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About Country Profiles

ECA's Country Profiles are in–depth briefing documents for individuals preparing to live and work in another country. Available for over 130 countries, they provide essential information for both IHR managers planning international assignments and for people going abroad to work, whether for one day or permanently.

In addition to coming as part of subscription and being available to buy individually, extranet versions of the profiles are available to supply directly to employees, and they can be customised.

- Orientation material on the country's geography and climate, major cities, demographics, language and social customs
- Immigration information on obtaining visas, work and residence permits, visas for spouses and dependants, and registration
- Travel guidance on how to get to and around the country, including travel from the airport, public transport and health and safety advice
- Customs and import regulations for household shipments, cars and pets, banking, advice on leasing arrangements, residential districts, schools and sports and social clubs
- Business etiquette, public holidays, suitable clothing, money, telecommunications, and city–level information on medical services, supermarkets, other shops and restaurants, as well as recreational highlights
- Background information on the country's history, government and economy
- Additional resources, such as country guides and links, cross–cultural and language training resources, and conversion tables
Key facts

At a glance

ESSENTIALS
Capital city: Singapore City
Currency: Singapore dollar, SGD (S$)
Language: English, Malay, Mandarin Chinese, Tamil
International dialling code: +65

LOCAL TIME
Local time in Singapore is GMT+08:00
No daylight savings are observed.

FLAG

DID YOU KNOW?
Singapore is home to several ethnic quarters, such as Chinatown, Geylang Serai (Malay) and Little India. The Marina Bay district offers numerous opportunities for entertainment. Shopping is focused on Orchard... Capital city: Singapore

Local food stalls, found throughout the city, sell inexpensive Chinese, Malay and Indian dishes, and hawker centres such as at Newton Circus and Lau Pa Sat are... Local cuisine

Transport in the city includes public buses (SBSTransit, SMRT Buses), the metro (MRT) and light rail (LRT). Licensed taxi companies include... Singapore

LOCAL WEATHER

FORECAST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Temperature °C</th>
<th>Rainfall (mm)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GDP growth: 5.0% (2021 forecast)

IN NUMBERS
Country population: 6,209,660 (mid-2020)
Population growth rate: 1.73%
Geographic area: 719.2 km²

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Context

 Territory

 Map of Singapore

Geography

The territory of the Republic of Singapore covers an area of 719.2 km² and consists of an island at the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula plus over 50 small islets. Singapore is separated from the Malay Peninsula by the narrow Johor Strait and is connected to the Peninsula by the Johor–Singapore Causeway and the Malaysia Singapore Second Link (Tuas Second Link). To the south, across the Strait of Singapore, is Indonesia.

The island is low-lying and gently undulating, with the highest point, Bukit Timah, over 150 m above sea level. Large areas have been reclaimed in the north–east of the island and much of the original swampland covering the low-lying areas has been cleared. The centre of the island is a plateau set aside as a water-catchment area and contains several reservoirs. Singapore’s strategic geographical location has made its harbour – the largest in Asia – one of its most important assets.

Time zone

Local time in Singapore is GMT+08:00. No daylight savings are observed.
Climate

Singapore is less than 150 km north of the equator and has a tropical climate, unvaryingly hot and wet, with high humidity, although nights are almost always reasonably cool due to the proximity of the sea. The average daytime maximum temperature is 31°C (88°F), dropping to an average minimum of 24°C (75°F) at night. Rain falls throughout the year and there are frequent thunderstorms. Average annual rainfall is 2 400 mm and the wettest season is between November and January during the north–east monsoon. The south–east monsoon lasts from June to September and brings slightly drier weather. Strong winds and rain occur from time to time between May and October.

Meteorological Service Singapore (MSS)
National Environment Agency (NEA)

Detailed worldwide, daily and long−range/five−day forecasts are available online from a number of organisations including:

BBC Weather
CNN
Weatherbase

Capital city: Singapore

Singapore, the 'Lion City', occupies the southern part of Singapore Island on the strait between the Indian Ocean and South China Sea. It is the capital of the Republic of Singapore, the largest port in South−east Asia, and one of the world's greatest commercial centres.

Originally a fishing village in the Malay kingdom of Srivijaya, the modern city of Singapore was founded in 1819 by Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, who established the location as a trading base for the British East India Company. As Singapore grew in importance as a port during the 19th century, large numbers of immigrants were attracted to the city, particularly from China and India. The city was briefly captured by the Japanese during World War II, when it was an important British naval base, before becoming a self−governing state in 1959. In 1965, following an unsuccessful attempt at joining the new confederation of Malaysia, Singapore City was designated capital of the independent republic. Today, the modern and colonial areas of the city face each other across the Singapore River, with gleaming skyscrapers towering over traditional architecture.

Singapore is home to several ethnic quarters, such as Chinatown, Geylang Serai (Malay) and Little India. The Marina Bay district offers numerous opportunities for entertainment. Shopping is focused on Orchard Road while Sentosa Island in Singapore Harbour has a number of popular beaches, a golf course and an amusement park. Located between the Singapore River, Marina Bay and Chinatown, the Central Business District, commonly referred to as 'the city' or CBD, is the centre of commercial and financial activity. Expats choose to live in District 9, the area surrounding the busy retail hub of Orchard; in adjoining districts; along the East Coast; and in Woodlands in the north of the island.

Government of Singapore

People

Demography

The estimated population of Singapore in mid−2020 was 6 209 660. The estimated annual population growth rate is 1.73%. The estimated total fertility rate is 0.87 births per woman. Estimated life expectancy at birth is 83.3 years (male) and 88.9 years (female).

The overall population density is 7 875.7 persons per km². 100% of the total population live in urban areas.

Approximately 77% of the population is ethnic Chinese, 14% is Malay, 8% is Indian and the remainder is mainly of European nationalities.
Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal urban area</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singapore (capital)</td>
<td>5,703,569</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Department of Statistics Singapore, population estimate (mid-2019).*

Language

The national language is Malay but English, Tamil and Mandarin are also widely spoken official languages. English is the common language for the different sections of the population, and also the language of commerce and administration. It is also the medium of education in schools. Many Singaporeans speak ‘Singlish’, a local version of English with its own grammar and idioms. A third of ethnic Chinese households speak Mandarin but there is a decline in the use of Chinese dialects such as Cantonese and Hainanese. The Government encourages all children to learn their ethnic tongue; hence, ethnic Chinese learn Mandarin, Indians learn Tamil and Malays learn Malay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Malay</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Mandarin (pinyin)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hello</td>
<td>Selamat tengahari (daytime); Selamat petang (evening)</td>
<td>ni hao</td>
<td>ni hao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodbye</td>
<td>Selamat tingal</td>
<td>zàijiàn</td>
<td>zàijiàn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please</td>
<td>Tolong</td>
<td>qing</td>
<td>qing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you</td>
<td>Terima kasih</td>
<td>xièxié</td>
<td>xièxié</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleased to meet you</td>
<td>Seronok berjumpa denga anda</td>
<td>wo hen gaoxing rènshí ni</td>
<td>wo hen gaoxing rènshí ni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excuse me; I'm sorry</td>
<td>Minta maaf</td>
<td>duibūqi</td>
<td>duibūqi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My name is…</td>
<td>Nama saya…</td>
<td>wo jiāo…</td>
<td>wo jiāo…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't understand</td>
<td>Sya tidak faham</td>
<td>wo tingbudong</td>
<td>wo tingbudong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Religion

Singapore is one of the world's most religiously diverse countries. Freedom of worship is guaranteed by the constitution. Religion is discussed openly. For certain family matters, religions may establish laws for their members. Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Islam, Christianity and Hinduism, along with a number of smaller religions, are all practiced in Singapore.

