

Settling in -- Life in Hong Kong

A. General Information

Living Cost

The cost of meals, books, and incidental personal expenses varies according to individual preferences. HK\$100-150 (US\$12.8-19) per day for meals can be sufficient, but the actual cost varies substantially depending on choices.

Personal miscellaneous expenses, including local transportation, laundry, sundries and entertainment, cost the average student about HK\$6,100-11,400 (approx. US\$784-1,461) per month.

Estimated Living Expenses per month:

	HK\$
Accommodation	1,200 – 4,000
Food	3,000 – 4,500
Public Transport	400
Laundry	200
Photocopy and Stationery	300
Miscellaneous Expenses	1000
Total:	6,100 - 11,400 (approx. US\$784-1,461)

Money Matters

The Hong Kong currency (HK\$) is linked to the US Dollar (US\$) at the rate of approximately US\$1=HK\$7.78. Notes are in denominations of \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100, \$500, \$1,000. Coins are in \$1, \$2, \$5, \$10 and 10, 20 and 50 cents. Traveller's cheques and foreign currencies can be exchanged at banks, money changers and major outlets. Credit cards are accepted at banks, large restaurants and department stores.



Banking

Normally, banking hours are 9:00am to 5:00pm (Monday to Friday) and 9:00am to noon on Saturdays. Twenty-four-hour Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) are widely available, especially in large shopping centres. Visa and Mastercard holders can access most ATMs. American Express Cardholders can obtain cash at Jetco ATMs.

Postage

The Hong Kong Post Office (Head Office) is located at Connaught Place, Central, near the Star Ferry Concourse on Hong Kong Island. However, there are also branches located in different areas. Letters and postcards can be mailed at post offices or at green mailboxes located on street corners. You may purchase stamps at all Post Offices and 7-Eleven stores (a 24-hour convenience shop).

The nearest post office to PolyU is the **International Mail Centre**:

Address:	80 Salisbury Road, Kowloon
Tel:	2356 2500
Office Hour:	Monday - Friday: 9:30am to 5:00pm
	Saturday: 9:30am to 1:00pm
	Sunday and public holiday: closed

Food

Different kinds of cuisines are provided by the plentiful and excellent restaurants of Hong Kong, which offer as much variety in Chinese food as Western food. For anyone interested in learning more about Hong Kong's cuisines or specific restaurants, many excellent guides can be found in the local bookstores and the Hong Kong Tourism Board. (Please refer to the section on "Suggested Reading" for some tips.) Cost of food varies according to choice.

Telephone Calls

Local calls are free, except through public phone booths, which charge HK\$1 per 5 minutes. You may use stored-value phone cards to make both local and international calls. Phone cards can be bought at 7-Eleven stores or at Circle-K shops, etc.

