

South Korea Relocation Guide



By Appointment To
Her Majesty The Queen
Removals and Storage Contractor Abels

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FS 23942



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ISO 9001 - ISO 14001
OHSAS 18001

TELEPHONE:	Country code (0082) + Area code.
STANDARD TIME:	GMT + 9 hours.
WEIGHTS & MEASURES:	Metric.
ELECTRICITY:	Voltage in Korea is 220 volts at 60 Hertz.
INOCULATIONS/VACCINATIONS:	Hepatitis A and Typhoid are recommended.
PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:	1st January – New Year’s Day, 3 days for the Korean New Year normally end of January beginning of February according to the Lunar Calendar, 1st March – Movement Day, 5th May Children’s Day, Buddhas Birthday – 8th day of the 4th month of the Lunar Calendar, 6th June - Memorial Day, 17th July – Constitution Day, 15th August – Liberation Day, 3 days for Chuseok –Harvest Festival, 15th day of 8th Lunar month, 3rd October – National Foundation Day, 9th October – Korean Alphabet Day, 25th December – Christmas Day.
OFFICE HOURS:	Official hours Monday to Friday 09.00 hrs to 18.00 hrs.
BANK HOURS:	Normally 09.00 hrs to 16.00 hrs.
EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS:	Fire and Ambulance 119 Police 112
BRITISH EMBASSY:	24 Sajong-daero 19 - gil Jeong-dong Jung-gu, Seoul Tel: +82 2-3210-5500
SOUTH KOREA EMBASSY IN LONDON:	60 Buckingham Gate Westminster, London SW1E 6AJ Tel: 0207 227 5500

Part 1 – Background Information on South Korea

Background

An independent kingdom for much of its long history, Korea was occupied by Japan beginning in 1905 following the Russo-Japanese War. In 1910, Tokyo formally annexed the entire Peninsula. Korea regained its independence following Japan's surrender to the US in 1945. After World War II, a democratic-based government (Republic of Korea, ROK) was set up in the southern half of the Korean Peninsula while a communist-style government was installed in the north (Democratic People's Republic of Korea, DPRK). During the Korean War (1950-53), US troops and UN forces fought alongside ROK soldiers to defend South Korea from a DPRK invasion supported by China and the Soviet Union. A 1953 armistice split the Peninsula along a demilitarized zone at about the 38th parallel. Park Chung-hee took over leadership of the country in a 1961 coup. During his regime, from 1961 to 1979, South Korea achieved rapid economic growth, with per capita income rising to roughly 17 times the level of North Korea.

South Korea held its first free presidential election under a revised democratic constitution in 1987, with former ROK Army general ROH Tae-woo winning a close race.

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Korea (South Korea) is a peninsula that shares borders to the north with the demilitarised zone (separating it from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea), to the east with the Sea of Japan (East Sea), to the south with the Korea Strait (separating it from Japan), and to the west with the Yellow Sea. There are many islands and bays in the Korea Strait, including the largest, the volcanic island of Jeju-do, which lies off the southwest coast and is also home to South Korea's highest mountain, Mount Halla, at 1950 metres. Most of the country consists of hills and mountains with the 30% of flat plain home to the majority of the population and cultivation. Most rivers rise in the mountains to the east, flowing west and south to the Yellow Sea. The Nakdong River flows into the Korea Strait near the southern port of Busan, Korea's second largest city after Seoul. The eastern coast is rocky and steep with mountains rising from the sea.

South Korea has a moderate climate with four seasons. The hottest part of the year is during the rainy season between July and August and the coldest is December to February. Occasional typhoons bring high winds and floods. Spring and autumn are mild and mainly dry.

Currency

The currency is the South Korean Won.

The coins in circulation are the ₩1, ₩5, ₩10, ₩50, ₩100, and the ₩500. The ₩1 and ₩5 are rarely used in circulation because the prices of goods have been rounded to the nearest 10 won.

The notes in circulation in South Korea are in denominations of ₩1000, ₩5,000, ₩10,000, and ₩50,000.

The government plans to scrap the use of coins by 2020 as the economy shifts from physical to digital currency.

Economy

After emerging from the 1950-53 war with North Korea, South Korea emerged as one of the 20th century's most remarkable economic success stories, becoming a developed, globally connected, high-technology society within decades. Beginning in the 1960s under President Park Chung-hee, the government promoted the import of raw materials and technology, encouraged saving and investment over consumption, kept wages low, and directed resources to export-oriented industries that remain important to the economy to this day. Growth surged under these policies, and frequently reached double-digits in the 1960s and 1970s. Growth gradually moderated in the 1990s as the economy matured.

In 2017, the election of President Moon Jae-in brought a surge in consumer confidence, in part, because of his successful efforts to increase wages and government spending.

Education

South Korea has a famously strong education system, and has delivered results well above.

From the age of five / six it is compulsory for children to attend primary school. This stage of schooling is provided

free of charge. Primary school lasts for 6 grades, and the curriculum is broad, covering basic skills, physical education and languages. From the third grade, English is taught an hour or two a week for all students.