Just under half of the people, most of whom are Chinese, are either Buddhist (34%) or Taoist (11%). Many practice a combination of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. The vast majority of Malays (who make up some 13% of the population) are Muslim. An estimated 18% of the population are Christian and 5% (mainly Indians) are Hindu. Others are Sikhs or Jains. Christians are generally either Chinese or Caucasian. There are Anglicans, Orthodox Christians, Roman Catholics, Evangelicals, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterian and Baptists. A further 16% of the population (many being Chinese) are either atheists or agnostics. There is a small Jewish community and two synagogues. There are also Bahá'ís and Zoroastrians.

The government has worked hard to maintain harmony between diverse religious and ethnic groups. Finding Buddhist and Hindu temples next to Muslim mosques and Christian churches is not uncommon. Jehovah's Witness meetings are illegal in Singapore. It is also against the law to possess any Jehovah's Witness publication. Similar measures exist against the Unification Church.

Social customs and modes of address

As Singapore is a multiracial society, expatriates should be aware of the manners and customs of the Chinese, the Malays and the Indians. A national ideology based on five 'shared values' has been promoted by successive administrations: nation before community and society above self; the family; community support and respect for the individual; building consensus; and racial and religious harmony. The work ethic is strongly promoted.

Singaporean society is centred on the family. Older generations are respected. Children often live with their parents until marriage, partly due to high property costs.

Gender roles are less rigidly defined than in past generations. A growing number of couples share household chores and childcare responsibilities. Women hold senior positions in government and the private sector.
Greetings vary according to age, ethnicity and situation. Chinese will shake hands; a slight bow is reserved for older people. Malays use the salaam: two people bring together the right palms and slide them apart, each touching the palm to the heart. Indians may join their palms at chest level, raise them in front of their face and bow slightly. A typical Chinese greeting is *Whei* (Hello) or *Ni hao ma?* (How are you?), while Malays may greet with *Apa khabar?* (How are you?) or the Muslim phrase *Al-salaam alaykum* (Peace be upon you). Between different ethnic groups, English greetings are used.

In formal situations, titles and family names are used. Friends and relatives use given names. Chinese names begin with the family name, followed by a two-character given name. Many have adopted Western names, which come first. Malays do not have surnames but instead use given names followed by the father's given name, separated by *bin* (son of) or *binti* (daughter of). Indians may have the same basic name structure as Malays, or their given name may be followed by a family clan name.

Touching another person’s head, finger gestures such as pointing, and allowing the bottom of the foot to point at a person, are considered impolite. Public displays of affection are rare but are becoming more common among younger Singaporeans.

Visitors should avoid political discussion and any kind of criticism of the government or the way society is run.

Care should be taken not to give offence when entertaining or when being entertained. For example, Muslims do not drink alcohol nor eat pork or pork products and food must be offered to them with the right hand only.

Courtesy is extremely important. A soft-spoken and calm demeanour carries far more weight than an aggressive approach and all forms of confrontational behaviour should be avoided. Boastfulness is not appreciated.

When visiting a house, shoes should be removed; importantly, gifts should not be opened in the presence of the giver.

While dress is generally informal, most good class hotels and restaurants expect men to wear a jacket and tie in the evening and women to wear smart casual clothes.
**Immigration**

**Entry requirements**

For personalised passport, visa and health requirements, please refer to the Visa Tool provided on ECA’s website.

**Visas**

Visas, where required, are issued prior to arrival by diplomatic representations of Singapore outside Singapore.

E−visas, where required, are issued prior to arrival through authorised visa agents/partners or local contacts from the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA). Passengers must hold printed e−visa confirmations.

Short−Term Visit Passes are issued on arrival to non−visa nationals without prior application. They are issued for tourism and business visiting purposes only (not applicable for employment). They are valid from 14 days to 90 days, subject to the discretion of the immigration authorities. Business visitors from visa−required countries still require entry visas from Singaporean consular posts prior to travel.

Singapore only permits limited business activities for visitors. Business visitors on a Visit Pass should limit their activities to attending business meetings and discussions.

- **enhanced−Immigration Automated Clearance System (eIACS).** Uses biometric technology to provide efficient and secure immigration clearance at Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) checkpoints.
- **Frequent Traveller Programme (FTP).** Allows eligible travellers to enjoy convenient immigration clearance via automated clearance facilities – also known as the enhanced−Immigration Automated Clearance System (eIACS) – at Singapore checkpoints.
- **Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA).** Responsible for the security of Singapore’s borders. Performs other immigration and registration functions.
- **SG Arrival Card.** An e−Service provided by the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) to facilitate the electronic submission of personal information, trip details and health declaration (i.e. electronic arrival card) by foreign visitors (including travellers enrolled in the Frequent Traveller Programme (FTP)).

**Embassies**

Further information on foreign representative offices in and for Singapore is available from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**Work permits**

Foreign nationals seeking to take up employment or to engage in a business, profession or occupation in Singapore must first obtain either a Work Permit or an Employment Pass. Work pass applications are sponsored by Singapore entities (usually employers).

- **Work Permits (WPs)** are granted to either skilled or unskilled foreign workers who possess experience and qualifications relevant to the employment. WPs are issued for up to two years at a time and are renewable. A maximum employment period in Singapore may apply. WPs are subject to sourcing and quota restrictions. Employers are subject to monthly levies for each WP holder they employ.

- **S Passes** are work passes that may be granted to individuals with a minimum fixed monthly salary of SGD 2 500 (effective 1 October 2020) and an acceptable tertiary qualification such as a college diploma (this may be less than a university degree). Applicants with greater experience are expected to have a higher salary commensurate with their greater experience. The S Pass is subject to a quota and monthly levy payable by the employer.

- **Employment Passes (EPs)** are granted to foreign workers who possess relevant degrees, professional qualifications or specialist skills and whose fixed monthly salaries exceed SGD 4 500 (effective 1 September 2020) (SGD 5 000 for EPs in the financial services sector effective 1 December 2020). The minimum qualifying salary is applicable to recent graduates from approved institutions. Older applicants with greater experience are expected to have a higher salary commensurate with their age and greater experience. In reviewing an application, the authorities may consider the applicant’s professional and academic qualifications, plus any specialist skills with respect to their employment and their expected economic contribution to Singapore.

