



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- ❑ Driving is on the left.
- ❑ Drivers are required to carry a valid driver's license, International Driving Permit, passport, vehicle documents and proof of insurance. US driver's licenses are good for up to one year.
- ❑ Roads are heavily congested.
- ❑ The Hong Kong Dollar (HKD) is the official currency.
- ❑ Visitors, including drivers, may be subject to "movement restrictions" that prevent them from leaving; status of movement restrictions may not be known until attempting to depart the city.
- ❑ Many crashes involve pedestrians, who are at high risk due to overcrowded sidewalks and narrow streets.
- ❑ Persons on foot and drivers from right-drive countries may be unfamiliar with traffic patterns. Use caution when crossing streets.
- ❑ An estimated 17% of serious and fatal crashes involve bicyclists.
- ❑ Legal blood alcohol limit is below 0.05 g/dl. Reported rates of drink driving are generally low, but increase during national holidays.
- ❑ There are an estimated 1.9 road deaths per 100,000 people in Hong Kong, compared to 2.2 in Sweden and 2.3 in the UK, placing Hong Kong among the countries with better road safety records.



Source: CIA Factbook

ROAD CULTURE

- **Drivers** are generally polite.
- **Many drivers** speed, particularly on highways.
- **Street racing** is a popular form of political protest. Many street races take place on narrow mountain roads.
- **Distracted** driving is common.
- **Taxi drivers** may use multiple mobile devices while behind the wheel.
- **Motorcycle** drivers frequently weave through traffic.
- **Many pedestrians** use phones or other mobile devices while walking or crossing streets.
- **There are** many bicycles and tricycles. Drivers may not adhere to traffic rules.
- **Drivers of** e-scooters and motorized skateboards often drive among pedestrians.

ROAD CONDITIONS

- **There are** 2,193 km (1,362 miles) of paved roads.
- **Hong Kong** (officially the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China/Hong Kong SAR or HKSAR) is densely populated with heavy traffic.
- **Hong Kong** is comprised of multiple islands, divided into suburbs and districts. The largest island is Lantau.
- **Driving is not** recommended. Roads are heavily congested. Routes and street networks may be confusing to visiting motorists.
- **There are** multiple toll roads, toll bridges and toll tunnels. Fees may be paid in local currency, by credit card, Autotoll automatic payment systems, or with Octopus transportation cards.
- **Not all** road surfaces are well-maintained. Ongoing road work may not be clearly marked.
- **Signs** and street lights may be blocked by foliage.
- **Many roads** are narrow and unmarked.
- **Drivers may** encounter checkpoints near border areas. Comply with all instructions given by authorities.
- **Pedestrian** infrastructure is well-developed but inadequate given the dense population. There are footpaths, marked crossings, railed pedestrian islands and pedestrian bridges in many areas, but congestion often forces those on foot into narrow, busy streets.
- **Sidewalk** pavements may be uneven. Steps connect some sections, particularly in older areas of the city.
- **Many people** travel by bicycle. There is a lack of infrastructure. Motorists generally disregard cyclists.
- **Alternative** transportation devices including motorized skateboards, e-scooters, e-bikes and hoverboards are increasing in popularity. Drivers are often unfamiliar with traffic laws.
- **Avoid all demonstrations.** Recent protests have included violence between participants and authorities.



Road Conditions, continued

- **The following roads** may present particular challenges to motorists:
 - » **Tai Tam Road** in eastern Hong Kong Island is an 8.3 km (5.1 mile) route connecting the central business district of Quarry Bay with Stanley and Repulse Bay on the south coast. The winding road is bordered on both sides by granite rock walls. This road has heavy visitor traffic, and is subject to landslides. Some sections, including the area over the Tai Tam Tuk Reservoir, are particularly dangerous and too narrow for more than one large vehicle at a time. This includes buses and trucks.
 - » **The intersection of Wan Chai and Sham Shui Po** is one of the most dangerous spots for pedestrians. Both roads are narrow. There are multiple open-air markets that force pedestrians into busy streets. There are frequent serious and fatal crashes involving persons on foot.
 - » **Tuen Mun Road** is a main expressway linking Tuen Mun and Tsuen Wan. The paved road is 19.4 km (12.1 miles) long, and is part of Hong Kong Route 9. Traffic jams and road congestion are common. There are high numbers of crashes, including buses. Sections have sharp bends and steep descents. There are many slip roads/exits. Many crashes are attributed to poor road design, narrow lanes and substandard building materials.

