy of Korea Tourism Organization



Geoje Island



Gyeongsang-do



Daegu

Host city of U.S. military bases

As one of the largest cities in the ROK, the city offers diverse shopping, entertainment and recreational opportunities. Daegu is home to major U.S. military installations and a significant ROK military presence.

U.S. bases: Camp Walker, Camp Henry, Camp George, Camp Carroll (Waegwan/Chilgok)

Attractions nearby

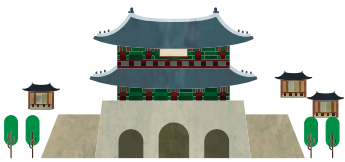
- Dongseong-ro Street (Downtown) & Sparkland
- Seomun Market (traditional market)
- Suseong Lake Resort
- E-World & 83 Tower
- Spa Valley
- Daegu Arboretum
- Mt. Palgongsan
- Daegu National Science Museum



Sparkland.

Photo courtesy of Korea Tourism Organization

SEOUL



The Five Royal Palaces

The royal palaces of Joseon Dynasty were home to kings and royal families. Renting and wearing hanbok is popular in these areas and allows free admission to the palaces.

- Gyeongbokgung Palace
- Deoksugung Palace
- Changdeokgung Palace
- Gyeonghuigung Palace
- Changgyeonggung Palace



Bukchon Hanok Village

Home to hundreds of traditional houses dating back to Joseon Dynasty.



Ikseon-dong

This neighborhood features trendy cafés and restaurants in photogenic narrow alleys lined with hanok houses.



Itaewon

This multicultural hub offers diverse options of foreign cuisine, shopping, and nightlife.



Myeongdong

A busy shopping district for cosmetics, clothing, fashion items and great street food.



Namdaemun Market

Large traditional market offering a variety of specialized items. Great for souvenirs and unique Korean products.



Noryangjin Fish Market

A popular seafood market known for fresh and live seafood.



Dongdaemun Market

Home to the largest shopping district, wholesale markets, outdoor markets, Toy Street, and more.



Lotte World Tower & Mall

This landmark skyscraper is the tallest building in Korea and a symbol of Seoul. The huge skyscraper has an observation deck, an aquarium, lots of shopping and restaurants.



Hongdae Street

At the center of the latest trends and local youth culture, neighborhood is home to unique cafés, local shops, restaurants, bars and clubs.



Yeouido Han River Park

The Han River, flowing through the heart of Seoul, is beloved by Seoulites for picnics, outdoor activities, water sports, cruise tours, festivals and more.



Gangnam

This upscale district is a hot spot for luxury shopping, eating, drinking, medical tourism and beauty treatments.



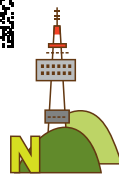
The War Memorial of Korea

This museum is dedicated to the Korean War and Korea's military history.



COEX Mall

This shopping complex includes many popular attractions such as Starfield Library, exhibition halls, and the COEX Aquarium.



The N Seoul Tower

An iconic landmark of Korea, sightseeing observatory, popular date spot.



Hitting the trails

Let's go hiking!
Deung-san gaja!



More tips

Finding hiking routes

Mastering Korea's hiking trails is so easy with the Kakao Map and Naver Map apps. Both apps are essential tools for navigating Korea's mountains and finding the best routes. They provide directions, distances in kilometers, and estimated hiking durations for most trails on the peninsula. Give them a try before your next hike!

■ Kakao Map

Try to search the mountain on the map and zoom in. It automatically shows you all the possible trails with distance and time around the mountains.



Android



iOS

■ Naver Map

Just like Kakao Map, try zooming in to see the trails with detailed information. If you input the mountain name and add the word "course," the map will show you a list of all the courses, including their difficulty level, duration, length, and altitude. For instance, type "Jirisan course" if you're headed for a brisk hike on Jirisan Mountain.



Android



iOS

Camping in Korea's national parks

In Korea, visitors to national parks can only camp in designated areas, and reservations must be made exclusively through the website run by the Korea National Park Service. If you're new to camping in these parks, it might appear a bit complicated. But no worries, simply follow this guide step by step!

1. Visit the Korea National Park Service website (reservation.knps.or.kr). The mobile version is currently not supported.
2. Sign up and log in. No phone number is needed, but email verification is required.
3. Click "View Campsites Reservation Schedule."
4. Select "National Park," "Campsites" and "Choose area" and click "Book now" at the bottom.

