Housing & Accommodation

ISC
Investor Support Center
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Seocho-gu, Seoul
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Fax: 02) 3497-1611
The Investor Support Center (ISC), launched by Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA), fully assists foreign investors and their families with their business and living in Korea. The ISC provides them with useful living information on a variety of issues, including housing, education, healthcare, transportation, tourism, etc.

In addition to insight on living conditions in Korea, the ISC offers a wide range of information for foreign corporate management. The Center refers foreign investors to professional consultants specializing in foreign investment.

Government officials also have been assigned to the Center to provide administrative services to expedite investment-related processes. The various administrative services including registration of incorporation, application of business registration, alien registration and visa matters are available at the ISC.

All the information provided by ISC can be obtained in English or Japanese by visiting or calling the Center at 1600-7119 or by going online to www.investkorea.org/ise.
1) Apartment (Flat)

Apartments are the modern housing of choice in Korea. Cost of living has skyrocketed along with urban development over the years, and most of the population has gravitated towards apartments, for reasons of economy and convenience, over stand-alone houses.

While Koreans tend to prefer the convenience of apartment complexes, many foreigners prefer two types of housing in Korea. For those who are single or not planning on a long-term stay, they tend to prefer the comfort and convenience of officetels and its fully furnished units. On the other hand, those with family tend to settle in private houses in quiet residential areas.

While the high cost of living is one of the reasons for which Koreans tend to stay away from private houses, convenience is another reason. An average Korean tends to prefer convenience over privacy. Thereby, most like the convenience that apartment complexes provide such as shopping plazas, subway stations and academies for their children.

Apartments are popular with the locals, but choosing to live in an apartment complex can come at a cost. First of all, the units are somewhat smaller than what one might be accustomed to abroad. Although new apartment complexes are replacing older, first-generation complexes from the 1970s and 1980s, privacy or lack thereof is a concern in these tightly-packed units. Finding a parking space after work hours can add to the stress of driving home in congested traffic, as most spaces are used on a first-come, first-serve basis.
2) Officetel / Studio Apartment

Mostly preferred by students and young working professionals, officetels and studio apartments are short-term residential solutions with contracts usually ranging from one to two years. Officetels, introduced in Korea in 1985 as a convenient solution for urban professionals, are buildings containing offices and residential units. The residential units’ sole purpose is to provide comfort and convenience to its residents. The most common amenities include underground parking along with stores, restaurants and cleaners (among others) on the ground level of the building. These units come fully furnished with washing machines and cooking stoves. For those who do not plan on a long-term stay, officetels offer residents the option not to deal with the hassle of buying and then selling newly purchased furniture at the end of their stay.

Studio apartments are referred to as “one room” or villa and these buildings are usually 4 to 5 stories high. A widespread residential choice for students and singles, these privately built buildings are affordable, yet have their drawbacks. First of all, in a congested city, land is scarce and that means waking up in the morning and opening the window to a brick wall or worst case scenario, your neighbor’s window. Although some sinchuk (new buildings) are officetel-like

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### Price range

Housing prices are measured in pyeong. One pyeong is equivalent to 3 square meter (36 square feet). The size of an average apartment is approximately 81 square meter (870 square feet) and the purchasing price ranges in the US$165,500~250,000 figure. The price range can differ depending on the area of choice and the quality of the apartment complex. The most preferred area of choice for Korean households is Gangnam, which refers to the district or part of the city south of the Hangang River. An area developed during the 1970s, it has more of a modern feel and is often considered prime real estate by Seoulites. Mokdong and Nowon, equipped with clusters of top schools and academies, are two neighborhoods that are also popular areas of choice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apartment (Flat)</th>
<th>In residential complex with 5 stories or higher</th>
<th>Janitor and manager on-duty</th>
<th>Shopping plazas and amenities</th>
<th>Public parking lot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Officetel</td>
<td>Office and apartment compound lay-out</td>
<td>Office or residential purpose</td>
<td>Janitor and manager on-duty</td>
<td>Public parking lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio Apartment</td>
<td>One-room lay-out</td>
<td>Gas supplied</td>
<td>Low building</td>
<td>No janitor or manager on-duty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
with furnishings, some of the older units during the monsoon season can be excruciating. Lack of sunlight and poor ventilation can mean waiting two days for laundry to dry. Washrooms need constant scrubbing and of course, you have to purchase all the necessary furnishing down to the cooking burner. For car owners out there, trying to find a parking space in alleyways is like trying to find your way out of an endless maze. Although it might seem like you’re saving money, the hassle of trying to rid the used furnishing and appliances at the end of your stay, and the nuisance that comes with living in these units, are probably not worth the trouble.

