



China Arrival Checklist

A Complete Guide for International Students Moving to China

Documents · Apps · Payments · Transportation · First Month Essentials

Free Resource by The China Helper

www.thechinahelper.com

Welcome to Your China Journey

Moving to a new country can feel exciting but also overwhelming.

China has a unique digital ecosystem, transportation system and daily lifestyle.

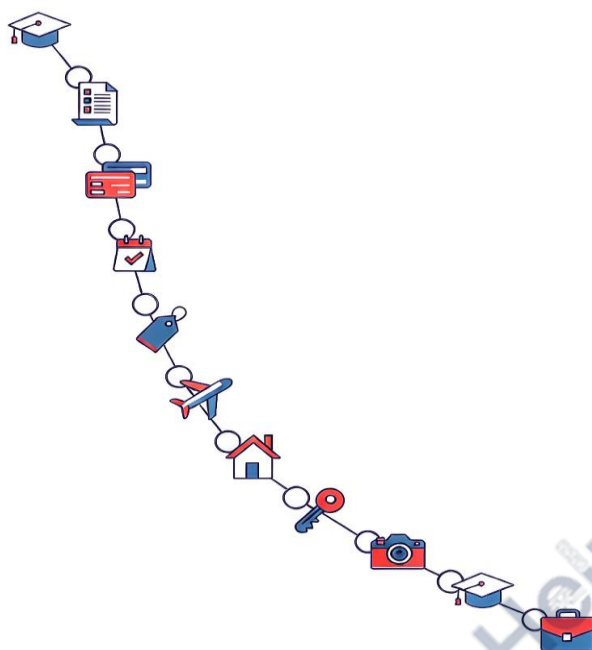
This checklist will help you prepare step by step before departure and during your first month in China.

This Guide Covers:

- ✓ Essential documents
- ✓ Important apps
- ✓ Payment preparation
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Campus registration
- ✓ Daily life essentials



Your China Preparation Timeline



1-3 Months Before Arrival

- ✓ Confirm admission documents
- ✓ Apply for visa
- ✓ Research university information
- ✓ Prepare financial arrangements

First Week in China

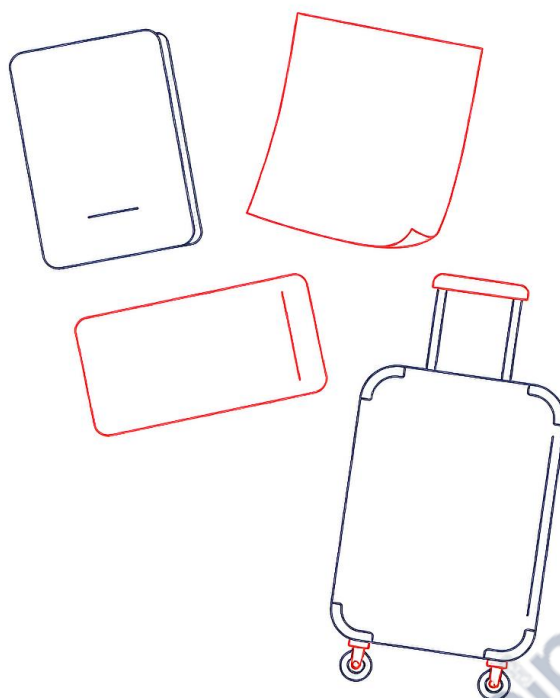
- ✓ Register at university
- ✓ Buy SIM card
- ✓ Set up payments
- ✓ Complete accommodation registration

2-4 Weeks Before Departure

- ✓ Install important apps
- ✓ Prepare document copies
- ✓ Pack essentials
- ✓ Inform family

First Month

- ✓ Understand local transportation
- ✓ Build daily routines
- ✓ Explore your city

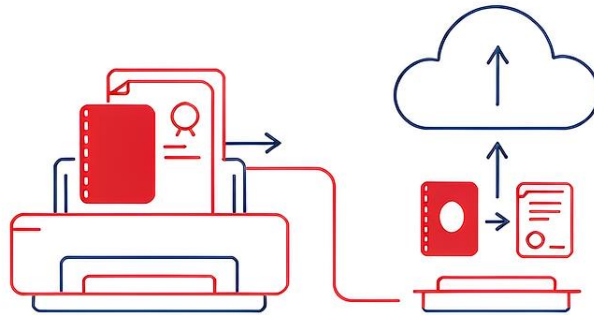


PART 1

BEFORE LEAVING YOUR COUNTRY

Everything you need to prepare before you board the plane.