5. Fill out the reservation form and click "Search by selected criteria."
6. Click "Book" for an available campsite on the list.
7. Payment isn't required for online reservations. You can pay on-site when visiting. Please make sure to cancel your reservation if you call off your trip so others can fill your slot.

Things to know for booking

- The available dates for reservations open only 30 days in advance and are updated twice a month, specifically on the first and 15th of each month. For instance, on Oct. 1, while reservations are available from Oct. 1 to Oct. 15, dates from Oct. 15 to Oct. 31 also become available. Then, on Oct. 15, reservations for Nov. 1 to Nov. 15 open.
- If the campsite you select doesn't show any available spots, it's either fully booked or currently closed.
- It is recommended to make campsite reservations as early as possible, especially during peak seasons such as spring, summer vacation (August) and fall.
- If you have any inquiries regarding bookings or hiking in national parks, you can call the helpline at +82-1670-9201 (M-F: 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.). If the staff doesn't speak English, try emailing "cnp@knps.or.kr."

Campsite options

Campsite options and facilities can vary depending on national park, so please check for more information on the website.

1. Regular campsites: You should install your own tent in a designated spot. Be prepared to bring a tent, cookware, bedding, and other items for camping.
2. Auto campsites: You can bring a movable camping car or car and your tent. Each site has different options for facilities and electricity.
3. Caravan (camping car) campsites: You don't have to bring your car or tent but simply use a camping car already set up on the site. In the camper, there is a bed, and small kitchen.
4. Full-option campsites: Everything is prepared, including a tent, cookware,

bedding and other camping items. You can enjoy camping without bringing additional equipment.

Shelters

Shelters are simply places to take a rest or seek refuge during an emergency halfway up the mountains. Visitors must prepare their own sleeping bags and cookware if needed.

- Mountains with shelters: Jirisan, Seoraksan, Deogyusan, Sobaeksan

Rules at national parks

As national parks are protected by law, there are rules to prevent actions that could harm nature or disrupt the ecology of small animals. Check what to avoid doing to help preserve the natural beauty of these parks. Mountains that are not national parks may have different rules; some may allow collecting vegetables or fruits and bringing pets.

- You're not allowed to bring pets into national parks, and violations can result in a fine of 100,000 won. Only service dogs for disabilities are acceptable.
- Camping and overnight stays outside designated areas are prohibited in national parks. Camping or cooking in non-designated areas can result in a fine of up to 500,000 won.
- Entering restricted areas can incur a fine of 100,000 to 500,000 won.
- Making loud noise with devices such as Bluetooth speakers can result in a fine of up to 300,000 won.
- Alcohol is prohibited in many areas of national parks and can result in a fine.
- Bringing any kind of inflammable material or smoking can incur a fine of up to 2,000,000 won.
- Collecting forest products such as acorns, mushrooms, and wild greens can result in a fine of up to 50,000,000 won or five years in prison.

- Hyemin Lee

Kids' Travel Corner

If you are looking for some kid-friendly places to take the family, we have you covered. Here are some super fun places to check out.



Starfield Anseong

Starfield is a large shopping mall company with many shopping, dining, and entertainment options. In Pyeongtaek, Starfield Anseong is a popular shopping spot for those stationed at Camp Humphreys and Osan Air Base. Because it has many kid-friendly activities that won't break the bank, including a beautiful outdoor playground and an indoor water park.



Free bike rentals near Humphreys

Renting a bike at Pyeongtaek at Pyeongtaek public bike free rental shops (두바퀴의 행복 공공자전거 무료대여소) is a beloved

activity among locals and both shops are conveniently located near Camp Humphreys. The shops offer a variety of bikes including tandem bikes, bikes in different sizes, with baskets, or backseats so everyone in your group can enjoy a nice ride.



Photo by Korea Tourism Organization

Bear Tree Park

Encounter hundreds of adorable bears at Bear Tree Park, a family-friendly spot in Sejong City, just 45 kilometers from Camp Humphreys.

While exploring this wonderland, you can encounter not only around a hundred moon bears (Asian black bears) and brown bears, but also other animals like deer, peacocks, and mandarin ducks. Kids can participate in various programs which allow them to interact with the animals.



Picking strawberries

Starting in winter through early spring, Korea's sweet,

plump strawberries are ripe for picking. Strawberry-picking at one of the many farms open to the public is a popular activity. Many of the farms also offer strawberry desserts and classes to make strawberry cakes, Tanghulu (candied fruit), fondue and cookies.