### 3) Single-family House

Residential houses are a dying breed in Korean cities. Traditional hanok style houses can be seen in places like Samcheong-dong and Gahoe-dong. Other common residential houses are two-stories high, and rooms are rented out by the live-in family. As a stand-alone structure on its own lot, a garden or yard is included in the property. These houses for foreigners can be commonly seen in Itaewon, Ichon-dong and Pyeongchang-dong. They are harder to find in densely populated areas in downtown or south of the river.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single-family House</th>
<th>(Individual House) Stand-alone structure on own lot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Garden or yard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gas supplied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4) Multi-family House

Multi-family houses are small-sized apartments usually 5 stories or less and houses at least two families. The rent is much lower than houses or apartments. However, the downside to multi-family houses is the absence of on-duty janitors or managers. This means that the tenant has to make a phone call to the landlord to have a problem resolved. Although not a huge deal, it is inconvenient when you have to get in touch with the landlord and the waiting period can be a bit of a hassle. Parking is not an issue as at least one parking space is set aside for each unit. Extra cost is incurred for additional parking spaces.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multi-family House</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small-sized apartments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No janitor or manager on-duty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public parking lot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The foreign population in Seoul has been growing steadily over the years and the visible change is expected to continue with Seoul City’s plans for attracting more foreign investment. In the past, expatriate housing areas were limited to a few neighborhoods around foreign embassies. Expatriate homes in these areas have traditionally featured spacious living rooms, ample parking, and space for entertaining and attractive views.

Now, residential areas for foreigners are becoming ever more diverse. Although the foreign population in Seoul is not as concentrated in certain areas as in the past, popular neighborhoods are those which offer a high-quality educational environment, comfortable living and easy access to business districts and workplaces. Many foreigners still prefer predominantly expatriate neighborhoods.
are western restaurants in other neighborhoods, Itaewon’s authenticity is rarely duplicated. Some of the authentic ethnic restaurants are as good as they get. For example, Pakistani, Indian, Egyptian and Middle Eastern cuisine are outstanding. These Asian and Middle Eastern eateries serve lamb and beef prepared according to strict Halal standards.

Due to its close proximity to the military bases, English is widely spoken and various entertainment and eateries are well-established. The number of GI’s in the area is not as high as one might expect, and a wide range of nationalities represented by English teachers, immigrant workers and tourists are commonly seen frequenting the local establishments. It’s also one of the preferred destinations for shoppers in search of various items at discounted prices.

2) Hannam-dong

Located near Itaewon, Hannam-dong has a significant number of foreign diplomatic missions. The area is divided into UN Village and the ordinary residential district. Many embassy official residences as well as exotic restaurants are located here. Villas or big western-style houses can be seen in this quiet and exclusive area. As most commercial businesses or cultural facilities are located to the west in Itaewon, Hannam-dong does not have much to offer in that field.

3) Ichon-dong

It is close to Itaewon and Hannam-dong and is also the oldest foreigner’s town in Seoul. The area with its small shops and parks is predominantly Japanese with an approximate population of 5,000. The official name of the district is Ichon 1-dong, but is commonly referred to as Dongbu Ichon-dong. It was once home to Japanese
diplomats and employees of trading companies, but has steadily grown to include a variety of residents from all walks of life since 1965, when diplomatic relations between the two countries resumed. The most distinguishing traits of the area are the Japanese-style restaurants, bars and signboards of various businesses in Japanese. Authentic Japanese restaurants and noodle houses can be found in the area.

4) Seodaemun-gu

Widely recognized as an entertainment district, the area is always alive with a large college population from universities and schools located in the vicinity. Seodaemun-gu is located in the northwest of Seoul and is home to Yonsei, Hongik, Sogang and Ewha Woman's Universities. One-room studios and officetels are a common sight. These types of housing are popular with students, young urban professionals and English teachers. Convenient public transportation and bus routes make it easy for residents of the area to travel around the city. The district is also known for its mountains and international schools including Seoul Foreign School and Chinese School, indicating a sizeable international population in the area.