Under the **Fair Consideration Framework (FCF),** employers must post job vacancies on a designated jobs database (MyCareersFuture) for at least 28 calendar days before EP or S Pass applications can be made. Small firms with fewer than ten employees and jobs paying a fixed monthly salary of SGD 20 000 and above are exempt from the advertising requirement. Other exemptions are available.

- **Fixed monthly salary.** The definition of a ‘fixed monthly salary’ includes basic salary plus fixed monthly payments, such as a cost−of−living adjustments and other cash allowances provided to an employee. It does not include provision of
benefits–in–kind such as accommodation, or variable payments such as bonuses, commissions or daily allowances.

Foreign nationals who receive in–principle approval for EPs or S Passes may be required to undergo medical examinations or to complete health declaration forms.

First–time applicants may be issued an EP/S Pass valid for up to two years. The EP/S Pass may be renewed for periods of up to three years per renewal.

**Personalised Employment Passes (PEPs)** may be granted to EP holders who earn a fixed monthly salary of at least SGD 12 000. Overseas foreign professionals whose last fixed monthly salary (within six months from the date of application) was at least SGD 18 000 may also be eligible. PEPs are issued for a non–renewable period of three years and may be issued once only. Holders may not be unemployed for more than six months continuously and must earn a fixed annual salary of at least SGD 144 000 per calendar year in which they hold the PEP. PEP holders and their employers are required to make certain notifications to the Ministry of Manpower (MOM).

PEPs allow greater flexibility for holders as they are not tied to named employers. They provide the same dependent privileges as the EP. PEP holders may not take up freelance employment without a direct employer, and may not be business owners (sole proprietors, working partners or directors with shareholding).

**EntrePasses** (employment passes for entrepreneurs) are available to foreign entrepreneurs intending to start new businesses or companies in Singapore. New applicants must have their companies registered as private limited companies in Singapore for less than six months at the time of application, or if their companies are not registered, they may do so after the outcome of the application. Business ventures must be of an entrepreneurial nature. Applicants must meet the criteria of an entrepreneur, innovator or investor, as defined by the MOM. They must show evidence of innovation. Newly–issued and first renewed EntrePasses are valid for one year. Subsequent renewed EntrePasses are valid for up to two years.

**Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA).** Responsible for the security of Singapore’s borders. Performs other immigration and registration functions.

**Levies and quotas for hiring foreign workers.** Monthly foreign worker levy for Work Permit (WP) holders and industry quotas.

**Ministry of Manpower (MOM).** Facilitates and regulates the employment of foreign nationals in Singapore.

**myMOM Portal.** Allows business employers to centrally access eServices and view transactions with one login.

**Online Foreign Worker Address Service (OFWAS).** Employers are required to register and update the addresses and mobile/cellular numbers of their foreign workers online.

**Regulations covering accommodation for foreign workers.** Categories of housing that foreign employees may live in, and requirements for each category.

**Settling–in Programme (SIP) for Work Permit (WP) holders.** All first–time non–Malaysian Work Permit (WP) holders in the construction, manufacturing, marine shipyard and process sectors must attend the SIP to learn about their employment rights and other useful information.

**SGWorkPass.** Free mobile app to check validity of Singapore work passes or long–term passes issued by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM).

**Singapore Corporate Access (CorpPass).** The only login method for online corporate transactions with more than 200 government digital services.

### Spouses and dependants

EP/S Pass holders may apply for **Dependant’s Passes (DPs)**, which allow their legal spouse and legal children under 21 years to live in Singapore. EP/S Pass holders earning a fixed monthly salary of less than SGD 6 000 may not apply for DPs. DP holders who wish to work in Singapore must apply for a WP, S Pass, EP or letter of consent separately and in their own right.

Where dependants are ineligible to apply for DPs, EP/S Pass holders with fixed monthly salaries of at least SGD 6 000 may apply for **Long–Term Visit Passes (LTVPs)** for their eligible dependants: common–law spouses (recognised as such by their home country); unmarried stepchildren not legally adopted under 21 years; unmarried disabled children over 21 years; and parents (applicable for EP/S Pass holders with fixed monthly salary of at least SGD 12 000).

Singapore does not recognise same–sex unions. The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) does not issue DPs to partners in same–sex relationships, even if legally married in another country.

**Pre–approved Letter of Consent (PLOC).** Allows eligible Long–Term Visit Pass (LTVP) holders who are spouses or children of Singaporean or permanent residents to work in Singapore.

**Permits Foundation** Promotes access of accompanying spouses and partners of international staff to employment through improvements to work permit regulations.
Residence permits

Certain categories of employees, such as qualified professionals, technical personnel and skilled workers, may apply for permanent residence as soon as they obtain their EP/S Pass to work in Singapore. They may also apply for permanent residence for their spouse and unmarried children under 21 years.

Under the Global Investor Programme (GIP), foreign investors may apply for permanent residence for themselves and their immediate family members by making investments of at least SGD 2,500,000 in approved categories of business or investment activities. In some instances, the investment must be in a Singapore-incorporated entity, or to a designated GIP fund that invests in Singapore-based companies.

Successful applicants are required to make an investment in accordance with the approved business plan within six months of receiving the approval in principle. Applicants must provide evidence of the investment for final approval and conferring of permanent residence status. They must maintain the investment for a period of five years beginning on the date of final approval of permanent residence.

Registration

Foreign nationals are advised to register with their own embassy or consulate and to notify them of any subsequent changes of address. In some cases this can be done online.
Travel

Getting there

Air

Singapore

Singapore is served by Changi Airport Singapore (SIN), 18 km north-east of Singapore city centre.

Changi Airport Singapore is served by public bus (Go-Ahead Singapore line 36), coaches (Transtar Travel), hotel shuttle buses (WTS Travel), metro (MRT) and taxi (ComfortDelGro Taxi, Premier Taxis, SMRT Taxis and Trans-Cab). Gojek and Grab are popular ride-hailing apps.

Average transport costs from ECA's Cost of Living Survey (all costs are quoted in local currency except where stated otherwise):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singapore (Changi)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taxi − 2 miles/3 km within city, including tip:</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi − airport to city centre with luggage, including</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tip:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus − airport to city centre:</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train − airport to city centre:</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

International departure tax

No airport tax is levied on passengers upon embarkation at the airport.

Rail

Singapore can be reached from several cities in Malaysia by train. The journey from Kuala Lumpur is by air-conditioned express. Trains from Kuala Lumpur run daily (including sleeper services). Services are operated by Malaysian Railways (KTMB).

Road

It is possible to drive across the causeways to Singapore from West Malaysia. There are two land checkpoints, at Tuas in the west and Woodlands in the north. Both are open 24 hours. SBSTransit and Causeway Link operate cross-border bus services.

Water

A number of ferry companies including BatamFast and Sindo Ferry operate services between Indonesia and Singapore.

Health and safety

Personal safety

Crime generally poses a minimal threat in Singapore. Petty crime is an ever-present threat globally, but in Singapore, other criminal threats include scams. Criminal activity is most prevalent in areas with late-night bars, particularly in Clark and Robertson quays.