Prepare Your Documents



Travel Documents

- ☐ Passport
- ☐ Chinese Visa
- ☐ Flight Ticket
- ☐ Travel Insurance

University Documents

- ☐ Admission Letter
- ☐ JW201 / JW202 Form (if applicable)
- ☐ Registration documents
- ☐ Scholarship documents

Personal Documents

- ☐ Passport photos
- ☐ Academic certificates
- ☐ Medical records

Digital Backup

Save documents in: Cloud storage / Phone / Email

- ☐ Scan important documents
- ☐ Keep digital copies
- ☐ Share emergency copies with family

Understanding Visa and Registration



Before Arrival

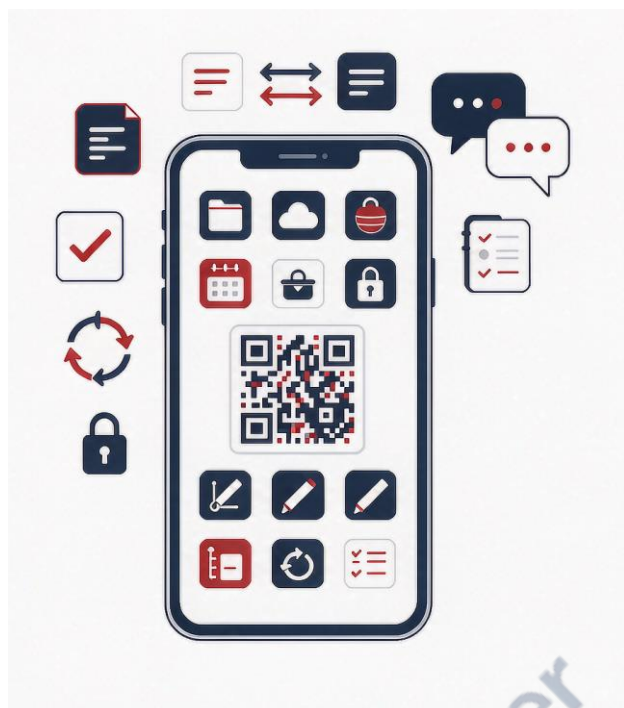
Prepare: Valid Chinese visa · University documents

After Arrival

Most international students need to complete the following steps:

- ✓ Register at university
- ✓ Complete accommodation registration
- ✓ Follow local residence requirements

Note: Always check the latest requirements from your university and local authorities.

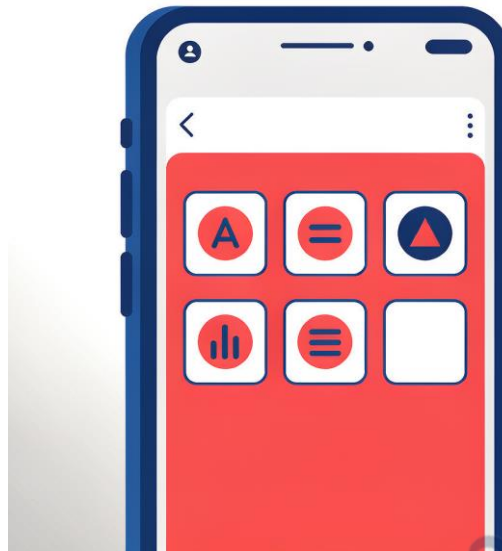


PART 2

DIGITAL PREPARATION

Set up the apps and digital tools you'll rely on every day in China.

Install These Apps Before Coming to China



Category	App	Main Use
Translation	Pleco / Google Translate	Chinese translation & dictionary
Maps	Amap (高德) / Baidu Maps	Navigation, metro & bus routes
Payment	Alipay / WeChat Pay	Mobile payment for most daily needs
Social	WeChat	Messaging, services & mini-programs
Food	Meituan / Eleme	Food delivery from local restaurants
Transport	Didi	Ride-hailing & taxi service

Suggestion: Download and register these apps before departure whenever possible.

Your Digital Setup Checklist



- ☐ Create WeChat account
- ☐ Download translation tools
- ☐ Save university contacts
- ☐ Backup important files
- ☐ Learn basic Chinese input

Why Digital Preparation Matters

Most daily services in China rely on mobile digital systems — food delivery, offline and online payments, public transport, campus services and more. Setting up these tools before arrival helps you settle in faster and avoid unnecessary stress during your first weeks.

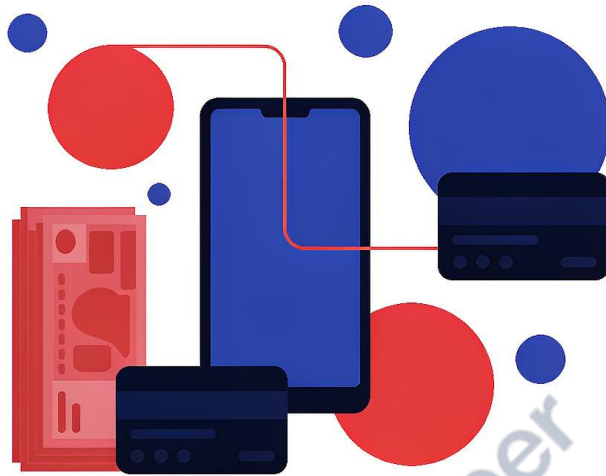


PART 3

MONEY & PAYMENTS

Get your finances and payment methods ready for a cashless lifestyle.