5) Samsung-dong/ Yeoksam-dong

The most modern and newly developed parts of Seoul are located south of the Hangang River in Gangnam-gu. As a business hub of Seoul, shopping and transportation in the area are convenient. Gangnam is also a popular destination for Seoumites with facilities such as Korea International Trade Association (KITA), COEX, and a huge business district in Gangnam-dong. Also known as the most affluent district in Seoul, it is very modern with pricey high-rise buildings and trendy fashion districts. The entire district is relatively new since its development started during the 1970s with the population boom that came with industrialization and urbanization in the city. Samsung and Yeoksam are areas of concentration for major businesses, with officetel buildings suitable for young urban professionals and singles.

6) Banpo-dong

Of the many neighborhoods in the district, one of the more interesting neighborhoods is Seorae Village in Banpo-dong. A French village with a population of 560, the village makes up approximately 40% of the entire French population in Korea. The residents were mostly
made up of employees of French corporations and the village began to take shape in 1985 with the move of L’Ecole Francaise de Seoul to the area. As the only French International school in the city, most of the bakeries, wine shops and families moved with the school. The village is the site of “Montmartre Park,” often the site of public events for foreigners. The area has a distinct French flavor that’s not found elsewhere in the city.

7) Pyeongchang-dong/ Seongbuk-dong

Pyeongchang-dong and Seongbuk-dong are affluent neighborhoods comprised mostly of middle- to upper-class families. Expensive villas and luxury houses line the hilly neighborhoods surrounded by mountains with a scenic view overlooking the city. The area boasts a quiet and serene atmosphere otherwise hard to find in a crowded city like Seoul.

Seongbuk-dong is widely known for its close proximity to the Blue House, the President’s residence. Cultural facilities such as art centers and galleries can be seen, but commercial businesses are hard to find. Private vehicles are a must as public transportation is limited to a few bus routes.
Renting a House

Types of Payment

1) Jeonse (Key Money Deposit)

Jeonse or key money deposit is a Korean-style housing rental system. Instead of paying a monthly rental fee to the landlord, a large lump sum payment is deposited into the landlord’s bank account for the duration of the contract. By law, the minimum period for Jeonse contracts is two years. Then the amount is returned to the renter at the end of the contract period.

Although coming up with the large amount can be a problem for some, Jeonse is the most advantageous for renters financially since monthly payments are not required and the deposited sum is wholly returned at the end of the contract. However, the renter should be careful about the deposit as unforeseen circumstances can lead to the loss of the deposit.

One of the first steps you must take is to avoid renting a house with unpaid loans. It is essential that you check the building’s registry before you sign.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum Amount Retrivable by Renters [Unit won]</th>
<th>Deposit Sum</th>
<th>Amount Retractable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seoul City and Surrounding Areas</td>
<td>Below 40,000,000</td>
<td>16,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Regional Cities</td>
<td>Below 35,000,000</td>
<td>14,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other cities/towns</td>
<td>Below 30,000,000</td>
<td>12,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2) Wolse (Monthly payment + deposit)

Wolse requires the renter to deposit a fixed amount of money with the landlord. The minimum amount is 5 million won (approximately US $5,500) and monthly rent is paid on a designated date of each month. For whatever reason, if the renter fails to make the monthly payment, the landlord can deduct the amount from the key money deposit. The deposit is returned at the end of the contract. Renters have the option of drolling out more on the deposit sum as increased deposit amount results in lower monthly rent. For an increase of 5 million won in deposit, 50,000 won or (US $55) is
deducted from the monthly rent amount. For example, a 5 million won deposit at 500,000 won monthly rent can be negotiated to 10 million won deposit at 400,000 won monthly rent. Another method of Wolse payment requires the renter to pay all monthly payments in advance after signing a contract. To start, 10 percent of the total monthly payment amount should be paid upon signing a contract and the remaining amount paid after the move-in date.

3) Galse

Galse or advanced payment method is similar to the Wolse system. However, instead of making monthly payments, Galse system requires renters to pay one year’s monthly rent sum in advance. In addition to the yearly rent paid in advance, a 10% of the lump sum payment amount is deposited with the landlord. The duration of the contract is for a year or two. The terms of contract are negotiable with the landlord.