The trustworthiness, capabilities, and responsiveness of security services in Singapore are generally excellent. Police officers are typically able to speak English and other local languages, including Malay, Chinese, and Tamil.

The prevalence of violent demonstrations and/or anti-foreign sentiment in Singapore is minimal.

The threat of terrorism is low in Singapore. Known and specific threats exist, but Singapore must currently be considered a potential target of Islamic State-linked militants.

For most foreign nationals, the threat of kidnapping in Singapore is generally minimal. Victims are usually released unharmed and relatively quickly.

Singapore is generally economically, politically, and socially stable. Singapore is generally minimally impacted by regional developments, such as regional historical rivalries.
There are severe penalties for all drug offences.

It is illegal to drink alcohol in a public place between 22.30 and 07.00. Alcohol can be consumed between these hours in restaurants, bars and cafés. Geylang and Little India are designated 'Liquor Control Zones' where drinking in public places is prohibited on weekends, public holidays and the eve of public holidays.

Male homosexual acts are illegal in Singapore. However, the law is not proactively enforced. Openly gay and lesbian support groups and social venues exist.

The offence of 'outrage of modesty' (molestation) can result in fines.

On-the-spot fines are common and are issued for offences foreign visitors may be unaware of, e.g. littering, smoking in some public places or importing chewing gum.

Police permits are required for any outdoor public assembly or procession. Visitors should avoid street gatherings and public demonstrations as they might be illegal.

**Health risks**

Visitors to Singapore should take special precautions against tetanus. Special precautions against hepatitis A are sometimes advised, although infection is rare. Vaccinations against tuberculosis and hepatitis B are sometimes recommended.

**Hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD)** is common; young children are particularly at risk. Mosquito-borne illnesses such as dengue fever and chikungunya virus occur throughout the year. Dengue fever symptoms include a rash, fever, headaches and pain in muscles and joints. Visitors should take appropriate precautions to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes (e.g. covering up, use of a DEET-based repellent). There is a moderate risk of zika virus transmission; pregnant women should consider postponing non-essential travel until after the pregnancy.

The Singaporean authorities have put in place measures to limit the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

High levels of pollution haze are experienced from June to October from fires in Indonesia; health advisories are available from the National Environment Agency.

Food hygiene standards are generally high and mains water is safe to drink. However, shellfish and reheated foods carry risk, raw vegetables should be avoided, and fruit should be washed or peeled.

Expatriates should seek advice from their doctor/physician well in advance of departure.

**Travel advisories**

Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada
German Federal Foreign Office
Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA)
Netherlands Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken
New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade
République Française Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes
Spanish Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores y de Cooperación
United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)
U.S. Department of State – Bureau of Consular Affairs

**Travel money**

Currency regulations relate to the import and export of currencies based on normal travel expenses and are subject to frequent change. Expatriates should consult with the appropriate national bank for details on current payments and capital payments.

**Entering**

Local currency and foreign currencies may be imported without restriction. Amounts exceeding SGD 20 000 (or equivalent), including travellers’ cheques, bearer cheques, bills of exchange and promissory notes, must be declared on arrival.

Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA). Currency declaration form NP727.
Leaving

Local currency and foreign currencies may be exported without restriction. Amounts exceeding SGD 20 000 (or equivalent), including travellers’ cheques, bearer cheques, bills of exchange and promissory notes, must be declared on departure.

Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA). Currency declaration form NP727.

Duty–free allowances

Visitors to Singapore who have been outside of Singapore for at least 48 hours prior to arrival may import the following items free of duty:

- Alcohol: 1 litre of spirits, 1 litre of wine and 1 litre of beer; or 2 litres of wine and 1 litre of beer; or 1 litre of wine and 2 litres of beer (persons 18 years of age and older).
- Tobacco: All tobacco products must be declared on arrival as they are subject to tax and duty. N.B. The minimum age for the purchase, use, possession, sale and supply of tobacco products will rise from 20 to 21 years of age in 2021. Failure to comply carries fines.
- Other: Other goods, gifts, souvenirs and foods up to SGD 100 (stays outside Singapore of less than 48 hours); or SGD 500 (stays outside of Singapore of 48 hours or more). Certain foods are prohibited or controlled depending on county of origin and may be limited to a maximum amount or weight.

Free import of liquor products is not permitted if arriving from Malaysia. Visitors coming from third countries transiting Malaysia who did not enter Malaysia are exempt.

Getting around

Air

There are no scheduled internal flights.

Rail

Singapore Mass Rapid Transit (SMRT) covers much of the island. There are three Light Rail Transit (LRT) lines used by commuters.

Road

The island has an excellent road network, covering nearly 9 000 km. Traffic drives on the left. Unless otherwise indicated, the speed limit is 50 km/h on normal roads; upper limits on expressways can reach 90 km/h. Unleaded petrol/gasoline is available. Wearing seat belts in the front and back seats is mandatory. It is illegal to use a mobile/cellular phone while driving. Driving under the influence of alcohol is a serious offence and sentences include fines and imprisonment. Traffic police regularly carry out breath tests.

All motorists driving into the city and those travelling on some major roads are required to pay the Electronic Road Pricing (ERP).

Land Transport Authority (LTA)

Ministry of Transport (MOT)

One.Motoring

Buses

An extensive bus network serves all parts of the city and suburbs and across the causeway to Johor Bahru. Buses can get around more quickly than taxis or cars during the rush hour because of special bus lanes, but are often overcrowded at peak times.

Car hire

There are many car hire services, both international agencies and small local firms with offices at the airport and in major hotels. A valid national driving licence is required. However, an International Driving Permit (IDP) is preferred and is mandatory where the driver's national licence is not in English. A passport and credit card will be required to hire a car. The minimum age for hiring a car is 25 years.

A number of car hire companies offer a worldwide booking and reservation service online. Companies include:
Motoring

Severe restrictions on the use of private cars in the business district during rush hours and high taxes (import duty plus additional registration charge) are not acting as deterrents to private car ownership. Multinational companies, banks and the government offer cheap loans to their employees, which has increased ownership significantly. Singapore is one of the most expensive places in the world to own a car.

A Vehicle Quota System (VQS) sets a quota to the number of new vehicles to be registered in Singapore each year. This quota is calculated based on the allowable growth rate in vehicle population that is deemed sustainable for the long term.

Before purchasing a car, prospective car buyers must obtain a Certificate of Entitlement (COE), a permit available only in limited numbers and sold through a complex electronic online auction system, where prices vary from month to month. The successful bid price for the COE reflects the market clearing price that people are willing to pay to own a car. The vehicle entitlement is valid for ten years from the date of registration of the vehicle.

The Revised Off−Peak Car (ROPC), Off−Peak Car (OPC) and Weekend Car (WEC) Schemes offer car owners the option to save on registration and road taxes in return for restricted usage of their vehicles. Road taxes are renewable on a six−monthly or yearly basis, but can only be renewed if the vehicle has a valid inspection certificate. Many people take their cars to Johor Bahru for repairs as costs are lower.