Photo courtesy of Kids Dakoong

Kids' cafés

Kids' cafés in South Korea offer a magical blend of play zones for kids and relaxing spaces for parents. Places like these are especially popular when weather conditions might affect outdoor activities. Your kids will enjoy playing in wide indoor spaces with a variety of fun and creative themes.



Photo by Paradise Spa Dogo

Spa water parks

Asan City, located close to Pyeongtaek and renowned as a hot spring vacation spot, is home to two major spa water parks perfect for families during winter

months: Paradise Spa Dogo and Asan Spavis.



Photo courtesy of Seoul Grand Park

Seoul Grand Park Zoo

As South Korea's largest zoo, the Seoul Grand Park Zoo is the place to go when families want to get a close look with the animal kingdom at a budget-friendly price. Seoul Grand Park offers various family-friendly attractions alongside the zoo, such as a botanical garden, Seoul Land amusement park and camping grounds.



Photo courtesy of Haenam Dinosaur Museum

Best dinosaur museums

In Korea, numerous dinosaur fossils and their activities have been discovered, with significant finds in the southern coastal regions. While there are many dinosaur-themed attractions across the country, some

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Hanok & Hanbok

museums stand out for their ability to constantly captivate children's interest while providing rich educational content.



Photo courtesy of National Science Museum

Amazing science museums

Unlike a traditional classroom setting, science museums offer dynamic experiences with interactive exhibits, virtual reality adventures, and hands-on workshops that truly bring science to life. Korea is home to many exceptional science museums that are not just educational but also family-friendly and at low cost, making them an ideal destination for a family day out.



Photo courtesy of KidZania

KidZania

Have you ever wondered what your kids will become when they grow up? At KidZania, your kids can be anything they want to be: veterinarians, doctors, police officers, chefs, journalists, cartoonist and so much more! KidZania Seoul and Busan each feature over 50 experience zones!



- Hyemin Lee

More family fun



Sledding parks



Geoje Island



Café Main Street



Winter festivals



Top 15 spots in Pyeongtaek



Beaches near Pyeongtaek



Top 7 amusement parks



16 fun places for Children's Day



8 free attractions in Seoul



Fall photo spots near bases



3 must-visit museums in Daegu



Anseong Farmland

Search more Korea Kids' Corner stories at Korea.stripes.com

Traditional Korean houses

Hanok, a traditional style of Korean houses, has two main types: tile-roofed, where noblemen dwelled, and thatch-roofed, where commoners resided in the past. When referring to "Hanok" in modern days, it's usually associated with traditional houses of the tile-roofed type. Hanok continue to be cherished even today, and many locals live in preserved historic Hanok villages.

Hanok boasts much scientific wisdom such as the ondol heating system that warms the floor and air of the house during winter, and the installation of a wood-floored porch (maru), which helps with the summer heat. Also, hanok are constructed with eco-friendly materials like clay, wood, stone and traditional paper called hanji. These materials help with air circulation and durability and contribute to its unique beauty. Even today, hanok's system has influenced Koreans' lifestyle including floor-sitting culture, enjoying jjimjilbang (Korean spa) and restaurants with floor seating.

Traditional Korean clothing

Hanbok is Korean traditional attire worn since ancient times, but the Joseon Dynasty style of hanbok is common in dress shops and modern ceremonies. To this day, it is customary for Koreans to wear hanbok on significant

occasions like traditional holidays, weddings, and important family events.

Hanbok's distinctive beauty comes from details like diverse patterns and, often bold, colors. Color coordination between the top and bottom is key. The top consists of a jacket called jeogori (저고리), and for the bottom, men wear trousers and women wear long, voluminous skirts. The colors and designs can often symbolize social and marriage statuses.

Today, hanbok has evolved into various styles blending traditional style with modern twists. Wearing hanbok at historic sites is a beloved activity among locals and tourists. Renting a hanbok is very affordable, and it is highly recommended to try in the spring or fall.

Historic sites to see both

- Gyeongbokgung Palace and Bukchon Hanok Village (Seoul)
- Jeonju Hanok Village
- Andong Hahoe Folk Village
- Gyeongju Gyochon Traditional Village and other ancient sites

Where to buy Hanbok?

Gwangjang Market in Seoul is home to the biggest hanbok market in Korea. It offers high-quality products at affordable prices.