TIP BOX

Galse is a lease payment system specifically made with foreigners in mind. It is important to check the contract papers for details specific to payment and refund. For those who decide on a move before the completion of the contract, return of the Galse amount can come into question. This all depends on what is stated in your contract, therefore, it is imperative that you examine your contract carefully before signing a Galse contract.

When signing a monthly lease contract, it is recommended that you sign a Wolse contract instead of Galse. The monthly payment method involves less risk compared to the lump sum payment method of Galse.

* KOTRA, in conjunction with Seoul Guarantee Insurance, is working on guarantee insurance packages for those leasing properties. For inquiries, call ISC: 1600-7119.

Signing the Lease

Remember to take the proper steps before signing the dotted line.

1) Check a registry (Court of Justice Registry Office): ask the realtor to print it on the spot.
2) Discuss details, write a contract and make sure all the details are identical on all three copies. Remember that you are liable for the contents of the contract that you sign. Take your time.
3) Pay deposit
4) Check the registry again before paying the balance on move-in day.
5) Check and make a note of the number of keys, remotes you have received and any preexisting damages in the unit.
6) Confirm fixed date; the date recognized by the Court of Justice Registry Office as the date a lease contract was signed. (competent registry office)

It is important to get all the details ironed out before you can safely consider your move finalized. First, before you sign a lease contract, you must be careful in detailing all particularities such as the method of payment, terms and conditions, lease sum, deposit sum, method of payment, lease period and move-in.
date. Upon signing the contract, make the deposit into your landlord’s account and obtain a receipt. The landlord, tenant, witness and in most cases a realtor get a copy. Take a copy of your alien registration card and an original copy of the lease contract to a jurisdiction office and get a confirmed date. Taking this step is important as it protects the tenant from unforeseen damages. Finally, take good care of the registration document in a safe place.

Upon finalizing all the necessary steps, it is important to report the move at the local immigration office. One must report the move within 14 days of moving in with a passport and an alien registration card. This is a rather simple procedure and does not take long to process. Your new address will be printed on the back of your alien registration card.

**Important Terms**

- **Jeonge (전세):** Lump sum deposit method in which a large sum of money is deposited into the landlord’s account after the signing of the lease contract. The entire sum is returned to the renter at the end of the contract.
- **Wolse (월세):** A monthly rental system in which a deposit agreed upon by the landlord and the renter is deposited and a fixed monthly rent is paid on a specified date of each month. The deposited sum is returned in full at the end of the contract.
- **Galse (갈세):** Similar to Wolse, a lump sum payment of year’s rent is paid in advance along with a 10% of lump sum deposited with the landlord.
RENTING HOUSE

- Imdae (임대): Lease
- Bojeunggeum (보조금): Key deposit money
- Byeonjaegum (변제금): Tender
- Budongsan (부동산): Real estate
- Gyeyak (계약): Contract (agreement)
- Deunggi (등기): Title
- Soyu (소유): Possession
- Gyeyak Jogun (계약조건): Condition
- Jeodang (저당): Mortgage
- Jutaek yungia (주택용지): Home loan

TIP BOX

Checklist for Moving Day

On the day of the move, things are going to get hectic and with a lot happening, you need to remember a few things.

1) Having paid 10% of the deposit money on the signing day, you’ll deposit the rest of the amount on the day of the move-in. This won’t be a problem as it can be done easily at an ATM machine or through Internet banking. However, you should ask your realtor in advance and prepare all necessary transaction fees in cash. In some cases, the landlord will require you to pay the first and last month’s rent and a month of maintenance fees in advance. Realtors will also ask for their commission on this date and don’t forget gratuities for the movers. Try to figure out the total sum in advance and prepare the amount in cash.

2) When depositing the remaining sum of your deposit money, you need to take into account weekends and holidays in Korea. If a bank is closed, the entire situation can get a little messy. Things can get a little messier if you have a set limit on withdrawal amount per day. If the bank is closed, you can run into obvious problems and might even end up in front of the ATM for a while trying to withdraw a sizeable amount in 10,000 won bills. Take this into account and try to set your move-in date on a day which will not cause any banking problems.