Driving licence and car insurance

Foreign nationals may drive legally in Singapore with their home country driver's licences for up to 12 months after arrival. Those holding valid Employment Passes are required to present their home country driver's licences (in English or with an official translation) and pass a basic theory test in order to convert their foreign licences to local Singaporean licences. Singapore has driver's licence reciprocity with most other countries.

To comply with local legislation, car owners are required to take out insurance cover against third−party risks. Insurance can be taken out through the AAS Insurance.

Average car prices

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Compact SGD</th>
<th>Standard SGD</th>
<th>Premium SGD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New car price</td>
<td>123192</td>
<td>191777</td>
<td>315585</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The quoted prices include the cost of air−conditioning.
Average running costs

All costs are given in local currency except where stated otherwise.

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Compact</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Premium</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>1509</td>
<td>2539</td>
<td>3278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Tax</td>
<td>744</td>
<td>1214</td>
<td>2386</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Anyone wishing to buy a car or motorcycle has to bid for a Certificate of Entitlement (COE). Each month, a certain number of COEs are released for bidding and if successful, the vehicle entitlement is valid for ten years from the date of registration of the vehicle. The average car prices in this report include the cost of the COE. The price of a COE varies from month to month but was approximately SGD 40 990 per passenger car (above 1600cc) for October 2020.

The average cost of two routine services, comprising ten hours in total, is SGD 1 222. Servicing costs will vary according to car size, model and age of vehicle.

Motoring organisations

Automobile Association of Singapore (AA)

Water

Boat tours can be taken from Boat Quay and Clarke Quay. Services to the southern islands depart from the Marina South Pier. Ferries to Pulau Ubin leave from Changi Point Ferry Terminal.

Singapore

Transport in the city includes public buses (SBSTransit, SMRT Buses), the metro (MRT) and light rail (LRT). Licensed taxi companies include ComfortDelGro Taxi, Premier Taxis, SMRT Taxis and Trans-Cab. Gojek and Grab are popular ride-hailing apps.

Hotels

A wide variety of accommodation is available in all price categories. Standards are generally high. Many international hotel chains are represented. Hotels are fully air-conditioned. Many business hotels can be found in the Orchard Road area. The extent and quality of facilities is a feature of competition between hotels and most provide a swimming pool, health club, business services and shopping arcades as standard. There is no formal grading system.

Singapore Hotel Association (SHA). Those arriving at Changi Airport Singapore can obtain details of discounted prices from the SHA hotel reservations desk in the Arrivals Hall or visitors can make advance reservations through the online booking service.

Accommodation listed in this report is a sample selection of three, four and five star hotels available in the country. This is not an exhaustive list and other hotels are available.

Luxury Business Tourist

Mandarin Oriental Singapore, 5 Raffles Ave, Marina Sq, Singapore, 039797.
Located by the harbour, right across from the Esplanade (a major performing arts centre), adjacent to the shopping at Marina Bay, but also next to the city's prime business district.

Pan Pacific Singapore, 7 Raffles Blvd, Marina Sq, Singapore, 039595.
Located in the heart of Marina Bay, in close proximity to the central business district, with direct access, via sky bridge, to the International Convention & Exhibition Centre.

Crowne Plaza Changi Airport, 75 Airport Blvd #01–01, Singapore, 819664.
Located at the international airport. Connected by linkbridge to Terminal 3, with Terminals 1 and 2 accessible by SkyTrain. 10 minutes from Changi Business Park, Singapore Expo and 25 minutes from the city by taxi or MRT.
Holiday Inn Singapore Orchard City Centre, 11 Cavenagh Rd, Singapore, 229616. Located in the city centre, 2 minutes' walk from the shopping of Orchard Road and 25 minutes by taxi from the international airport.

Ibis Singapore on Bencoolen Hotel, 170 Bencoolen St, Singapore, 189657. Located close to Bugis Junction, 1.5 km from the city centre. 17 km from the international airport.

Village Hotel Bugis, 390 Victoria St, Singapore, 188061. Located in the heart of the central business district, only minutes from Bugis Village and Little India.

Average hotel prices in Singapore

Prices are quoted in local currency unless otherwise stated.

Range of hotel prices from ECA’s Daily Rates Report:

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<tr>
<td>351</td>
<td>905</td>
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<tr>
<td>240</td>
<td>538</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>366</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Relocation

Shipping

Personal effects and household goods

Household goods and personal effects may be imported to Singapore. The owner's presence may be required for Customs clearance. All shipments must arrive within six months of the owner's arrival in Singapore. Used household goods and personal effects may be imported duty-free provided they have been used for a minimum of six months abroad, are for the continued use of the owner for a minimum of three months, and the owner is to reside in Singapore for more than 12 months. All shipments are fully inspected by the Customs authority and all cartons are opened. Only one air and one surface shipment is permitted.

The following documents will be required: passport; residence permit and copy of application for residence permit; employment pass/green card (copy); declaration of facts (completed at origin and forwarded to the destination agent five to seven working days prior to the owner's arrival in Singapore (to obtain 7% goods and services tax (GST) waiver); GST relief form; letter from employer (including information about the assignment, position and length of stay); Customs declaration (confirming the goods have been owned and used for a minimum of six months); and wine and liquor declaration form (if applicable).

Singapore Customs

Cars

The importation of vehicles is discouraged with high duties and registration fees. Vehicles must be registered in the owner's name and must not be for resale. Dismantled vehicles may not be imported. Left-hand drive vehicles and vehicles over three years are prohibited.

The following documents will be required: original commercial invoice; letter from manufacturer confirming the date of manufacture; valid insurance policy; certificate of compliance with exhaust emissions standards; vehicle registration; owner's passport; inward declaration permit; Customs duty payment receipt; and temporary certificate of entitlement.

Singapore Customs

All vehicles must be verified by and registered through the Vehicle Inspection & Type Approval System (VITAS).

Further information is available from the Land Transport Authority (LTA) and from the official motoring portal One.Motoring.

Pets

Pets may be imported to Singapore.

Persons arriving with pets are required to obtain the following prior to arrival:

- Import Licence (valid for 30 days) from the Animal & Veterinary Service (AVS);
- veterinary certificate in accordance with the AVA's import regulations; and
- acceptance of the pet for quarantine at the Sembawang Animal Quarantine Station (SAQS) – cats/dogs from countries other than Australia, Cayman Islands, Denmark, Hong Kong SAR, Iceland, Irish Republic, Japan, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States (Guam and Hawaii only).

Persons intending to import pets to Singapore are required to notify the Changi Animal and Plant Quarantine Station (CAPQ) of the AVA of the following details, at least five working days before arrival at Changi Airport Singapore:

- passenger's name and local contact number;
- confirmed date and time of arrival;
- import permit number; and
- whether pet is travelling as accompanied baggage or manifested cargo.

Cats and dogs directly imported from Australia, Cayman Islands, Denmark, Hong Kong SAR, Iceland, Irish Republic, Japan, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States (Guam and Hawaii only) must be accompanied by an Airline Declaration, a copy of which must be attached to the carrying container (page 2 must be completed if the seal of the container has been broken).
When transiting pets via Singapore a Transhipment Licence from the AVA must be obtained. Pets arriving without an import licence are subject to immediate re-export or may be destroyed.