Electricity

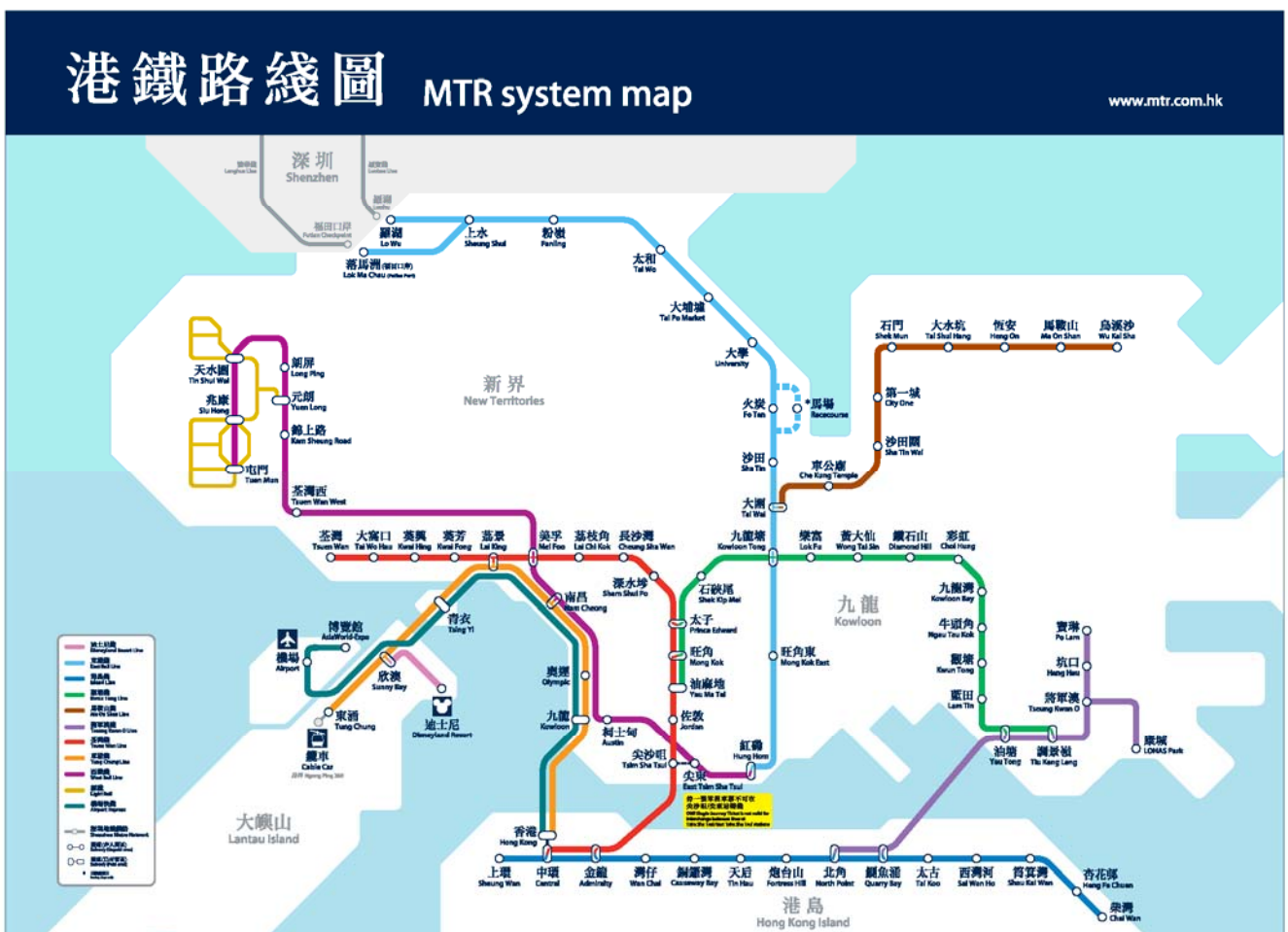
The voltage here is 200/220 volts, 50 cycle. You are recommended to bring an adapter for electrical appliances.

B. Transportation

Public transport in Hong Kong is generally extensive, efficient, and economical but traffic can be highly congested during peak periods. Major modes of transport:

The Mass Transit Railway (MTR) covers 80 stations from the heart of Central and Causeway Bay to the New Territories and Lantau Island. It also provides through train services to major cities across Mainland China. MTR trains operate from 5:30am or 6:00am to 1:00am.

Homepage: <http://www.mtr.com.hk>



Buses cover most parts of the territory. Most are double-deckers with air-conditioning and run from 6:00am till midnight. Overnight buses are also available. You may check the routes, schedules and fares from the websites of the three major bus companies:



Homepage:

Kowloon Motor Bus (KMB)

<http://www.kmb.com.hk>

New World First Bus

<http://www.nwfb.com.hk>

City Bus

<http://www.citybus.com.hk>



Taxis are probably the most convenient way to get around the territory. They are “red” in color both in Kowloon and on Hong Kong Island, “green” in the New Territories and “blue” on Lantau Island.

