

Preparing for China

- **Your flight:** It's important that you don't buy your flight until given the go ahead by your school. Sometimes a delay in visa processing can push back your start date. Buying the flight later, will still be less expensive than changing it.
- **Arrange your visa.** You'll need to work closely with your schools HR department to complete the work permit application process. It will likely require authentication of your employment documents, which is a multi-step process. Don't hesitate to contact your placement consultant for assistance. If you don't live near a Chinese consulate, you'll also likely need to use an agent like www.mychinavisa.com to help with authentications and visa application.
- **Download WeChat** on your phone. It is THE communication tool in China. Use it to do everything from connecting with new friends to paying your rent.
- **Unlock your phone**, many western mobile phones will work in China if they are unlocked. This will likely be easier to do before you leave.
- **Inform your family and friends** of your plans, and keep them updated on your address in China. It may be a good idea to get Skype installed on family's computer and show them how to use it.
- **Inform your bank** that you will be living in China for the next year. Sometimes, banks, for your own security, will block your card if they detect that it's been used overseas. Although a simple phone call will unblock it, such instances can be a nuisance. Letting them know beforehand will keep this from happening in most cases.
- **Budget** for your first month in China. Remember that you will likely need to pay your first month's rent, plus a deposit (equal to another month's worth). You should consider living costs, plus an emergency fund also. Rents and living costs vary widely by city, so ask your recruitment consultant if you need further advice on this matter.
- **Prepare for jet lag.** You should expect to feel some degree of exhaustion. Drink plenty of water during your trip and after you arrive, and immediately conform to the new time zone when you arrive, i.e. sleep at night and stay awake during the day. Try not to think what time it is in your time zone, as this will confuse your system further.
- **Purchase a guidebook**, such as the Lonely Planet or Let's Go. Do read up on your city beforehand. Most quality guidebooks also have a Chinese phrasebook toward the back.
- **Weigh your bag** before you set off to the airport. Bathroom scales will suffice. Be aware that airlines often have very high charges for overweight luggage, even if they are only slightly overweight.
- **Bring the appropriate** clothing for the climate. Your guidebook will give you a good indication of this.
- **If you take prescription medicine**, consult your doctor about obtaining a larger prescription. Note that most medications are easy to come by in China.

To get you acquainted with more elements of China, check out Teaching Nomad's series of Info Sheets, which you can download at: <http://www.teachingnomad.com/discover-more/info-sheets>

Links about daily life, culture and etiquette may be found at: <http://www.teachingnomad.com/discover-more/helpful-links1>

We hope your transition to your first year in China is a smooth one, and don't forget, you are welcome to email your recruiter if you have *any* questions or concerns!