



China VISA Regulations 2015

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1. Introduction

- A Chinese VISA is permitted to a foreigner, and authorizes ENTRY to, EXIT from, or TRANSIT through the People’s Republic of China (PRC). It is issued by a Chinese Diplomatic Mission, which is a VISA authority such as an Embassy, Consulate, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or any other authorized entity.
- Visitors to the PRC must obtain a VISA from one of the Chinese Diplomatic Missions, UNLESS falling into a VISA-FREE Entry category outlined in this PPT.
- A Chinese VISA, if required for ENTRY into the PRC, can have Diplomatic, Official, or Regular Status dependent on factors that are also outlined in this PPT.

2. VISA-FREE Situations

A. TOURISM & BUSINESS

Certain countries have a relationship with the PRC Government to where their citizens may travel to Mainland China for tourism or business for up to 15 or 30 days (dependent on the native country) without a VISA.

Link: <http://www.travelchinaguide.com/embassy/pdf/non-visa.pdf>

Group Touring

Citizens of the following countries may visit China without a visa for up to 30 days if traveling as part of a tour group that is accompanied by a representative of a tour operator registered in both countries:

Azerbaijan	Belarus	Georgia	Moldova	Russia	Turkmenistan
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Touring in (TAR) Tibet Autonomous Region

- Foreign Passport holders entering Tibet must have a Tibet Travel Permit, issued by the Tibet Tourism Bureau
- The only way to obtain a Tibet Travel Permit is to arrange a tour operated by a Tibet travel agent which includes at least hotels and transportation
- The Tibet Travel Permit is also required by Taiwanese holding a Mainland Travel Permit for Taiwan Residents, but it is not required for Chinese citizens from Hong Kong or Macao holding a Mainland Travel Permit for Hong Kong and Macao Residents.

B. Citizens of Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan

Residents of HK, Macau, and Taiwan are not considered international travelers throughout China, so their passports and a VISA are not necessary. Instead, a different document is required dependent on your native residency.

Mainland Travel Permit for HK & Macau Residents

- Valid for 10 years; unlimited entries
- Apply at the China Travel Service Agency in HK or Macau
- If resident is abroad, and in need of one, contact the Chinese Embassy or Consulate located in the respective region

Mainland Travel Permit for HK & Macau Residents

- Must be accompanied by a VISA endorsement
- There is also a One-Time Compatriot Pass available
- The Permit, not the Pass, is valid for 5 years with unlimited entries
- Apply for all of the above documents at International Airports (pre-arrangements required)
- Apply at Travel Service Agencies in Taiwan, HK, or Macau
- If resident is abroad, apply at a Chinese Embassy or Consulate

C. Alternative Documents

Seaman Book Entry

Holders of the Seaman Book are allowed to use this document instead of a Chinese VISA. Nationals of the following countries can obtain this VISA Alternative:

Lithuania	Poland	Russia	Ukraine
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APEC Business Card Entry

Holders of a valid APEC Business Card can enter China VISA-FREE. Nationals of the following countries can obtain this VISA Alternative:

Australia	Brunei	Chile	Indonesia	Japan	Malaysia	Mexico	New Zealand
Papua New Guinea	Philippines	Peru	Russia	Singapore	S. Korea	Vietnam	HK (Non-Chinese)

D. Transit Through International Airports

24-Hour Visit

VISAs are not required of Foreign Passport Holders who:

- Hold air tickets to a final destination outside of China but will need to fly directly through China
- Stay in the transit Airport for less than 24 hours
- Never leave the Transit Airport

72- Hour Stay

Holders of a Passport issued by the below countries do not need a VISA for a 72-hour visit, IF they are transiting through one of the below declared Airports, and they hold a:

- Valid Passport
- VISA for the destination country if required
- Final destination air ticket with booked seat



Beijing Capital International Airport	Beijing
Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport	Chengdu
Chongqing Jiangbei International Airport	Chongqing
Dalian Zhoushuizi International Airport	Dalian
Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport	Guangdong Province
Guilin Liangjiang International Airport	Guilin
Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport	Zhejiang Province
Harbin Taiping International Airport	Harbin
Kunming Changshui International Airport	Kunming
Nanjing Lukou International Airport	Nanjing
Shanghai Pudong International Airport	Shanghai
Shanghai Hongqiao International Airport	Shanghai
Shenyang Taoxian International Airport	Shenyang
Tianjin Binhai International Airport	Tianjin
Wuhan Tianhe International Airport	Wuhan
Xi'an Xianyang International Airport	Xi'an & Xianyang
Xiamen Gaoqi International Airport	Xiamen