- Hyemin Lee



Websites worth bookmarking

Stars and Stripes!

Stripes Korea The best source for military and local military community news, respectively. Explore thousands of stories covering travel, food, festivals, activities, Korean lessons, life tips and more. korea.stripes.com

Stripes Newsletters For important news you may have missed straight to your inbox, don't forget to sign up for one or all of Stars and Stripes informative newsletters.

stripes.com/subscribe/newsletters

Military Child Every April, the spotlight is on our military kids! We receive thousands of drawings, pictures, poems and written submissions from military kids pacific-wide which are published in the paper and online. korea.stripes.com

News and General Information

Korea.Net is run by the government and provides a valuable resource for breaking news, features, and comprehensive information about Korea. www.korea.net

The Korea Times keeps English speakers in Korea informed about local news, current events, business, culture and more. <https://www.koreatimes.co.kr>

Monitor daily air quality

As a resident in Korea, my daily routine begins with checking the air quality reports before opening windows or heading outside. Air pollution in Korea is a serious concern that can cause significant health risks, including respiratory problems, eye and skin irritation, depending on individual sensitivity. To effectively manage air pollution in Korea, it's important to follow these essential steps to safeguard your health.

First, learn where to monitor daily air quality. You can easily stay updated by using your phone's weather widget, which provides not only weather forecasts but also details on fine dust and ultra-fine dust levels. Also, you can check the Air Quality Index (AQI) through the following websites.

Air Quality Index: <https://aqicn.org/map/southkorea>

AirKorea: <https://www.airkorea.or.kr/eng>

Learn more about how to cope with air pollution in Korea:



Korea Joongang Daily is another reputable source for local news, including politics, economy, and culture. <https://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com>

Yonhap News Agency is another great English language news provider for politics, business, and culture. <https://en.yna.co.kr>

The Korea Herald is good for up-to-date Korean headlines in English. <https://www.koreaherald.com>

Tourist Information

Korea Tourism Organization serves as the premier source of comprehensive tourist information in Korea, covering attractions, festivals and more. The app is also available -VISIT KOREA. <https://english.visitkorea.or.kr>

Seoul Tourism Organization shares all the details on attractions, activities, food, accommodations and special events around Seoul. The app is also available -Visit Seoul. <https://english.visitseoul.net>

Jeju Tourism Organization helps English speakers discover attractions and activities in Jeju. It also provides online chat or a helpline for travel inquiries. <https://www.visitjeju.net>

Haps Korea offers the latest news and events in Korea with a special focus on Busan. <https://www.hapskorea.com>

Community and Resources

PIEF (Pyeongtaek International Exchange Foundation) is a great community organization for those stationed in Pyeongtaek. It offers affordable Korean classes, various cultural exchange events and many volunteer opportunities to engage with the local community. Visit the website and click the FB page for the latest event updates. For Korean class inquiries, contact them via email or phone for the class schedule. <https://www.pief.or.kr>

Seoul Global Center provides resources for foreigners living in Korea, primarily offering language classes, cultural events, workshops, and festivals happening in Seoul. It also offers comprehensive information on job opportunities and life guides. <https://global.seoul.go.kr>

Gmarket is a shopping site based in Korea where you can explore a large selection of Korean-made products in English. <https://www.gmarket.co.kr>

Creatrip allows foreigners to experience Korea like a local with trendy travel ideas and activities while offering prices like what locals would pay. App and website available. <https://creatrip.com/en>

LOST 112 is a national lost & found system that manages reported lost items nationwide. Any



Ride out the storm with Dave

Dave Ornauer has been with Stars and Stripes since 1981, and one of his first assignments as a beat reporter in the old Japan News Bureau was "typhoon chaser." Pacific Storm Tracker is designed to take the technical weather lingo and simplify it for the average Stripes reader. www.stripes.com/blogs/pacific-storm-tracker

lost items that haven't been retrieved within the first few days are transferred to the police station and recorded on this system. <https://www.lost112.go.kr>

Meetup offers great opportunities to make new friends through diverse social events such as volunteer work, language exchanges, sports groups and more. The app is also available. <https://www.meetup.com>

Learning Korean

King Sejong Institute Foundation is a government-affiliated online institute for educating foreigners in the Korean language. It offers valuable Korean language courses for free, including e-textbooks, quizzes and lectures. After completing the courses, you can also earn a certificate. <https://nuri.iksi.or.kr>