	<i>Fare</i>
<i>First 2 kilometres or any part thereof</i>	<i>HK\$18</i>
<i>Every subsequent 200 metres or part thereof /</i>	
<i>Every period of 1 minute waiting time or part thereof</i>	
<i>For meter fare below HK\$70.5</i>	<i>HK\$1.5</i>
<i>For meter fare of HK\$70.5 and above</i>	<i>HK\$1.0</i>

Ferry services mainly run between Central and Tsimshatsui, Wanchai and Tsimshatsui. There are also ferry services between Central and several outlying islands, which generally run every hour or three to four times per day, depending on the popularity of the destinations.



Homepage:

New World First Ferry <http://www.nwff.com.hk>

Hong Kong and Kowloon Ferry Ltd <http://www.hkkf.com.hk>

Minibuses are green and yellow or red and yellow in colour. They can pick up and drop passengers anywhere along the routes, except at regular double-decker bus stops and restricted areas.

Trams: Since 1904, the tram system has run east to west along the north side of Hong Kong Island, and still provides a leisurely, grandstand view. The flat fare is HK\$2.30 and the service operates between 6:00am and midnight. It is a great way of enjoying the sights and sounds of Hong Kong Island. You board the tram at the back and pay into the fare box at the front as you get off.

The Peak Tram is one of the most advanced tram systems in the world, taking just eight minutes to climb Victoria Peak. The service operates from 7:00am to midnight and the single fare is HK\$28 (HK\$40 return). The funicular railway has run since 1888 and is still the quickest way to reach the Peak.

Octopus Card

Octopus is widely used in Hong Kong for purchases on public transport, and in convenience stores, fast food shops, supermarkets, cake shops, vending machines, schools and parking. Octopus is also used for office and residential premises access control.

Each Octopus has a built-in microchip containing an electronic purse and other applications which can accurately record the holders' transaction details. Users simply hold their Octopus over a reader, and the correct amount will be deducted automatically. There's no longer a need for coins.



Octopus Cards are available at the following outlets:

- MTR Customer Service Centres
- Airport Express Line Customer Service Centres
- Light Rail Customer Service Centres
- KMB Customer Service Centre (Sha Tin Central Bus Terminus)
- New World First Ferry Octopus Service Centres (Piers of Cheung Chau, Mui Wo, Peng Chau, Central Piers 5 & 6)
- New World First Bus Customer Service Centre (Admiralty (East) Bus Terminus)

In Hong Kong, you can conveniently reload your Octopus using cash and Electronic Fund Transfer.

You can load up to HK\$1,000 on to your Octopus in cash at:

1. Authorised Add Value Service Providers, such as ParknShop, Wellcome, Watsons, 7-Eleven, Circle K, Cafe De Coral, etc.
2. Customer service centres or ticket offices of transport operators including:
 - MTR Customer Service Centres
 - Airport Express Line Customer Service Centres
 - Light Rail Customer Services Centres
 - KMB Customer Service Centre at Sha Tin Central Bus Terminus
 - New World First Ferry Octopus Service Centres (Piers of Cheung Chau, Mui Wo, Peng Chau and Central Piers 5 & 6)
 - New World First Bus Customer Service Centre (Admiralty (East) Bus Terminus)
 - Citybus Customer Service Centre (Central-Exchange Square Bus Terminus)
3. Add Value Machines at MTR / Airport Express / East Rail / Selected Light Rail Stations

C. Weather in Hong Kong

Typhoon and Rainstorm Warning

Tropical cyclones and heavy rainfall prevail in summer time. When there is a typhoon or heavy rainstorm, the Hong Kong Observatory will announce the updated situation. Students should note the following situations which will be broadcasted on T.V. or radio, and take proper action whenever appropriate:

Typhoons

- ***Typhoon Signal No. 1 or 3:*** A tropical cyclone is approaching Hong Kong, but most activities remain unaffected.
- ***Typhoon Signal No. 8 or above:*** A tropical cyclone is close to Hong Kong and may attack the territory directly. All activities including work, school and outdoor activities should cease and you should return to your Student Halls of Residence immediately. Public transports maintain minimum services only.

Heavy Rainstorms

- ***Amber or Red Rainstorm Warning:*** Heavy rain is expected and will affect some special areas. However, most activities remain unaffected.
- ***Black Rainstorm Warning:*** Intense and heavy rainfall is expected. Activities should cease and you should stay indoors when the warning is announced.