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### Real Estate Agencies for Foreigners

**SEOUl**

**Gangnam-gu**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Tel/ Fax/ Mobile</th>
<th>Website/ E-mail</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elite Real Estate</td>
<td>Song Kyu-sang</td>
<td>T: 02-540-3700 F: 02-511-9094 M: 011-9675-8249</td>
<td><a href="http://www.114elite.co.kr">www.114elite.co.kr</a> <a href="mailto:kssongkr@empal.com">kssongkr@empal.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JH Realty Service</td>
<td>John, Kim</td>
<td>T: 02-558-4202 F: 02-558-4203 M: 016-367-8354</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Star Realty</td>
<td>Kim Tae-hyun</td>
<td>T: 02-3448-5651 F: 02-3448-5654 M: 010-6273-7039</td>
<td><a href="http://www.newstarrealty.com">www.newstarrealty.com</a> <a href="mailto:coo@newstarusa.co.kr">coo@newstarusa.co.kr</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realty TMK Co., Ltd.</td>
<td>Eric Kim</td>
<td>T: 02-538-7550 F: 02-538-4754 M: 011-459-1470</td>
<td><a href="http://www.realtymtk.com">www.realtymtk.com</a> <a href="mailto:tmk@realtymtk.com">tmk@realtymtk.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave’s Realty</td>
<td>David Kim</td>
<td>T: 02-586-4400 F: 02-586-4534 M: 011-336-0918</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lulupio@dreamwiz.com">lulupio@dreamwiz.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea Realty</td>
<td>Song Byung-hun</td>
<td>T: 02-534-4066 F: 02-592-3211 M: 019-312-8241</td>
<td><a href="http://www.korea-realty.com">www.korea-realty.com</a> <a href="mailto:koreaehy@craeal-realty.com">koreaehy@craeal-realty.com</a></td>
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**Gangdong-gu**

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<th>Contact</th>
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<th>Website/ E-mail</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hana Realty Consulting</td>
<td>Kim Hoon</td>
<td>T: 02-448-2221 F: 02-427-6688 M: 011-330-2236</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kh-seoul@dsam.net">kh-seoul@dsam.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.S. Lee</td>
<td>Lee Jik-sun</td>
<td>T: 02-470-8946 F: 02-472-4455 M: 011-270-4810</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jiksun@korea.com">jiksun@korea.com</a></td>
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**Songpa-gu**

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<th>Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dream Real Estate Office</td>
<td>Kim Mong-suk</td>
<td>T: 02-402-0999 F: 02-402-0365 M: 011-9881-5376</td>
<td><a href="mailto:poongsukim@hanmail.net">poongsukim@hanmail.net</a></td>
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### Yeongdeungpo-gu

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<th>Agency</th>
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<th>Tel/ Fax/ Mobile</th>
<th>Website/ E-mail</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Richensia Realty     | Um Ock-soo  | T: 02-784-5655  
 F: 02-2642-4543  
 M: 010-4754-5655 | richensiarealty@yahoo.co.kr |

### Yongsan-gu

<table>
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<th>Agency</th>
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</table>
| Green Real Estate Consulting | David Chung        | T: 02-749-8070  
 F: 02-749-9060  
 M: 017-328-3730 | www.greenrealestate.co.kr  
green70@hanafos.com |
| Dreamland Consulting         | Kang Shin-young    | T: 02-794-0811  
 F: 02-794-9876  
 M: 011-660-0811 | www.seoulife.com  
webmaster@seoulife.com |
| Global Midas Realty          | Lee Keun-sik       | T: 02-792-7890  
 F: 02-749-2115  
 M: 011-250-1279 | www.korealty.com  
ks@korealty.com |
| International Real Estate    | Lee Youn-kyun      | T: 02-792-7979  
 F: 02-790-8002  
 M: 010-9118-1225 | reality8949net@yahoo.co.kr |
| Consulting                   |                    |                         |                                        |
| Reamko Realty               | Yoo Young-hwa      | T: 02-749-9959  
 F: 02-749-7959  
 M: 011-9715-6770 | www.reamko.co.kr  
europe@daum.net |

### Jungang-gu

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
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</tr>
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</table>
| Prima Realty Office | Jona Lee  | T: 02-2207-5400  
 F: 02-2207-2211 | jonalee@korea.com |

### BUSAN Yeunje-gu

<table>
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<th>Tel/ Fax/ Mobile</th>
<th>Website/ E-mail</th>
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</table>
| A-Ram Real Estate Office    | Sohn Ok-sun  | T: 051-507-0049  
 F: 051-507-0049  
 M: 016-570-2375 | river225@hanmail.net |
## Purchasing a House

1) Checklist for Purchasing a House

### 1. Location

The most important housing factor, you should research and decide which area you want to settle in. Transportation to and from work and overall atmosphere and attractions in the neighborhood should be taken into account.