How to study Korean is a great website to improve vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing skills. <https://www.howtostudykorean.com>

Mountains

Korea National Park Service offers information on national parks in Korea, hiking courses and other tourist attractions on mountains. <https://www.knps.or.kr>

Reservation.knp is where you can make reservations for accommodations at national parks. Search "how to camp in Korea's national parks" at korea.stripes.com. <https://reservation.knps.or.kr/foreigner/main.do>

Templestay is a way to get away from the rat race and find some inner calm by participating in temple life. <https://eng.templestay.com>

- Hyemin Lee

Must-have apps

Mastering life in Korea will be much smoother when you have these essential apps on your phone. Below are the most useful apps that locals use daily, and downloading them will be a big step toward adopting the local lifestyle!


Lifestyle

 **KakaoTalk** A free messenger widely used among Koreans, similar to WhatsApp. It's a main tool for communicating with Koreans and local businesses. Get used to the cute Kakao emoticons as they are commonly used in everyday texting. KakaoTalk PC allows you to use this messenger on your computer.


 **Coupang** The best shopping app in Korea offers English service with foreign card purchases. It provides a wide selection of products from groceries to beauty items, perfect for an effortless shopping experience! Most items arrive the next day with their fast delivery service.


 **Danggeun Market (Karrot)** An essential app for buying and selling second-hand goods locally and connecting with communities in your neighborhood. Locals also use this app when finding lost pets, getting restaurant recommendations, seeking beauty shop suggestions, hosting community events and advertising businesses.


Navigation & Transportation


 **Naver Map** The most efficient mapping app in Korea, offering detailed maps, directions, real-time traffic information and additional features such as finding nearby

attractions and great restaurants.


 **Subway Korea** Offers metro maps with real-time information on schedules, fares, routes and travel times. It covers all subway systems in Korea, including Seoul Metropolitan Area, Busan and Daegu.

 **Kakao T Essential app** for taxi-hailing, but also useful for finding parking spots, EV charging stations and more.


 **KorailTalk** A simple way to book train tickets operated by Korail without a language barrier.

 **Waze** A useful GPS app for finding directions within U.S. military bases in Korea.

Travel & Booking


 **Trazy** A popular Korean travel shop offering various activity ideas across Asia, including Korea, Japan and Thailand. It's perfect for booking tickets for trendy tours at discounted prices. Available as both an app and a website.


 **Klook** An excellent travel booking platform where you can discover top attractions and purchase tickets for tours, theme parks, transportation and more at good prices. It covers destinations worldwide including Korea.

 **Airbnb** Offers diverse options for accommodations and experiences hosted by locals.


 **Agoda** Specializes in ac-


commodations with great deals, from luxury hotels to affordable guesthouses. It also provides transportation and activity options.

 **Trip.com** A global app that's also popular in Korea. It offers great deals on accommodations, flights and rental cars. Before booking with other apps, compare prices on Trip.com!


 **Skyscanner** An excellent app for finding the best deals on flights. It's also useful for booking rental cars.


Korean language

 **Naver Papago** Provides the most accurate translations from Korean to other languages.

 **Naver Keyboard** A useful app for typing in Korean on your phone.

Food delivery

 **Baedal Minjok (Baemin)** The No.1 food delivery app in Korea with the largest selection of restaurants. Available almost anywhere, including homes, beaches, parks and hotels. You can use guest mode without creating an account and pay with a foreign credit card. Once you get used to it, Baemin provides the most convenient 24/7 food delivery service.

 **Shuttle** A foreigner-friendly food delivery app and website with English support and foreign credit card options. It specializes in foreigner-populated areas like Itaewon and U.S. military bases, but restaurant options are limited compared to other apps listed here.



How to get an Alien Registration Card



How to use Coupang



How to use Karrot

Public Wi-Fi

If you don't have a Korean SIM card or run out of data, use free public Wi-Fi widely available throughout Korea. Many cafés, dining spots and shopping centers offer their own Wi-Fi. Also, local government and major telecom companies like LG U+ and KT provide a service called "Public Wi-Fi." This service is available in most public areas, including public transportation, traditional markets, community centers, beaches and more!

How to find Public Wi-Fi

Simply check your phone for Wi-Fi connections when you're in a public area. If you want to get an idea of the locations in advance, visit their website or download the app - Public Wi-Fi (공공 와이파이).

Learn more about Public Wi-Fi:



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