REGIONAL AND SEASONAL CONDITIONS

- **Hong Kong** is subject to monsoon rains, strong storms, typhoons, landslides, high heat and humidity.
- **Monsoons** and storms occur from May to October.
- **Typhoon season** is generally from April to October, and may be accompanied by flooding and landslides that affect road travel and transportation.
- **Small storms** can develop quickly into typhoons.
- **High temperatures** and humidity are common from May to October. Conditions can result in dehydration and heatstroke. Drivers should be alert to symptoms, which include confusion, seizures and loss of consciousness.
- **Be familiar with emergency procedures.** The Red Cross provides a website and free, downloadable emergency app: <http://www.redcross.org/get-help/prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies>

TRANSPORTATION

- **Transportation options** include cars, buses, minibuses, taxis, trams/streetscars, e-scooters, hoverboards, electric skateboards, bicycles, motorized tricycles, rideshares, trains and ferries.
- **Public transport** is overseen by the Transport Department of Hong Kong.
- **Public transportation** is extensive and generally regarded as safe and reliable.
- **The HKeMobility app** provides route planning, real-time arrival/departure information, fares and traffic conditions for all public transport.
- **Public transportation** and taxi fares can be paid with rechargeable Octopus Cards, the Octopus App, e-Wallets and local currency.
- **Buses are** modern and air-conditioned. The network includes single-deck and double-decker vehicles.
- **Route numbers** and destinations are displayed on the fronts of vehicles, and include English.

Maximum Speed Limits

Type of road	Maximum speed
Urban areas	50 to 70 kph (31 to 43 mph)
Rural roads	40 kph (25 mph)
Highways	80 to 90 kph (50 to 55 mph)

Always adjust speed according to signage, hazards and weather conditions.

Signs are generally pictorial and may not follow European Union conventions.

Stop	Restricted zone ahead	Layout of road lanes	Electronic toll road ahead	No jaywalking within bus park	Pedal bicycles only	Use caution	No jaywalking	Crosswalk



Transportation, continued

- **Buses** are operated by Kowloon Motor Bus, Citybus, New Lantao Bus and Long Win Bus.
- **Green minibuses** serve specific routes with fixed prices. Pay fare when boarding. All green minibuses accept Octopus cards. Exact change is required if paying by cash.
- **Red minibuses** have varying routes. Passengers can board or get off anywhere along the route. Fares are paid to driver when getting off. Change can usually be made for small denomination bills.
- **Minibus drivers** generally do not speak English. Carry a copy of destination written in Cantonese or in Chinese characters.
- **The tram/streetcar** system is widespread. Double-decker trams include routes through historic and tourist areas.
- **Exact change** is required if paying tram fares in cash. Board at the rear and pay at the front when disembarking.
- **All taxis** are regulated. Drivers must display identity cards on dashboards.
- **Taxis are** widely available, but may be less prevalent in very remote areas.
- **Taxis can** be hailed in most areas except where signs prohibit taxi flagging.
- **Taxi** drivers may not speak English. Carry a copy of destination written in Cantonese or in Chinese characters.
- **Taxis** generally operate on cash fares. Some accept credit cards, Octopus Cards and Alipay. Surcharges apply for tunnels and luggage.
- **Ask driver** to activate meter or agree on fare in advance of travel.
- **Taxi color** indicates areas served:
 - » Red: Most areas except Tung Chung Road on Lantau Island and the entire south side of Lantau Island.
 - » Green: New Territories
 - » Blue: Lantau Island
- **Rideshares** are available. Use only services that have a dispatch app providing vehicle description, license plate number and driver's name. Verify all information before entering vehicle.
- **The MTR** (Mass Transit Railway) system is extensive. There are nine lines. Trains cover all major districts.
- **MTR train** routes include Lo Wu Station and Lok Ma Chau Station on the border with mainland China.
- **MTR** also operates a light rail system linking Yuen Long

and Tuen Mun in the New Territories. The light rail system includes feeder buses between some routes.

- **Luggage restrictions** apply to MTR trains.
- **Multiple companies** operate regular ferry routes to Kowloon, Hong Kong Island and outlying islands. Vessels include standard ferries and fast ferries.
- **Water taxis** are air-conditioned vessels that provide service in Victoria Harbour.
- **Ferry collisions** and emergencies have occurred. Though boat services are regulated, passengers should verify that adequate life preservers and life boats are provided, or bring their own life preserver.
- **For safety**, avoid travel by water during inclement weather conditions.

