

Hong Kong



Capital:	Victoria (area) & Kowloon (area)
Population:	6.9 million (approx)
Religion:	The majority of Hong Kong's population is Buddhist with Confucianism and Daoism also being widely practiced. Christians represent 10% of the population, 2% are Muslims and 0.2% are Hindus.
Government:	Legislative Council
Ethnic Groups:	98% ethnic Chinese, stemming from five major groups in Southern China: the Cantonese, the Fukkien, Hainan, the Chui Chow, and the Hakka. 2% other, including Europeans.
Language:	English and Chinese (official language); most Chinese speak Cantonese, while Mandarin is widely understood.
Currency:	Hong Kong dollar, signified by the prefix 'HKD'.

- The island of Hong Kong itself lies off the south-east coast of China adjoining Guangdong province. The nearest point of the mainland, a peninsula with Kowloon at its southern tip, faces Victoria, the capital, on Hong Kong Island, across a superb natural harbour.
- Originally a barren island with a small fishing village, Hong Kong was inhabited in prehistoric times, probably by peoples from northern China, and settled from the 2nd century BC by Cantonese.
- The harbour attracted British adventurers as early as 1841 when Britain first occupied it. In 1898, China signed away Hong Kong and the New Territories to Britain on a 99 year lease, which has since expired.
- Most residents are Cantonese Chinese, with the foreign community comprising Vietnamese refugees, domestic servants from the Philippines and expatriate Britons, with a growing presence of Americans and Japanese.
- Hong Kong is the outlet for China's foreign trade and is the economic and financial capital of South China. It is committed to aggressive materialism and has the world's highest concentration of Rolls Royces per head and per mile.
- The average annual temperature is 21 degrees celsius. Winters are dry and sunny, summers humid, and the terrain is steep and hilly.

Business and Social Etiquette

- Punctuality is considered a virtue among Chinese business people, and demonstrates respect. Make every effort to be on time.
- In Chinese tradition, no one is exempt from apologising. Be sure to apologise profusely if you are late, even if it was not your fault.
- Either a slight bow or a handshake on greeting is usual.
- Always recognise and greet the most senior or elderly person in a group first, and politely inquire about their health.
- Courtesy and formality in behaviour and in dress are an integral part of Chinese manners. Do not offer opinions too freely. The Chinese find the disclosure of excessive amounts of information vulgar.
- Avoid any behaviour that could be construed as aggressive or loud.
- Avoid close physical contact, such as a pat on the back or a hug when greeting someone. Never beckon someone or point with one finger. Instead, use your open hand to point, and to beckon, extend your arm, palm down, and move your fingers.
- Business cards should be presented and received with both hands.
- Negotiation occurs over cups of tea. Always accept an offer of tea, whether you want it or not. When you are served, wait for the host to drink first.
- Present all materials and ideas in a modest and patient manner. Aggression is out of place, and if someone loses face during negotiations, the contract may be lost.
- Be alert for family relationships in the organisations you deal with in Hong Kong, and anticipate that the more senior family members will hold the greatest authority.
- Be prepared for fast action in your dealings with Hong Kong businesses. Respond to their communications promptly, or you will find your project placed on a back burner.
- Never confront a Chinese person with an unpleasant fact in public; discuss it in private. Appearances are extremely important.
- With the superstitious Hong Kong Chinese, heed their suggestions that a product be introduced, a meeting held, or a contract signed on a certain day or in a certain manner.
- Banquets are a large part of Hong Kong's Chinese culture. Celebrating a productive business meeting or a new alliance usually occurs over 8 to 12 courses of a well-prepared banquet.
- Gift giving is an intricate and important custom in Hong Kong. A banquet is a very acceptable gift for a Chinese client, and must definitely be reciprocated if offered to you. Entertain at prestigious restaurants and banquet halls. First class hotels can usually provide facilities.
- When dining out, seating etiquette is important. The guest of honour traditionally sits opposite the host. Chinese tables are traditionally round, with a maximum of 12 seats.

Since there is no 'head' of the table, the seat of honour is the one furthest from the entrance

- It is not customary to remain at the table once a meal is finished.

Language

- Family names are traditionally mentioned first, then the given name composed of one or two parts eg. Suan Imm is the given name of Lim Suan Imm. Given names should not be broken up. Many overseas Chinese have adopted Western first names or reversed the order of their name. Chinese women keep their own family names when they marry, and the Chinese rarely call each other by their given names. Use Mr, Mrs or Miss unless an alternative is offered.

English	Cantonese	Phonetics
Hello	Neih hau	Nay hoe
Good morning	Jou sahn	Joe sun
Good night	Jou tau	Joe tow
Good bye	Joi gin	Joy gin
Yes	Haih	High
No	Mhaih	Mm-high
Please	Ching neih	Ching-nay
Thank you	Do jeh	Doh-jay
You're welcome	Mmsaih do jeh	Mm-sigh oh-jay
I don't understand	Mming baak	Mm-ing bahk

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