**Planes, Trains and Everything Else**

Korea is one of the easiest countries to get around in, yes, even as a foreigner.  
  
Despite English not being widely spoken, you can always find someone to help you get on the right bus or train. These buses, trains, planes and taxis will take you anywhere in [South Korea](http://www.footprintsrecruiting.com/teaching-jobs-in-asia/teaching-jobs-in-korea) - and - this is the kicker - they will do it very cheap.

Here are a list of the various modes of transport in South Korea:

1. Planes - Korean Air or Asiana Air
2. Trains - Hi-Speed or Regular Passenger
3. Buses - Highway buses, city buses, community shuttles, tour buses
4. Subway
5. Car
6. Taxi - Black Cabs or Blue/Grey Cabs
7. Bicycle
8. Mopeds and Motorcycles
9. Foot

**Air Transportation in South Korea**

There are two national/international carriers in South Korea, Asiana and Korean Air.  Both are about the same in terms of price and reliability though some argue that the service is better on Asiana... having flown both, I have no opinion with respect to which is better.  My bags got to where I wanted them to go on both and the meals were equally bad.  The drinks were the same and the prices were almost identical too.

Both airlines fly to most destinations in Korea and domestic flights are very cheap.  The domestic airport in Seoul is Kimpo while the international terminal is on an island off Incheon.  They are relatively close and are connected by public transport.

There are also domestic flights connecting all of Korea’s major cities and Cheju Island, and flights are reasonably priced as well. Visit a travel agent (yohaengsa) to see what is available.

**Trains in Korea**

In Seoul, the main train terminal is located at Seoul Station on the red line of the subway line.  Trains connect all the major cities in Korea and the cost is similar to bus travel. Both are fast, safe and efficient.

There are different classes of tickets and there are different types of trains that you can take.  The high-speed train that whisks travels from Busan to Seoul and various stops in between is amazingly fast and cheap.  A weekend ticket costs around 70,000 Won.

The slower train is half the price and half the speed but it also gives you the opportunity to soak up the countryside as the tracks meander through rice paddies and over mountain ranges.

**Subways in Korea**

There are currently two subway systems in Korea, one in Seoul and one in Busan. Both are simple to navigate, the signs are in both Enlish and Korean as are the announcments (though they can be hard to understand). If you're worried about getting lost in the maze you need only put a relatively stunned look on your face and someone will ask if he or she can help out. If you plan on using the system a lot we suggest you get a 10,000 Won ticket, the cost per ride is contingent on how far you ride but it usually won't cost you more than a dollar.

The [Seoul Subway](http://www.seoulmetro.co.kr/) system has one of the best maps of Seoul I have ever seen. It's a lot of fun. Have a look.

The [Busan Subway](http://humetro.busan.kr/korea/main/) system is much more simple. At present there are only three lines.

**Buses in Korea**

To give you an idea of how cheap travel is in Korea, the bus from Seoul to Busan, about the longest trip you can take in the country, costs less than USD $20. About the most annoying thing about bus travel in Korea is some long distance buses are equipped with karaoke machines- hard to sleep through strobe lights and crooning eighty year olds but this is a must for everyone at least once.

Local buses are always very prevalent as well. There are several different types. There are village buses, there are community buses, there are express buses and probably about 5 other types. Talk to other teachers and find out what buses go where, for how much and find out how long it takes. Most times this is the cheapest and fastest form of transportation though be warning - get in and hold on. Drivers often get paid by how many laps they can do on their circuit not how many passengers they pick up. If you don't hold on there is a good chance you'll be on your butt before too long.

Many buses are now equipped with mobile WI-FI.

**Taxis in Korea**

There are two different kinds of cabs in Korea. cheap cabs and luxury cabs (black). The cheap cabs will get you there fast and cheap. The black luxury cabs are also fast but you won't be quite as scared.

The cheap cabs are really inexpensive and late at night or on long runs the driver is open to negotiating the fare.

Don't get too upset if a cab driver goes past you when you're flagging him down. Even thoug hhe may not have a fare he might not be able to speak English or there could be a multitude of other reasons that he might fly by you and stop a block away to pick someone else up. Don't take it personally. Take a deep breath and try for the next one.

You do need to be wary when taking a cab. The odd driver has been known to take you on the milk route. That's often why negotiating a fare in advance on a long run is often a good idea. A good way to prevent any troubles is to be obvious about making sure hte ID picture of the driver matches the person driving the cab and make sure they realize that you made a mental note of their number. Realize that this happens all over the world and again try not to take it too personally.

**Buying a Car in Korea**

Cars are plentiful and used cars are incredibly cheap. Unless you are planning on staying in Korea long term, it is not recommended that you buy a car.

If you do buy one, forget about bringing it home. The standards of the cars produced for export are known to be different than the standards of cars produced for domestic purpose. Bringing a car home would be very expensive to bring it up to spec for local requirements.

If you plan on staying in Korea for a stretch it's not a bad idea to think about purchasing a car. It does give you freedom to explore but realize also that driving is very different over there and that the public transportation system is amazing.  Also consider that gas is expensive, parking is non-existent and the whole country is a traffic jam. However if you do buy a car, used cars are very cheap in Korea, and it is relatively easy to get an international driver’s license- just apply at your embassy.

**Bicycles in Korea**

Oddly enough bikes aren't big in Korea. In fact you would be hard-pressed to find a bike rack if you rode your bike to the local store.

There are loads of places to ride and mountain biking is becoming more and more popular but it is really important to remember that the streets are not bike friendly or at least that they have little or no bike awareness.

Some teachers have made REALLY good money bringing bikes in to Korea and selling them in Korea before they head out.  This is definitely something to consider if you are an enthusiast.

**Motorbikes and Mopeds in Korea**

Motorbikes and mopeds are not as common as one might think. Often motorbikes are only used by couriers and mopeds by delivery people.

Both are great ways to get around but realize that not bikes are allowed on highways and that driving in Korea is an adventure. Sometimes it's nice to have some steel around you and even better, a driver.

Speaking of steal, in a different sense.  DO BE CAREFUL.  Often Foreigners are sold stolen motorbikes and mopeds in a scam that goes so far as to make you believe that you are buying the bike, the registration, the insurance and so forth when in reality you are simply buying an unregistered, uninsured stolen bike.  If you are buying one, bring a Korean friend and ensure you register the bike on your own.  If you are buying it privately, get a copy of the resident card of the person you are buying it from.  If you aren't near a photocopier, take your camera and take a picture of the card.  This could become very important in the future... hopefully not...