Hong Kong Weather at a Glance

	<i>Spring</i>	<i>Summer</i>	<i>Autumn</i>	<i>Winter</i>
<i>Temperature</i>	18-27°C	26-33°C	18-28°C	10-14°C
<i>Humidity</i>	77%-90%	80%+	72%	71%
<i>Prevailing Conditions</i>	Mist and rain showers	Sunny, heavy rain during typhoon season	Sunny and clear	Sunny, bright and cool
<i>What to Wear</i>	Sweaters, shower-proof jackets	Short sleeves, cotton clothing	Light clothing for daytime, sweaters / light jackets for evenings	Warm clothing and overcoats

Source: Hong Kong Observatory Homepage (<http://www.weather.gov.hk/>)

D. Part-time On-campus and Summer Employment

Part-time on-campus employment is allowed up to 20 hours per week throughout the year. However, unused hours of part-time on-campus employment cannot be rolled over from one week to another.

Summer job is to be undertaken during the summer months (i.e., 1 June to 31 August) without any limit on work hours, nature of work and location.

There is no need for non-local students to seek individual permission from the Director of Immigration for part-time on-campus and summer employment. A “No Objection Letter (NOL)” will be issued to you upon approval of your application for a student visa. If you transfer to another study programme, switch to another institution or change study mode, the NOL in respect of the previous programme or institution will cease to be valid. It will be necessary for you to seek approval from the Director of Immigration again. In case of loss, damage or defacement of the NOL, you may request the Immigration Department for the issuance of a fresh NOL free of charge.

E. Contact Details of the Hong Kong Immigration Department

Address	Hong Kong Identity Card application	8/F, Immigration Tower*
	Visa extension	<u>For mainland students</u> Quality Migrants and Mainland Residents Section, 6/F, Immigration Tower* <u>For other non-local students</u> Extension Section, 5/F, Immigration Tower*
	Other matters	Information and Liaison Section, 2/F, Immigration Tower*
Telephone Hotline	2824 6111	
E-mail Address	enquiry@immd.gov.hk	
Website	http://www.immd.gov.hk (please check this website for updated information)	

*Immigration Tower is located at 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

F. Other Useful Telephone Numbers and Websites

Emergencies (Fire/Police/Ambulance)	999	
Hong Kong SAR Government	28428777	http://www.gov.hk
Hong Kong International Airport (24-hour Enquiry)	21818888	http://www.hkairport.com.hk/
Hospital Authority	23006555	http://www.ha.org.hk/hesd/nsapi/
Queen Elizabeth Hospital	29588888	Address: 30 Gascoigne Road, Kowloon
Arts & Culture		
HK Academy for Performing Arts	25841500	http://www.hkapa.edu/
HK Arts Centre	25820200	http://www.hkac.org.hk/
HK Cultural Centre	27342009	http://www.hkculturalcentre.gov.hk/
URBTIX (Urban Ticketing System)	27349011	http://www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/Entertainment/Ticket
Telephone directory enquiry	1081	http://www2.hkt.com/hkt/dqi/dqi.html
Hong Kong Tourism Board	25081234	http://www.discoverhongkong.com
Hong Kong Police (Crime hotline)	25277177	http://www.info.gov.hk/police/hkp-home/english/contactus/index.htm#hotlines
Hong Kong Post (General Post Office)	25231071	http://www.hongkongpost.com/
Hong Kong Observatory	18501	http://www.weather.gov.hk/
Transport		
Citybus	28730818	http://www.citybus.com.hk/
Hong Kong & Kowloon Ferry	28156063	http://www.hkkf.com.hk/
Kowloon Motor Bus (KMB)	27454466	http://www.kmb.com.hk
Mass Transit Railway (MTR)	28818888	http://www.mtr.com.hk
New World First Bus	21368888	http://www.nwfb.com.hk
Hong Kong Tramways	25487102	
Peak Tramways	25220922	