### 2. Market

Once you narrow your decision down to a couple of neighborhoods, you need to look into the average Jeonse, Wolse rates in the respective neighborhoods. A good place to start is the

### TIP BOX

“How much commission do I pay my realtor?”

In the case of signing a lease or purchasing a contract, you have to pay a commission rate. Commission is collected from both landlord and tenant. The rate is calculated by multiplying the transaction amount and the commission rate.

#### 1. General Residences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Transaction Amount</th>
<th>Rate (%)</th>
<th>Limit</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 50 million</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 50 million, less</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than 200 million</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transaction amount multiplied by rate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 2. Luxury Residences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Transaction Amount</th>
<th>Rate (%)</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sale/Exchange</td>
<td>Sale of residence at more than 600 million</td>
<td>To be determined with statutory commission limit of 0.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lease and transactions other than sale/exchange</td>
<td>Lease of residence at more than 300 million</td>
<td>To be determined with statutory commission limit of 0.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3. Buildings other than residences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Transaction Amount</th>
<th>Rate (%)</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sale/Exchange/Lease</td>
<td>No set standards</td>
<td></td>
<td>Set by the agent within statutory commission limit of 0.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Internet. Although most of the rates listed on websites are lower than actual rates, it’s a good place to start to get an idea of a ballpark figure you’re willing to pay.

3. Best time to visit

It’s in your best interest to visit and thoroughly check the property you’re looking to purchase. The best time to visit is during the morning hours as a vast majority of prospective purchasers visit during the afternoon. For a detailed and thorough tour from a realtor, it’s best to visit during their slow hours. Realtors in Korea in most cases will not pay you their full undivided attention as they figure you likely won’t make the purchase on your first visit. If you give off the impression that you’re eager to make the purchase, you just might get what Koreans like to refer to as, “full service.”

4. Courtesy & Respect

Korea is a country high on Confucian values where folks are still keen on traditional values such as respect towards elders and filial piety. Although not imperative, it just might help your transition run a little more smoothly if you approach your realtor with courtesy and respect.

2) Procedure

1. Potential buyer needs to prepare all necessary documents before entering the country. The first and most important are proof of residency abroad and address confirmation.

2. All capitals for real estate investment must be registered at a foreign exchange bank. Necessary documents are: sales contract, surveying report, public land evaluation confirmation and property register.

3. Make a payment.

4. After your acquisition, the property must be reported to the land registration department of the city within 60 days.

5. Apply for a registration number. Non-resident individuals must go to the immigration office with their Land Acquisition Certificate and a copy of their passport. Residing foreigners do not have to worry about reporting procedure of non-residents.

6. Within 60 days of signing the contract, transfer of ownership must be reported to the district office. Your alien registration card, address certification, registration certificate, register application, sales contract, and land register papers are needed.
Accommodations

1) Serviced Residences

Serviced Residences are available for those looking for both short and long-term stay in Korea. The fully furnished units are equivalent to nice apartment units, equipped with all the necessary amenities and public facilities including swimming pool, fitness center, restaurant and game room. The most appealing feature is the hotel-like service and affordable rates that start at 100,000 won per night, with discounts available depending on length of stay.

These serviced residences are similar to condominiums in North America. Furthermore, since these residences are geared towards foreigners, they are usually located near tourist attractions or key business areas in the city.

2) Guest Houses

For those interested in staying at a guesthouse at an affordable rate or at a traditional hanok (한옥) guesthouse, there are a few in Seoul as well as other cities. It’s a good way to meet visitors from other countries and to learn about Korean culture and food. Since these guesthouses are located near the downtown area of Seoul, popular tourist destinations are often a walking distance away. The traditional-style houses feature ondol (floor-heated) rooms with floor mats in place of beds. The houses are built around a small courtyard at the center.
of the gated property. Wooden front porches are in place to keep the house cool during the humid Korean summers. To accommodate the needs of visitors, Internet access, modern washrooms complete with shower stalls and cable televisions are available.