The Pet Hotel

Pet transport and insurance

Air Animal (United States) International pet moving services.

International Pet and Animal Transportation Association (IPATA) Links to pet shippers worldwide. Searchable database by IATA airport code or country.

Petplan Ltd (United Kingdom) Pet health insurance company with boarding kennel cover, worldwide transit cover and accident insurance.

Prohibited and restricted items

Prohibited imports

- Firearms and ammunition of any kind.
- Bulletproof clothing.
- Swords and knives.
- Telecommunications and radio equipment (including toy walkie-talkies).
- Controlled drugs and psychotropic substances.
- Pornography, obscene materials, publications, videos and software.
- Reproduction of copyright publications and videos.
- Seditious and treasonable materials.
- Cigarette lighters of pistol or revolver shape.
- Vaporisers (e-cigarettes, e-pipes, e-cigars, and refills).
- Chewing tobacco and imitation tobacco products.
- Chewing gum.
- Counterfeit currency and coins.
- Live or stuffed animals on the Endangered Species List.

Restricted imports

- Wine, liquor and tobacco products (subject to high duties and taxes; must be packed together and declared to Customs; an itemised list stating the brands, number of bottles and volume must be provided; no permit is required if part of the household goods shipment and in reasonable quantity).
- New items (subject to duty; invoices required).
- Duplicates of major appliances (only one of each type is permitted duty-free).
- CDs, DVDs and books (subject to censorship; inspection fees are levied; an itemised list stating the titles, authors and subjects must be provided).
- Antiques (duty-free but a detailed description and certificate of antiquity must be provided).
- Medicines (prescription required).
- Certain stuffed birds and animals (import licence required).
- Certain agricultural products (import licence required).

International removals and relocations

A number of companies will look after all removal problems. As well as organising the actual move, services include selling/managing property at home, finding suitable accommodation overseas and helping the expatriate family settle into a new environment. Companies include:

AGS
Banking

Opening a bank account

Singapore is a regional financial hub with well-developed banking and financial services. Electronic, mobile and phone banking are popular ways of managing finances. Foreign nationals may open current and savings accounts with local and international banks in Singapore. Accounts may be opened online or in branch.

Applicants require a passport, employment pass, proof of address (utility bill) and a reference from the current bank. Dependent spouses may not open individual accounts but must operate joint bank accounts with working spouses. Although interest rates on savings accounts are low, such accounts are a secure and convenient way of managing money. Most banks require an initial deposit of SGD 500 or SGD 1,000. Most banks charge a small monthly fee if the balance falls below a set amount.

Savings accounts come with passbooks and ATM facilities. Some banks offer debit cards with certain types of savings accounts.

Current accounts are required for payments by cheque. As with savings accounts, current accounts can be used for deposits and withdrawals. Current accounts pay no interest. They require a minimum initial deposit of SGD 1,000 to SGD 3,000, depending on the bank. Banks may charge a fall-below service fee if the average daily balance in the account falls below a minimum amount. Some banks may also charge a small transaction fee per cheque if the monthly average balance falls below a certain amount. Current accounts usually offer ATM facilities and sometimes debit card facilities. It may take around five working days to activate an account.

Banking hours

08.00/09.00/09.15/09.30 to 15.00/16.30/16.45 Monday to Friday.
09.30 to 11.30/12.30 Saturday.
09.30 to 15.00 Sunday (selected retail bank branches).

Central bank

Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS), Bank of issue.

Commercial banks

Australia and New Zealand Banking Group (ANZ)
Bangkok Bank
Bank Negara Indonesia (BNI)
Bank of China (BOC)
Bank of East Asia (BEA)
Bank of India (BOI)
Bank of Singapore
BNP Paribas
Citibank
DBS Bank
HL Bank
HSBC
ICICI Bank
Indian Bank
Indian Overseas Bank (IOB)
Lloyds Bank
OCBC Bank
RHB Bank
Standard Chartered Bank
State Bank of India (SBI)
UCO Bank
United Overseas Bank (UOB)

Insurance

Insurance can be taken out locally in Singapore. Companies include:

AAS Insurance
Allied World Insurance
China Taiping Insurance
ECICS Insurance
India International Insurance
Liberty Insurance
MS First Capital Insurance
MSIG Insurance
QBE Insurance
Sompo Insurance
Tokio Marine Insurance Group
United Overseas Insurance

General Insurance Association of Singapore (GIA)

Finding a home

Leasing arrangements

Leases are typically for two years with the option to renew for one or two more years. A diplomatic clause or ‘break clause’ can be incorporated into the agreement, usually valid after the first year and requiring two months’ notice.

The tenant is accountable for all minor repairs to fixtures and fittings (within the monetary limit indicated in the tenancy agreement), whereas the landlord is expected to pay for major repairs.

A holding deposit is payable with the application for the property and amounts to one month’s rent. If the property is then occupied, this payment will usually constitute the first month’s rent.

A further security deposit will need to be paid when the tenancy is agreed, usually equivalent to 2–3 months’ rent.

If the monthly rent is above SGD 3 000, then the landlord is liable for the brokerage fee. If the monthly rent is equal to or below SGD 3 000, then the tenant is liable to pay the brokerage fee, which is half a month’s rent per year of the lease.

Rent is usually reviewed two to three months before the expiry of the lease, if the lease is to be renewed.

Estate agents and relocation agents

Singapore

Colliers Singapore
1 Raffles Place, 45–00 One Raffles Place, Singapore 048616

Dennis Wee
190 Lorong 6 Toa Payoh 03–512, Toa Payoh Shopping Centre, Singapore 310190

Home Equity
22 Yio Chu Kang Road 02–06, Singapore 545535

Jack Sheo
480 Lorong 6, Toa Payoh #10–01, Singapore 310480

Landplus Group
883 North Bridge Road 07–04, Southbank, Singapore 198785

Savills Singapore
Branches available all over Singapore

SIRVA Relocation Services
#06–01 Keppel Tower, 10 Hoe Chiang Road, Singapore 089315
Serviced and short-term accommodation

Newly arrived expatriates may have the option of living in serviced apartments in apartment hotels while trying to find long-term accommodation. Serviced apartments are furnished and will usually have a weekly cleaning and laundry service. The rental cost is inclusive of all furnishings, television sets and cooking appliances. The monthly cost of serviced accommodation varies depending on length of stay, location, property size and time of year, and rates should be confirmed at time of booking. If available, serviced apartments are often a better option than hotels for expatriates on short-term assignments. However, many hotels offer suites or reduced rates for longer stays.

