How to Travel From Hong Kong to Shanghai by Train and Plane

# 

Separated by 762 miles (1,226 kilometers), [Hong Kong](https://www.tripsavvy.com/hong-kong-4138860) and Shanghai are two of the most tourist-centric cities in Asia, offering visitors dynamically different experiences. Although flying is the quickest way of traveling from Hong Kong to Shanghai, you can also drive, but it would take you about 15 hours to cover the distance, so many travelers opt for the high-speed train.

|  | Time | Cost | Best For |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Train | 8 hours, 30 minutes | from $56 ($150 for high-speed) | Traveling on a budget |
| Plane | 2 hours, 30 minutes | from $150 | Arriving on a time crunch |
| Car | 15 hours | 910 miles (1,464 kilometers) | Exploring the area |

## What Is the Cheapest Way to Get From Hong Kong to Shanghai?

The cheapest way to travel from Hong Kong to Shanghai is by train. Whereas a one-way flight can cost up to $600 during February (the month of Chinese New Year) and about $200 most other months, a train ticket on the slow sleeper train will set you back $56 or $92, depending on whether you want a hard bunk or a soft bunk. You'll save on the cost of a hotel room for one night if you don't mind the 19-hour ride.

Alternatively, there's the high-speed Bullet Train, also cheaper than a flight but not by much: Tickets [purchased in advance](https://www.chinahighlights.com/china-trains/) cost $150 for the most basic second class accommodation. These trains depart from Hong Kong West Kowloon Station and arrive at Shanghai Hongqiao Railway Station after about eight hours, 30 minutes of traveling, making stops in Hangzhou, Nanchang, Changsha, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen along the way.

## What Is the Fastest Way to Get From Hong Kong to Shanghai?

The fastest way to travel between the two is by plane. According to [Skyscanner](https://www.skyscanner.com/routes/hkg/sha/hong-kong-intl-to-shanghai-hongqiao.html), the average flight time is two hours, 30 minutes. Several airlines operate direct flights, including Cathay Dragon, China Eastern, Hainan Airlines, and others.

## How Long Does It Take to Drive?

To drive the 910 miles (1,464 kilometers) between Hong Kong and Shanghai would take 15 hours, so most people choose to travel by plane or train.

## When Is the Best Time to Travel to Shanghai?

The cheapest time to fly to Shanghai is in March when it costs about as much as a high-speed train ticket ($150). Otherwise, be prepared to spend upward of $200 anytime throughout the summer, $500 in January, or $600+ in February, when the locals tend to travel most for Chinese New Year.

The period of April through August is generally the cheapest time to travel, which means the city sees the most international visitors. However, the weather during this time is less than ideal. The heat combined with relentless rain (July is the wettest month) can sometimes lead to near-unbearable humidity. October and November are much more comfortable weather-wise and are less busy with travelers.

## Do I Need a Visa to Travel to Shanghai?

There is a formal border that separates Hong Kong from China and it [includes passport](https://www.tripsavvy.com/passports-visas-required-for-china-travel-1495426) control and customs checks. Whereas American travelers do not need a visa to visit Hong Kong, visas are required to visit mainland China. This [visa](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/China.html) should be applied for at least a month in advance. It cannot be obtained at the port of entry, but you'll need to allow for time at the border to conduct such formalities. The traditional tourist visa permits visitation for up to 90 days.

## Can I Use Public Transportation to Travel From the Airport?

The Pudong International Airport is Shanghai's main airport, although it is home to Hongqiao International, too. Taxis aside, travelers can get from Pudong to the city center by shuttle bus, metro, or maglev (another rail option). The airport operates an express bus whose Lines 1 and 8 (departing from Terminals 1 and 2) will take you right into the center, but the ride takes about 70 minutes. A single ride costs about 15 cents.

Alternatively, you can take one of two trains. Line 2 (the green line) of the Metro travels from Pudong International to the city center in about eight minutes. Covering this distance would cost about 80 cents. Alternatively, the maglev is Shanghai's magnetic levitation train, which also covers the distance in about eight minutes and costs about $5.70.

## What Is There to Do in Shanghai?

The coastal city of [Shanghai](https://www.tripsavvy.com/shanghai-guide-planning-your-trip-4796877) is comprised of picturesque colonial-era buildings that line the waterfront in an idyllic scene. This mile-long stretch along the western bank of the Huangpu River is called The Bund and it's often referred to as the "museum of buildings" due to its architectural gems. A stark contrast to the old aesthetic is the contemporary Oriental Pearl Radio & Television Tower, containing 11 LED-lit spheres. It was the tallest structure in China before the Shanghai World Financial Center became not only the tallest building in China but the second tallest building in the world. A jaunt along Nanjing Road—one of the busiest shopping streets in the world—will put you in the lively part of the city, but if you want peace, try meditating at one of the city's many ornate temples.