Middle school begins when students are around 12 years old, and lasts for three years. Middle school is free of charge and covers both compulsory and elective subjects.

There are several different options for secondary education in South Korea. Students can choose to go to a school which specialises in foreign language, arts or music, as an for example. This level of education must be paid for by parents - some concessions for lower earning families. If students want to go to university, they must take the College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT).

South Korea has many international schools, mainly in the major cities, teaching in English and other major world languages, and often using either the International Baccalaureate syllabus, or other curriculum.

Language

Korean is the formal language of both North and South Korea, although different varieties of Korean are spoken in every nation-state, with the Hanguk dialect being the main dialect used in South Korea.

Religion

Korea is a country where all the world's major religions, Christianity, Buddhism, Confucianism and Islam, peacefully coexist with shamanism are represented.

Healthcare

As one of Asia's leading countries, South Korea has a high quality healthcare sector.

There is a national medical insurance scheme through which all Korean nationals receive healthcare. Expatriates are also required to join the scheme, regardless of whether or not their company is Korean owned. Foreign visitors and expatriates are also entitled to hold private medical insurance plans, tourists are exempt from the national medical insurance scheme and are required to personally meet any medical costs.

Although every care is taken to ensure that all information in the Abels Relocation Guide is accurate and up to date Abels cannot accept liability for any inaccuracy.

Part 2 – Korea Import Customs Regulations

To the best of our knowledge, the following is required to import household goods and personal effects into Korea.

Important Information

- You must be in Korea at the time when your household and personal effects arrive, and this must be within 6 months of your own arrival.
- All incoming shipments (excluding diplomatic) are subject to open inspection and will be cleared at a customs bonded warehouse
- Because of access restriction within Seoul's four main gates area, containers have to be de-vanned (including diplomatic) and trans-loaded to our partner company's van.

Documents required – Foreigners

- Copy of passport, and accompanying family members (photo, entry stamp and long term visa pages)
- Marriage certificate, employment letter
- Detailed inventory/packing list (in English)
- Alien registration card (ARC) (from Korean Immigration Office) which must be valid for at least 12 months

- Customs Declaration Form (our partner company will provide)
- Power of Attorney (our partner company will provide form)

Documents required – Returning Koreans

- Copy of passport, and accompanying family members
- Certificate of entry and exit for all family members
- Detailed inventory/packing list (in English)
- Certificate of family relationship
- Customs Declaration Form (our partner company will provide)
- Power of Attorney (our partner company will provide form)

Documents required – Diplomats

Copy of Passport

Detailed inventory/packing list (in English)

Application for duty exemption issued by Foreign Affairs Ministry of Korea

Diplomatic ID card (copy)

Power of Attorney (our partner company will provide form)

Dutiable Items

Household and personal effects can be imported duty free except the following items

- Any new furniture 22.5% - 54.8%
- New carpets 24.3%
- New electrical items and electrical items less than 6 months old – 20% of customs assessed value
- Jewels
- Upright piano (duty free if over 6 months of age) otherwise 20%
- Grand piano (duty free if over 6 months of age and being imported by a major diploma holder) otherwise 20%
- TV over 65" or a second TV over 29" to 49"
- Second or subsequent sets of golf clubs 8%
- Second or subsequent sets of skis 20%
- Air cleaner 20%

Motor Vehicles

Diplomats

- In addition to documents for household effects the following are required
- VIN (vehicle Identity Number)
- Year of Car
- Model/brand
- Engine number
- The vehicle cannot be sold or transferred to non-diplomatic individual for three years. however sale or transfer between diplomatic individuals is authorised

Non-Diplomatic

- All vehicles are subject to payment of duties
- Vehicles must have been owned and used for at least three months at origin
- Full technical specification is required and listed on Inventory
- In order to register and drive the vehicle in South Korea, the vehicle must pass the following Government tests
- Emission gas level test
- Noise and vibration test
- Type and model approval
- The following documents are required in addition to those for household effects
- Original title/registration certificate
- Copy of purchase receipt or invoice
- Insurance policy documents issued in Korea

Prohibited items

- Drugs
- Firearms
- Ammunition
- Pornographic material
- Imitation of bank notes and coins

Wine and alcohol

- Although one bottle of wine or spirit per adult is allowed duty free please do not include in consignment without notifying us
- Diplomats must check with their embassy for duty free allowance

Food

A small amount of foodstuffs is allowed, but please do not include without notifying us.

Pets (dogs, cats, etc.)

We work with a number of Pet Relocation companies who can help you import your pet to South Korea.

Please contact us if you wish to be put in contact with our partners.

Endangered Species

A CITES certificate is normally required. There is a worldwide ban on the movement of Ivory without a CITES Certificate. **Please note old pianos usually have ivory keys and a CITES certification will be required.**

For information on obtaining a CITES certificate please visit:

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/endangered-species-application-for-import-and-export-permit>