Singapore

Far East Hospitality Serviced Residences
Branches available all over Singapore

Fraser Suites Singapore
491A River Valley Road, Singapore 248372

Great World Serviced Apartments
2 Kim Seng Walk, Singapore 239404

Le Grove Serviced Apartments
32 Orange Grove Road, Singapore 258354

Vision Apartments
10 Claymore Road, Singapore 229540

Residential areas

Singapore

District 9

District 9 refers to the area surrounding the busy retail hub of Orchard, including the neighbourhoods of Cairnhill, Killiney, Leonie Hill and Oxley. It is a relatively small area, and is bordered by Districts 10 and 11, which share many of its amenities. District 9 is extremely popular with expatriates, not only because it offers excellent shopping and recreational amenities, but also because of the close proximity to the Central Business District and easy access to several international schools.

Orchard Road, Singapore’s main shopping street, is the main thoroughfare of District 9. Lined with malls, it offers an extensive range of upmarket shops and numerous dining options. The Emerald Hill conservation area, just off Orchard
Singapore Country Profile

However, this has not affected the level of private car ownership. Automobiles; the purchase of a car is therefore a prolonged and complex process, and car ownership is very costly. It is worth noting that Singapore's government has implemented a series of measures to restrict the usage of automobiles, including vehicle quotas, Certificates of Entitlement, road and vehicle taxes, registration fees and pay-per-use road charges. The purchase of a car is therefore a prolonged and complex process, and car ownership is very costly. However, this has not affected the level of private car ownership.

Apartment are the predominant type of accommodation in this area, and availability is reasonable. There are also a few houses available to rent.

District 10

District 10 is an established expatriate residential area encompassing the desirable Holland Village and Tanglin neighbourhoods. The busy thoroughfare of Bukit Timah Road borders the district to the north. It is flanked by apartment buildings to the east, and features boutiques, grocery shops and restaurants set in a number of upmarket shopping plazas. The surrounding areas are leafy and low-rise, with a pleasant suburban atmosphere. Holland Village features plenty of lush greenery and peaceful, winding roads lined with single-family houses. Holland Road is the main thoroughfare, and is surrounded by high-end apartment blocks and a good range of shops, bars and restaurants. The quiet residential area of Tanglin features many grand houses with gardens, and plays host to embassies and diplomatic residences. The extensive shopping and recreational facilities of Orchard lie to the east, and there are several bars and restaurants clustered around Dempsey Road. The Singapore Botanic Gardens, situated in the centre of District 10, are one of Singapore's most scenic and popular parks. The tranquil and picturesque gardens host regular outdoor performances of classical music. The members—only Tanglin Golf Course is also located in the vicinity.

Public transport links are good, with many bus connections to the centre. Subway connections are only available from the southern edges of District 10 or from Orchard, with journey times to the city centre taking between five and 20 minutes, depending on the route taken. Bus journeys typically take between 15 and 30 minutes, although some areas are not situated along bus routes and residents may choose to rely on taxis or personal cars.

It is worth noting that Singapore's government has implemented a series of measures to restrict the usage of automobiles; the purchase of a car is therefore a prolonged and complex process, and car ownership is very costly. However, this has not affected the level of private car ownership.

Both apartments and houses are available. Availability is good.

District 11

District 11 is situated to the north of Districts 9 and 10 and encompasses the upmarket neighbourhoods of Newton, Novena and Chancery to the east, and the residential areas between Dunearn Road and the Central Catchment Nature Reserve to the west. Newton and Novena lie just to the north of Orchard. These areas feature both high-rise and low-rise apartment blocks, as well as some single-family houses, all set on tree-lined streets. Newton is within walking distance of the extensive shopping and recreational amenities of Orchard Road, while Novena plays host to the Novena Square and United Square malls. Newton Circus Hawker Centre, a large complex of food stalls selling freshly-prepared local food, is also within easy reach. Further west, the area between Dunearn Road and the Central Catchment Nature Reserve has a suburban feel, with houses and low-rise apartment blocks on quiet streets, surrounded by plenty of lush greenery. A good range of shopping facilities is easily accessible, with several upmarket shopping plazas dotted along Bukit Timah and Dunearn Roads. The vast expanse of the Central Catchment Nature Reserve borders District 11 to the north-west. The tropical forest features an extensive network of scenic hiking routes and numerous golf courses.

Both Newton and Novena are served by the MRT, with journeys to the city centre taking approximately ten minutes. The MRT does not reach the western part of District 11. However, many bus routes serve Dunearn Road, with typical journeys into the city taking between 20 and 40 minutes, depending on the distance travelled.

It is worth noting that Singapore's government has implemented a series of measures to restrict the usage of automobiles; the purchase of a car is therefore a prolonged and complex process, and car ownership is very costly. However, this has not affected the level of private car ownership.
Both apartments and houses are available in this area. Apartments are the main type of accommodation in Newton and Novena, while houses predominate further west. Availability is good.

East Coast

This peaceful, leafy residential area stretches eastwards from the city centre all the way to Changi International Airport and comprises Districts 15 and 16. It includes the neighbourhoods of Marine Parade and Siglap, popular with expatriates for their proximity to the city centre, picturesque waterfront setting and easy access to the international airport. The East Coast is characterised by a varied mix of high−rise and low−rise accommodation, with both modern complexes and older, character properties available throughout. Marine Parade plays host to the expansive Parkway Parade shopping centre, and is within easy reach of the numerous local restaurants along Geylang Road. There is a good range of local shops in the Siglap area, catering for most everyday needs. For more extensive shopping facilities, larger malls can be found just to the west, on Changi Road and in the Katong area. The grounds and sandy beaches of East Coast Park span all along the coast. The wide range of recreation facilities include tennis courts, bicycle paths, outdoor fitness equipment, a water sports centre, as well as several bars and restaurants. Further recreation opportunities are situated towards the airport, where several golf courses are located.

The MRT extends out to the east, with stations dotted around Changi Road; journeys to the city centre typically take 25−35 minutes. The area is well served by buses, which link to the MRT stations along Changi Road.

It is worth noting that Singapore’s government has implemented a series of measures to restrict the usage of automobiles; the purchase of a car is therefore a prolonged and complex process, and car ownership is very costly. However, this has not affected the level of private car ownership.

Both apartments and houses are available. Availability is good.

Woodlands

This area is situated in the northern part of the island in District 25, north of the Central Catchment Nature Reserve. Although further from the city centre than the other areas covered, it is popular with expatriates and their families due to the close proximity of the Singapore American School. It is also convenient for travel to Johor Bahru in Malaysia along the causeway. The Causeway Point mall is the area's main retail hub, with a cinema, large supermarket, and a good range of dining options. There are also some small shopping plazas dotted around the neighbourhood, with shops catering for everyday needs. Woodlands is a calm, quiet area, with parks and open spaces dotted throughout. The largest, Woodlands Town Garden, contains a lake, lush greenery, and architectural elements which reference Singapore's Chinese and Malay heritage. The landscape in Woodlands is one of large apartment blocks on winding, tree–lined streets, with few of the imposing skyscrapers found closer to the city centre. There are also some large clusters of houses in which expatriates tend to live.

The MRT extends out north into Woodlands and takes approximately 40 minutes to reach the city centre. The same journey by car takes 35 minutes, traffic depending.