E. Region-Specific Waivers

The Chinese Government has implemented a VISA waiver for foreign nationals travelling to the following areas of Mainland China (duration of stay is dependent on Passport status, and travel declaration):

1. Pearl River Delta
2. Shenzhen (Special Economic Zone)
3. Hainan Province

Pearl River Delta

All visitors to Hong Kong and/or Macau are able to visit the surrounding Pearl River Delta VISA-FREE as long as the following conditions are fulfilled:

- The visitor is a national of a country which has diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China
- The visitor is visiting the Pearl River Delta as part of a tour group organized by a Hong Kong or Macau based travel agency
- The stay is six days or less (21 days for citizens of Germany, Republic of Korea and Russia)
- The visitor stays only within the cities of Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Foshan, Dongguan, Zhongshan, Jiangmen, Zhaoqing, Huizhou and Shantou

Shenzhen (SEZ)

- Visitors from most countries may obtain a five-day VISA Entry when travelling to Shenzhen, Zhuhai and Xiamen.
- Visits are limited to the VISA's issue city.
- The VISA can be obtained only upon arrival at Lo Wu border crossing, Huanggang Port Control Point or Shekou Port for Shenzhen, Gongbei Port of Entry or Jiuzhou Port for Zhuhai and Xiamen Gaoqi International Airport for Xiamen.

Hainan Province

Nationals from the following countries can visit Hainan Island VISA-FREE for at most (15 days or less), if they are visiting as part of a tour group organized by a National Tourism Administration of China-approved travel agency based in Hainan with 5 or more people.



3. VISA Types

(C) Crew Visa

(乘务签证) Issued to foreign crew members of means of international transportation, including aircraft, trains and ships, or motor vehicle drivers engaged in cross-border transport activities, or to the accompanying family members of the crew members of the above-mentioned transport.

(D) Permanent Residence Visa

(定居签证) Issued to those who intend to reside in China permanently. The Chinese government have started to implement new permanent residency policy for foreigners to attract and introduce technical talents and experts

(F) Visit Visa

(访问签证) Issued to those who intend to go to China for exchanges, visits, study tours and other activities.

(G) Transit Visa

(过境签证) Issued to those who intend to transit through China.

(J1) Long-term Journalist Visa

(常驻记者签证) Issued to resident foreign journalists of foreign news organizations stationed in China. The intended duration of stay in China exceeds 180 days.

(J2) Short-term Journalist Visa

(临时记者签证) Issued to foreign journalists who intend to go to China for short-term news coverage. The intended duration of stay in China is no more than 180 days.

(L) Tourist Visa

(旅游签证) Issued to those who intend to go to China as a tourist.

(M) Business Visa

(商贸签证) Issued to those who intend to go to China for commercial and trade activities.

(Q1) Family Reunion Visa

(家庭团聚签证) Issued to those who are family members of Chinese citizens or of foreigners with Chinese permanent residence and intend to go to China for family reunion, or to those who intend to go to China for the purpose of foster care. The intended duration of stay in China exceeds 180 days.

(Q2) Family Visit Visa

(探亲签证) Issued to those who intend to visit their relatives who are Chinese citizens residing in China or foreigners with permanent residence in China. The intended duration of stay in China is no more than 180 days.

(R) Talent Visa

(人才签证) Issued to those who are high-level talents or whose skills are urgently needed in China.

(S1) Long-term Private Visit Visa

(长期私人事务签证) Issued to those who intend to go to China to visit the foreigners working or studying in China to whom they are spouses, parents, sons or daughters under the age of 18 or parents-in-law, or to those who intend to go to China for other private affairs. The intended duration of stay in China exceeds 180 days.

(S2) Short-term Private Visit Visa

(短期私人事务签证) Issued to those who intend to visit their family members[Note 1] who are foreigners working or studying in China, or to those who intend to go to China for other private matters. The intended duration of stay in China is no more than 180 days.

