

Road signs

Road signs in Shanghai have English language versions of the street names, however taxi drivers and people you might ask for directions may not understand the English versions, so here are the common Chinese and English terms in use. Always give the driver your destination address and the closest cross street.

Road – lu

Street – jie

Avenue – da dao, da jie

Middle or central – zhong

North – bei

South – nan

East – dong

West – xi

One – yi (pronounced 'ee')

Two - er

The metro

The metro system in Shanghai is excellent. It is clean and efficient and there are new lines being constructed to further expand the network. Lines 1, 2, and 3 are the older lines. Line 8 opened in 2008, and other lines are under construction, with up to 11 metro lines and 10 light rail lines planned by 2025.

Metro Line 1 runs from north to south, metro line 2 runs from east to west, and the Pearl Line is a mainly elevated line going from north to south via the Shanghai Railway Station. The ticketing system uses magnetic tickets that can be bought from ticketing machines in stations, and the signage is in both Chinese and English.

There is also a *jiao tong* card (which is a value add card), available from major metro stations, McDonalds, some convenience stores (including Alldays and Lianhua) and some banks (including China Construction Bank, Agricultural Bank of China and Shanghai Pudong

Development Bank). It requires a small deposit, and can then be used on public transport and in taxis, which saves the hassles of buying a ticket for each trip and carrying small notes for taxi or bus fares.

Explore Shanghai Metro Map

<http://www.exploreshanghai.com/metro/>

This is a very good interactive metro map, with information on the different lines and stops. You can click on a stop to see what lines intersect and for information on train times.

Taxis

There is a plentiful supply of taxis in Shanghai, with the major companies recognizable by the color of the taxis. There are six major companies and the most reputable are Qiangsheng who have yellow cars and Dazhong who have turquoise cars. Others include Jinjiang (white cars), Bashi (light green cars) and Blue Union (dark blue cars). The rest of the taxis are red, and can be of variable quality. If possible try to use the taxis of the more reputable companies.

When catching a taxi, you can pay by cash or card, which is the *jiao tong* card, described above. Always ask the taxi driver for the receipt. In case of any problems, the receipt provides details of the taxi company, date and time of fare, and can be used to trace the particular taxi.

Be careful that only the taxi driver is in the taxi as you get in, as scams have become more frequent in the last few years.

Taxi company booking lines

Qiangsheng

Tel: 6258 0000 (no English)

Dazhong

Tel: 96822, 6428 9122 (simple English)

Bashi:

Tel: 96840 (simple English)

Tipping

Tipping in Shanghai is not de rigueur, but is becoming increasingly expected of foreigners, especially in the places they mainly frequent. However some Shanghainese who are not used to tipping may find the gesture offensive. If you have any doubts about how it will be received, just don't tip.

Trains

Trains are an excellent and economical way to travel around China. Shanghai is connected to nearby cities such as Hangzhou and Suzhou by fast train, a service that is clean and efficient. For longer journeys there are soft sleepers and hard sleepers available. The major train stations in Shanghai (such as Shanghai Railway Station) will often have an English speaking counter service, and you can also purchase train tickets from offices around the city, such as the China International Travel Service (CITS), though some offices are reluctant to do this. It is better to go to the office than try to book over the phone.

CITS

1 F Guangming Building, 2 Jinling Dong Road, Huangpu

Tel: 6445 5396

They will book plane tickets and sometimes train tickets.

Train Ticket Booking Office

Beijing Xi Road, near Nanjing Xi Road (adjacent to Jing'an Temple)

Jing'an

Ticket booking office, at least one of the staff speaks English.

Buses

Shanghai has an extensive bus service, however the buses are often crowded, especially during peak hour, and of course travel on the roads along with all the other types of vehicle. Most newer buses are air-conditioned and have written and audio announcements of stops in both Chinese and English. The fare is usually around 1.5 to 2 yuan.

Shanghai Daily

<http://live.shanghaidaily.com/detail.asp?type=editor&id=39>

The Shanghai Daily website offers a list of useful bus routes.

Local Tourism Offices

Shanghai Tourist Information and Service Center

303 Moling Road (near the south exit of Shanghai Railway Station),
Zhabei

Tel: 6353 9920

Tourist hotline

Tel: 6353 9920

You can ask for an English speaking operator.

Jing'an District Tourist Information Center

218 Yuyuan Xi Road, Jing'an

Tel: 6253 3336

Pudong New Area Tourist Information and Service Center

541 Dong Fang Road, Pudong

Tel: 6875 0593

Cars

Driving your own car in Shanghai is not for the faint hearted, although those who do brave the road and traffic conditions are usually happy to have tried it for themselves. An easier option, if affordable, may be to hire a driver who will take the risks and the stress for you. If you are coming to a position here in Shanghai, many companies supply the car as part of the expatriate package, or provide a car allowance that you can use at will.

If you choose the car as your way of transport around Shanghai, there are various options including purchase and rental. Check with the various car rental firms in Shanghai. You will also need to get a PRC driver's license.

Costs

The costs involved in buying a car in Shanghai include the following:

- Cost of the car (new or secondhand)
- Registration fee
- Road tax
- Cost of the license plate
- Salary of the driver if you choose to have one.