3) Hotels

Hotels in Korea are classified under five sections: super deluxe, deluxe, first class, second class and third class. Hotel ratings are identified by Mugunghwa or Rose of Sharon. Keep in mind that the Korean rating may not correspond to Western ratings.

Rooms are available with Western single and double beds and traditional Korean ondol (floor heated) rooms. The traditional rooms come with floor mats for guests to sleep on and are preferred by some of the older generations in Korea who prefer the heated floors to beds.

Hotels add a 10% VAT and 10% sales charge.

4) Motels

Motels are abundant and affordable in Korea. Although service is not up to par with hotels, the clean interior and affordable rates make it a wise choice for those looking for a place to stay for a short period of time. Trying to converse in English may be a bit difficult as most motels do not have English-speaking staff. An average rate for a motel is 40,000~50,000 won per night in Seoul.
An increasing number of foreigners are coming to Korea. However, the increased number of people coming for both short-term and long-term stays, are leasing housing through unfamiliar Jeonse, Wolse and Galse systems. To further complicate things, having to look for housing in a favorable neighborhood through a realtor proficient in English can be harder than one might think. Another growing concern is the continual rise in rent in Korea along with the growing housing demands. We all know that serviced residences are much more convenient and comfortable for both long and short-term stays. However, what concerns most is the high rate in comparison to what renters might pay on a monthly or yearly basis. To simplify things, KOTRA has taken steps to provide quality residence at an affordable rate. When you reserve a room through KOTRA Investor Support Center, you can receive 40~50% discount.

1) Select a serviced residence from the list and visit the homepage to check for details.

2) Contact the Investor Support Center at 1600-7119 to reserve a room at a serviced residence of your choice.

3) Investor Support Center will reserve and confirm reservation with the serviced residence.

4) Check-in and enjoy your stay in Korea!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gangbuk Area</th>
<th>Gangnam Area</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fraser Suites Serviced Residences</td>
<td>seoul.fraserhospitality.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyundai Residence</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hyundalair.com">www.hyundalair.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Han Suites</td>
<td>somersetpalace.co.kr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.dormy.co.kr">www.dormy.co.kr</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay7</td>
<td><a href="http://www.stay7.com">www.stay7.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coatel</td>
<td><a href="http://www.coatel.co.kr">www.coatel.co.kr</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M Cheerville</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mcheerville.com">www.mcheerville.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provista</td>
<td><a href="http://www.provista.co.kr">www.provista.co.kr</a></td>
</tr>
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<td>Seoul Residence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casaville</td>
<td><a href="http://www.casaville.co.kr">www.casaville.co.kr</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakwood Premier</td>
<td><a href="http://www.oakwoodseoul.com">www.oakwoodseoul.com</a></td>
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Moving companies and prices vary. Some of the more established companies take care of the entire moving process by packaging everything in empty boxes and unloading and unpacking all your belongings in your new place. This complete relocation service will obviously cost you a little more. A five ton truck will set you back 450,000~500,000 won. These companies also offer storage spaces. The other option is calling up your neighborhood movers.

If you have relatively few belongings, you can go with the standard relocation service. A mover typically shows up with his truck, and you can help the mover with loading and unloading. This method might require physical labor, but if you’re single and don’t have a lot of furniture, it’s not a bad choice. A five-ton truck costs approximately 350,000 won.

The last option is as best as they come. Larger number of movers will unpack everything and also clean your new place. This means a speedier and tidier method that’s convenient for the mover. Average cost for this type of service is 900,000~1,300,000 won.

1) Moving Companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Tel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yongsan-gu</td>
<td>Isa World Itaewon</td>
<td>02-790-3774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allied Pickfords</td>
<td>02-796-5961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crown Relocation</td>
<td>02-796-5717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seodaemun-gu</td>
<td>Sunwoo Express</td>
<td>080-365-0424</td>
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<td>Seodaemun Express</td>
<td>02-3141-2400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gangnam-gu</td>
<td>Gana Complete Relocation Service</td>
<td>080-402-1212</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Daehan Express</td>
<td>02-514-2424</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seocho-gu</td>
<td>Hyoseong Isa</td>
<td>080-240-2455</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Isa Theme Park</td>
<td>02-573-3651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asian Tigers Transpack International</td>
<td>02-3489-2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asian Relocation Management Korea</td>
<td>02-598-9705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pyeongchang-dong</td>
<td>Good Morning Isa Service</td>
<td>02-6246-7402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seongda Freight</td>
<td>02-379-9000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sinyeong-dong/</td>
<td>Mijlga Is a</td>
<td>02-396-9999</td>
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<td>Myeongseong Express</td>
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<td>Seongbuk-dong</td>
<td>Yujin Isa</td>
<td>080-926-2404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goryeo Isa Center</td>
<td>02-6246-4595</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guidance
2) Water

Korea’s tap water has been tested and proven to be safe for drinking. A drinking water examination facility and an authorized virus examination institution maintain and supply safe purified water. Water fees can differ depending on the amount and purpose of use. For example, households and offices have different rates.