(X1) Long-term Study Visa

(长期学习签证) Issued to those who intend to study in China for a period of more than 180 days.

(X2) Short-term Study Visa

(短期学习签证) Issued to those who intend to study in China for a period of no more than 180 days.

(Z) Working Visa

(工作签证) Issued to those who intend to work in China.

VISA VALIDITY NOTES**"Enter Before" =**

The visa is valid, or can be used for entry into China from the date of issue to the "Enter Before" date indicated on the visa (Beijing Time). If a visa has unused entries, the bearer can enter China before 0:00 (Beijing Time) on the expiration date.

"Entries" =

The number of times the bearer is permitted to enter China during the validity of a visa. A visa becomes invalid if there are no entries left, or if there are entries left but the visa validity expires. If a visa becomes invalid, its bearer must apply for a new visa before entering China. Traveling with an invalid visa to China will result in refusal of entry.

"Duration of Each Stay" =

The maximum number of days the visa bearer is permitted to stay in China each time, which is calculated from the date of entry into China.

- A foreign citizen who overstays the end date of his/her authorized stay in China without going through extension formalities is subject to fines and other penalties for violation of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Control of the Entry and Exit of Aliens.
- If a visa bearer is to stay in China longer than the duration of stay allowed on the visa, approval must be obtained from local public security authorities above the county level before the duration of stay expires.
- A bearer of a D, Q1, J1, S1, X1 and Z visa must apply for a residence permit at the local public security authorities within 30 days of entry into China. Members of foreign diplomatic or consular missions in China must apply for a residence permit at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or local foreign affairs departments within 30 days of entry into China.

4. VISA Process & Requirements

A. Application Requirements

General Materials

- Original passport with at least 6 months validity, and at least one pair of blank facing visa pages, a photocopy of the passport's data page and photo page if it is separate.
- One completed Visa Application Form attached with a recently-taken passport photo (bare-head, full face, and against a light background).
- Proof of legal stay or residence permit (for applicants who apply in a third country other than their country of citizenship). You must provide the original and photocopy of your valid certificates or visa of stay, residence, employment or student status, or other valid certificates of legal staying provided by the relevant authorities of the country where you are currently staying.

Additional Materials Needed for VISA Status

1. Foreign Passport Holders who were Chinese citizens and obtained foreign citizenship:

- A photocopy of previous Chinese passport or previous Chinese visas is required.
- If you are applying for the first time, you should provide your previous Chinese passport held and a photocopy of its data page.
- If you have been issued Chinese visas before and apply this time with a renewed foreign passport, you should present the photocopy of the previous passport's data page and the photo page if it is separate, as well as the previous Chinese visa page.

2. Tourist (L):

A Round-trip air ticket booking record, and proof of a hotel reservation, or an invitation letter issued by a relevant entity or individual in China with following information:

- Information on the applicant (full name, gender, date of birth, etc.)
- Information on the planned visit (dates of arrival and departure, places of visit, etc.)
- Information on the inviting entity or individual (name, contact number, address, official stamp, signature of the legal representative or the inviting individual)

3. Non-commercial Business (F):

An invitation letter issued by a relevant entity or individual in China, with following details:

- Information on the applicant (full name, gender, date of birth, etc.)
- Information on the planned visit (purpose of visit, arrival and departure dates, places of visit, relations between the applicant and the inviting entity or individual, financial source for expenditures)
- Information on the inviting entity or individual (name, contact number, address, official stamp, signature of the legal representative or the inviting individual)

4. Student (X):

For X1 with an intended stay of more than 6 months, applicants should provide:

- Original and photocopy of the Admission Letter issued by a school or other entities in PRC.
- Original and photocopy of "Visa Application for Study in China" (form JW201 or Form JW202).
- For X2 with a shorter stay, original and photocopy of Admission Notice issued by a school or other entities are enough.

5. Commercial or Trade (M):

Documents on the commercial activity issued by a trade partner in PRC, or trade fair invitation or other invitation letters issued by relevant entity or individual. The invitation letter should contain the same information as described for F type.