TRAFFIC REGULATIONS

- **Drivers must** be at least 18 years of age, and a minimum of 21 to rent a car. Some rental agencies may have other restrictions.
- **Drivers aged** 70 and above may be required to undergo a medical exam before renting a car.
- **E-scooters**, e-bikes and any two-wheeled battery-powered transportation device are classified as motor vehicles, and are subject to traffic regulations.
- **Electric mobility devices** including e-scooters, electric hoverboards, e-bikes and electric skateboards are prohibited on roads, footpaths and cycling lanes unless signs indicate otherwise.
- **Laws** regarding e-scooters are under review. At this time, they may be used on some cycling paths where posted speed limits are under 25 kph (15 mph). E-scooter drivers must be at least 16 years old and pass a test to register their vehicle before driving.
- **Seat belt** use is compulsory for drivers and passengers.
- **Taxi passengers** are required by law to wear seat belts.
- **Children** under 15 years of age must be seated in a safety restraint appropriate to age and size. Teenagers weighing at least 80 pounds may use seat belts.
- **Helmet use** is mandatory for motorcyclists and passengers, as well as drivers of motorized tricycles. Helmets must meet national standards. For safety, fasten helmet.
- **Helmets are** not required for bicyclists. For safety, wear a fastened helmet.
- **Double white lines** between lanes indicate that overtaking is prohibited.
- **In some** areas, speed limits vary by road section.
- **Police may** issue on-the-spot fines.



Hong Kong International Airport

- » Hong Kong International Airport is located on Lantau Island.
- » The high-speed Airport Express train connects the airport to Kowloon and Hong Kong stations.
- » Taxi queues are located outside of the Arrivals Hall. Taxis are metered, and are color-coded for the district they serve: Green/New Territories; Blue/Lantau Island; Red/Kowloon.
- » Multiple buses connect the airport and city. These include “E” public buses, “N” night-route buses, and “S” shuttle buses that serve specific city locations and services.
- » Dedicated Airbus routes link the airport and city. There are more than 20 Airbus “A” routes. Bus stops are located outside of the Arrivals Hall on the right.
- » Chartered minibus coaches and limousines can be booked at counters in the Arrivals Hall.
- » Most major car rental agencies are represented at the airport.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND INCLUSIONS FOR MOBILITY CHALLENGED

- **Laws** prohibiting discrimination against persons with physical, sensory or other challenges are generally enforced.
- **Sidewalks** often lack curb ramps.
- **Many streets** may be crossed only via pedestrian bridges or underpasses that require navigating staircases.
- **Accessible taxis** are available for mobility challenged and elderly passengers.
- **Assistive technologies** for persons with vision challenges are unreliable.
- **Elevators** in public buildings may have restricted access.
- **The Hong Kong Tourism** board publishes an “Accessible Hong Kong” guide at: <https://www.discoverhongkong.com/eng/plan/traveller-info/accessibletravel.html>
- **The Hong Kong Transport Department** publishes “A Guide to Public Transport for People with Disabilities” at: https://www.td.gov.hk/en/public_services/services_for_the_people_with_disabilities/index.html
- **“Cyberable”** is an information guide for those with various physical or sensory challenges: <https://cyberable.swd.gov.hk/en/index.html>

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

- **Some responders** to emergency numbers may not speak English.
- **Pre-program** emergency numbers into your phone before departure.
 - » Police, ambulance and fire: 999
- **Response time** to emergency situations is generally good.
- **Ambulance services** and reliable medical treatment are widely available.
- **Beyond** central city locations, it may take first responders longer to reach a patient or to provide care.
- **Antibiotics** are regarded as a controlled substance. Some medications prescribed in other countries may be prohibited. Verify legal status of drugs prior to travel. Carry medications in original packaging, accompanied by a written doctor’s prescription.
- **US health** insurance may not be accepted.
- **Financial deposits** are required by hospitals and care providers prior to admission or treatment.
- **Many** hospitals and physicians accept credit cards.
- **If involved in a crash:**
 - » Call 999
 - » Switch off engine.
 - » Place warning triangle outside vehicle and activate hazard lights to alert other road users.
 - » Agree to alcohol breath test, which is required of all drivers involved in a crash.
 - » Take photos of scene and collect contact information of other driver(s) and any witnesses.



Emergency Information, continued

- » Contact rental car agency.
- » Remain at scene until police indicate you may leave.
- **If involved in a crash without injuries:**
 - » Take photos of crash scene and collect contact information of other driver(s) and any witnesses.
 - » Contact rental car agency and insurance company.



ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION FOR SAFE INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRAVEL (ASIRT)

ASIRT is a non-profit humanitarian organization established in memory of Aron Sobel, age 25, who was killed along with 22 other passengers in a Pamukkale Bus Company crash on the roads of Turkey.

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