There are various ways of paying your bills. The most convenient method is through automated deposit. An amount specified on the bill will be taken from the designated bank account.

You can also deposit the specified sum through an automated bank machine or at a bank teller.

For more information, dial 121 or visit http://water.seoul.go.kr/index.html

3) Gas

Most Korean homes use gas for energy. Almost all homes in Korea have ondol heating system (floor-heating) using gas. Furthermore, most homes require gas stoves for cooking.

The use of natural gas is deemed safe since it’s lighter than air and it diffuses easily into air when leakage occurs. It is also convenient since it is supplied through pipelines and hence does not require extra storage space. It is also economical since it’s abundant and is not costly to produce.

All homes and units in Korea have a gas meter where you can check the amount of gas being used on a regular basis.

Seoul City Gas
www.seoulgas.co.kr
(02) 810-8000, (02) 3665-1849

4) Phone

You can apply for installation with a local telephone office by dialing 100 (ext.4) and fax a copy of your passport, alien registration card and bank account information. Initial installation fee is 60,000 won + minimum monthly fee of 5,200 won.

You can keep the same number if you move within the same KT telephone office district. However, you must change your number if you move outside the district.

Calls made from land line to mobile phones:
- Regular hours (8:00-21:00):
  10 seconds/14.50 won
- Discount hours (21:00-24:00 & 6:00-8:00):
  10 seconds/13.67 won
- Special discount hours (00:00-6:00):
  10 seconds/12.87 won

Calls made from land line to land line:
- Local: 180 seconds/39 won
  (Discount rate): 258 seconds/39 won (30%)
- Neighboring city/Outside 30 km radius: 180 seconds/39 won
  (Discount rate): 200 seconds/39 won
  (Special discount rate): 258 seconds/39 won
- Outside 31 km radius: 10 seconds/14.5 won
  (Discount rate): 10 seconds/13.1 won
  (Special discount rate): 10 seconds/10.2 won

5) Cable TV

Korea offers three basic broadcast channels, KBS, MBC and SBS. These channels are basic channels available without additional installation of the cable TV.

Cable channels are affordable with basic cable package and complete cable package. Cable channels offer a lot of programs in English with Korean subtitles. Some movie channels, Discovery channel and
History channel as well as sports channels offer western programs. Wide range of cable packages are available with a variety of contents and prices. The average price range starts from 7,000 won to 30,000 won per month. Those interested in signing a longer contract are offered a special offer such as a free service for first two to three months and lower monthly fees.

Installation fees 40,000-60,000 won.
Gangnam-gu (02) 518-3000
Seocho-gu (02) 525-5000
Yongsan-gu 1600-8896
Mapo-gu (02) 707-1515
Seocho-gu (02) 365-0101
Yeondeungpo-gu (02) 678-4051

6) Forwarding postal mail
Go to your district post office and submit an application form. Mail will be forwarded to your new address for three months and will be returned to the sender after that time.

TIP BOX

“Why does it cost more to move on certain days?”
It is customary for movers to charge 20% more on the 9, 10, 19, 20, 29, and 30th day of each month on the lunar calendar. These days are called Son Eopneun Nal (or days without harm). Traditionally, people believe that ghosts or evil spirits do not lurk on these days and these days were popular choices for moving days.

If Koreans couldn’t set their move-in dates on one of those six days, they would move in whatever they could on those days and move in the rest of the following day. Though it sounds strange, this along with some of the other traditions were carried out by Koreans long ago and some still do carry it out, it’s not necessarily because they believe in the evil spirits, but perhaps because they don’t want to take their chances and jinx their move into a new place. Although most Koreans nowadays do not believe in the myth, who knows? Do you really think it’s wise to take your chances with the evil spirit?