6. Work/Employment (Z):

One of the following documents are required:

- Foreigners Employment Permit y or Confirmation Letter of Invitation issued by relevant Chinese entities.
- Foreign Experts Certificate, and Invitation Letter of Duly Authorized Entity or Confirmation Letter of Invitation issued by relevant Chinese entities.
- Registration Certificate of Resident Representative Offices and Invitation Letter of Duly Authorized Entity or Confirmation Letter of Invitation issued by relevant entities.
- Approval document for commercial performances or the above Invitation Letter/Confirmation Letter of Invitation instead.
- Invitation Letter to Foreigners for Offshore Petroleum Operations issued by National Offshore Oil Corporation.

7. Private Visit (S):

S1 type issued to Immediate family members of Z/X holders including spouses, parents, sons or daughters under age of 18, and parents-in-law for a stay longer than 6 months. Following documents are required:

- An invitation letter from the inviting individual (a foreigner who stays on a work Z or student X)
- A photocopy of the inviting individual's passport and residence permit.
- Proof of kinship such as marriage certificate, birth certificate, certification of kinship issued by Public Security Bureau or notarized certification of kinship (original and copy)
- S2 type requires the same documents as S1 for family members of Z/X holders visiting for a short period less than 6 months. Here the family members include spouses, parents, sons, daughters, spouses of sons or daughters, brothers, sisters, grandparents, grandsons, granddaughters and parents-in-law.

For those who visit for other private affairs, documentation identifying the nature of the private affairs should be provided as required by the consular officer.

8. Family Reunion (Q):

Q1 type issued for a duration of stay exceeding 6 months.

For family reunion, following documents are required:

- Invitation letter issued by a Chinese citizen or foreign citizen with a Chinese permanent residence permit.
- Photocopy of Chinese ID or foreign passport and permanent residence permit.
- Proof of kinship such as marriage certificate, birth certificate, certification of kinship issued by Public Security Bureau or notarized certification of kinship (original and copy)

Family Reunion (Q): (cont'd...)

- Q2 type for duration of stay no more than 6 months, following documents are required:
- Invitation letter issued by a Chinese citizen or foreign citizen with a Chinese permanent residence permit
- Photocopy of Chinese ID or foreign passport and permanent residence permit

9. Transit (G):

An onward air (train or ship) ticket with confirmed date and seat to the destination country or region is required.

Special Reminders:

- Chinese D, J1, X1, Q1, S1, Z visa holders shall apply for Temporary residence permit within 30 days from the date of their entry at the exit/entry administrations of public security.
- Generally, the invitation letter in the form of fax, photocopy or computer printout is acceptable, but the consular officer may require the original of the invitation letter when necessary.
- The consular officer may require other proof documents or supplementary materials or an interview or verification of the signature on application documents if necessary.
- For passport collection, please carefully CHECK all the particulars, such as your name, birth date, passport number, validity, number of entries, duration of stay issued on your visa.

B. Process

STEP 1: Select a visa category that best describes your trip to China and prepare your visa application including necessary supporting documents accordingly.

Link to Application: <http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/visas/fd/>

STEP 2: Submit your application to the Visa Office of Chinese Embassy/ Consulate General based on your State of residence.

STEP 3: Pay the visa application fee at the Visa Office and pick up your visa.

C. On-Arrival Procurement of Non-Chinese Nationals

Visa nationals are able to obtain a visa-on-arrival at the following airports as long as arrangements have been made prior to arrival into China and confirmation has been received from the Entry and Exit Division of the local Public Security Bureau that a visa will be issued on arrival.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visa_policy_of_China#Visa-on-arrival_procedures

D. VISA for Hong Kong Non-Chinese Nationals

Residents of Hong Kong who are not Chinese citizens require a visa to visit the mainland. Hong Kong Permanent Residents may apply for a 3-year multi-entry visa. Hong Kong Residents can apply for a 1-year multi entry visa. In most cases the length of stay for each individual trip is one month. For non-Chinese Citizens, currently it is not possible to apply for a resident visa for mainland China based on the applicant's status as a Hong Kong Permanent Resident.

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Founded in 2001, LehmanBrown is a China-focused accounting, taxation and business advisory firm, operating in Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Macau, Shenzhen, Guangzhou and Tianjin. Our firm also manages an extensive affiliate network, providing service throughout China and reach across the globe.

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