Money and Payment in China



Daily consumption in China is highly digitalized. The two most widely used payment methods are Alipay and WeChat Pay, covering most offline and online scenarios. International students usually prepare a combination of international bank cards, RMB cash and mobile payment apps before arriving.

Before-Arrival Checklist

- ☐ Bring international bank card
- ☐ Prepare some RMB cash
- ☐ Check your bank's overseas service

Using Digital Payments

Digital payments in China can be used in almost all daily scenarios:

- ✓ Restaurants
- ✓ Shopping
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Online services

Suggestion: *Keep a backup payment method during your first weeks.*

Note: *The availability of overseas bank card binding and payment services may vary depending on your card type and currency. Some merchants may set a minimum amount for foreign cards.*

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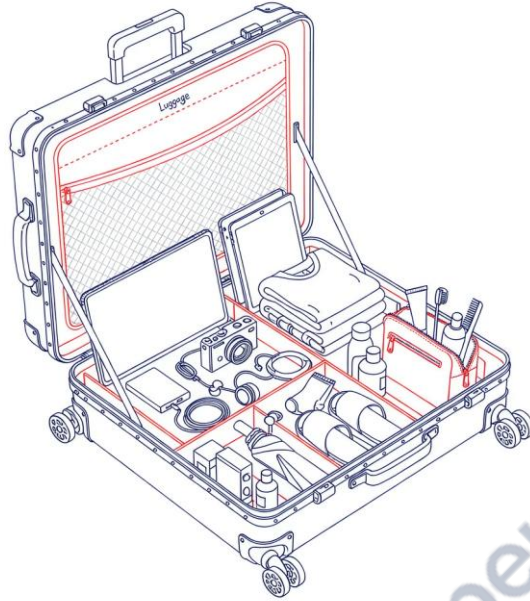


PART 4

PACKING & TRAVEL

Decide what to pack — and what you can easily buy after you arrive.

What Should You Bring?



Electronics

- ☐ Phone
- ☐ Laptop
- ☐ Chargers
- ☐ Adapters

Personal Items

- ☐ Medicine
- ☐ Glasses
- ☐ Personal necessities

Study Items

- ☐ Notebook
- ☐ Documents
- ☐ Learning materials

Don't Overpack

Most daily supplies, clothes and electronic accessories can be easily purchased in most cities in China, so there is no need to bring too many items.



PART 5

FIRST ARRIVAL

Survive and thrive during your first 24 hours and first week in China.

Your First Day in China



- ☐ Arrive safely
- ☐ Connect to internet
- ☐ Contact university
- ☐ Reach accommodation
- ☐ Keep important documents safe

Core Suggestion: *Do not rush to complete all procedures on the first day. Prioritize safety, arrival confirmation and accommodation first.*

Your First Week in China

University

- ☐ Complete registration
- ☐ Get student ID

Living

- ☐ Buy SIM card
- ☐ Learn nearby stores
- ☐ Understand transportation

Finance

- ☐ Setup payment methods
- ☐ Understand local banking options

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PART 6

FIRST MONTH

Build routines, connections and confidence in your new home.

Your First Month Goals



Learn Your City

Familiarize yourself with campus surroundings, nearby supermarkets, hospitals and metro stations to form stable living boundaries.

Improve Communication

Learn basic daily Chinese phrases, directional inquiry and simple daily conversation to solve everyday communication barriers.

Connect With People

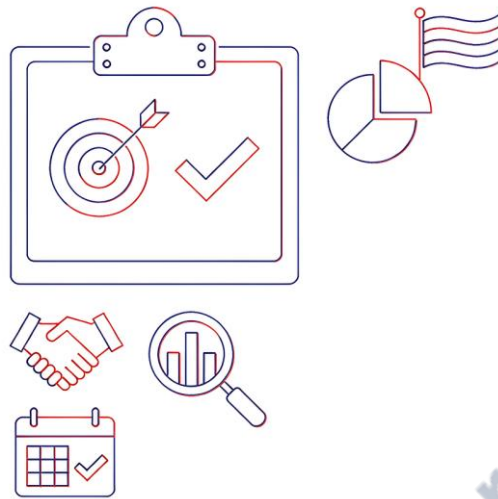
Actively connect with international students, local Chinese students and university communities to integrate into campus life.

Common Problems New Students Face

Problem	Practical Solution
Limited Chinese proficiency	Use translation apps + learn key daily phrases
Getting used to digital payments	Bind international card in Alipay / WeChat
Finding familiar food	Explore campus canteens + nearby supermarkets
Transportation confusion	Use Amap / Baidu Maps for metro & bus
Internet access	Buy a local SIM card on arrival
Language barrier in hospital	Save university international office contact

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Final Checklist Before Starting Your China Life



Before Flight

- ☐ Documents ready
- ☐ Apps installed
- ☐ Accommodation confirmed

After Arrival

- ☐ University registration completed
- ☐ Payment setup
- ☐ Transportation understood

First Month

- ☐ Build daily routine
- ☐ Explore China
- ☐ Enjoy your experience



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