It is worth noting that Singapore’s government has implemented a series of measures to restrict the usage of automobiles; the purchase of a car is therefore a prolonged and complex process, and car ownership is very costly. However, this has not affected the level of private car ownership.

Both houses and apartments are available, although some time may be needed to find a suitable property.

District 3, District 4 and District 5

Districts 3, 4 and 5 are located centrally to the west from downtown along the coastline.

District 3 is a major residential area located to the south of Districts 9 and 10, which consists of the Queenstown and Tiong Bahru neighbourhoods. Both are home to some of the oldest property estates in Singapore, with Queenstown being named after Queen Elizabeth II to mark her coronation in 1953. Queenstown has a number of good shopping centres, including Queensway Shopping Centre, as well as some great restaurants. Tiong Bahru is an up−and−coming neighbourhood known for its rustic charm and the numerous indie boutiques and cafes it offers. The Tiong Bahru Market and Food Centre is stated as being one of the best hawker centres in Singapore.

District 4 has undergone great change in recent years to become one of the most vibrant areas in Singapore, boasting beautiful views of the Strait of Singapore. This, accompanied with its central location to the south of District 3, has made it a coveted residential area. The district encompasses the neighbourhoods of Telok Blangah and Keppel Harbour. It is known to be very child−friendly with a wide range of amenities and activities for kids at the Harbourfront area including KidZania and Adventure Cove Waterpark. Telok Blangah is situated close to the Telok Blangah Hill Park and Mount Faber Park, offering great opportunities to keep fit and admire the scenic view from the top of Mount Faber. Keppel Harbour is known for its luxury waterfront homes and is a short distance to VivoCity, Singapore's largest retail centre.

District 5 is located to the west of Districts 3 and 4, and comprises the neighbourhoods of Clementi and Pasir Panjang in the centre and Buona Vista in the east. The district is home to many easily accessible parks and green spaces, including the Clementi Woods Park, Kent Ridge Park and the West Coast Park. Clementi is well served by a wide variety of
amenities, including the Clementi Swimming Complex, Clementi Stadium and 24-hour supermarkets. Buona Vista is a bustling centre and has become increasingly popular since the development of the Star Vista shopping centre.

Districts 3, 4 and 5 are all well served by the MRT. From District 3, journey times are approximately 15 minutes to the city centre from Tiong Bahru and 30 minutes from Queenstown. From District 4, journey lengths are approximately 25 minutes from Tiong Bahru and 20 minutes from the Harbourfront. From District 5 journey lengths are typically 30–45 minutes.

Accommodation consists mainly of apartments. Availability is good.

**District 21 and District 23**

Districts 21 and 23 are located further out from the central areas, on the western side of the Central Catchment Reserve.

District 21 is approximately 10 km from the central business district, situated to the west of Districts 10 and 11. The main residential area is Bukit Timah. Compared to other places in the outer edges of the city, Bukit Timah is a desirable place to live. This is mainly due to the wide variety of lush greenery and leisure activities that it offers, including the Botanical Gardens, Bukit Timah Nature Reserve and the Bukit Timah Saddle Club. The area is also well-catered by several shopping centres, including Serene Centre, Sixth Avenue and Beauty World Shopping Centre.

District 23 is a peaceful neighbourhood tucked away from the busy city centre without being too far out from the rest of the city. It is situated to the west of District 20, and encompasses the neighbourhoods of Bukit Batok and Bukit Panjang. Bukit Panjang is an excellent location for nature enthusiasts, as it is situated right next to the Bukit Timah Hill, Singapore’s first nature reserve. Bukit Batok is a vibrant residential area well served by many leisure places, including the West Mall and Bukit Batok Swimming Complex.

It takes approximately 30–50 minutes to get to the city centre from Districts 21 and 23.

Accommodation consists of both apartments and houses. Apartments are readily available, while some time is needed to find a suitable house.

**Household costs**

**Furniture and household goods**

Rented accommodation is either unfurnished or fully furnished. Most owners prefer to let out their properties unfurnished, but also providing appliances like air conditioners as well as a cooker, oven, refrigerator, washing machine, drier and curtains. Where the property is let fully furnished, this normally includes a dining room set, lounge set and bedroom furniture, as well as the items previously listed. Crockery and linen provision is rare. Furnished properties will typically be around 20–30% more expensive than unfurnished properties.

Furniture of good quality can be bought in Singapore, but some expatriates prefer to bring their own. Cane furniture, manufactured locally, is popular and reasonably priced. Second-hand appliances can be purchased at used appliance shops, or can be rented.

To purchase a furniture package suitable for a single assignee or couple would cost approximately SGD 9 500. This package includes the following items: one sofa and two armchairs, one table and six chairs, one bookcase, one double bedframe and mattress, one wardrobe, one chest of drawers, two bedside tables and two lamps.

To purchase a furniture package suitable for a child would cost approximately SGD 3 000. This package includes the following items: one single bedframe and mattress, one wardrobe or one chest of drawers, one study table and chair, and one desk lamp.

**Singapore**

**Castlery**
Unit 01–03A, 2 Alexandra Road, Singapore, 159919

**Expats Furniture Rental**
1 Bukit Batok Crescent, 03–41 Wcega Plaza S, Singapore 658064

**Home Essentials Singapore**
102E Pasir Panjang Road, Citilink Warehouse 06–01, Singapore 118529

**IKEA Alexandra**
317 Alexandra Road, Singapore 159965

**V hive**
Branches available all over Singapore
Utilities

Public utilities (water, refuse collection and electricity) and telephone charges are excluded from the lease and the financial responsibility lies with the tenant. Bills are payable monthly.

Utilities are all reported to be reliable.

Air conditioning will already be installed in expatriate accommodation.

Average cost of utilities

The average cost of utilities equivalent to the expenditure of a four−person household for all types of accommodation in Singapore is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Utilities</th>
<th>SGD per annum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heat &amp; Lighting</td>
<td>5 376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total cost</td>
<td>6 690</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Electricity

The electricity supply is 230 V, AC 50 Hz for domestic usage. Plug fittings with three pins, two−flat and one rectangular that form a triangle (Type G), are commonly used. Plug fittings with three−round pins in a triangular position of varying size (Types D and M) may still be found. Most hotels have a transformer to reduce voltage to 110 V where necessary. Bayonet lamp fittings are the most common although screw types will also be found. Both bayonet and screw fitting bulbs are readily available.

What Plug Information regarding various country−specific voltage types and electrical fittings.

Gas

Gas is widely used for cooking and water heating. Most private houses use bottled gas or piped gas.

Water

The water supply is good and mains water is safe to drink, although some expatriates prefer to drink bottled water.

Refuse collection

Singapore has an efficient daily refuse collection service. Residents are charged at a flat rate. There is a strong focus on recycling, and residents are expected to separate their waste for the fortnightly recycling collections. There are also recycling centres and colour coded bins scattered throughout the island for residents to take their recyclables to. 90% of non−recyclable waste is incinerated (with the heat energy thus produced recovered for electricity generation), and the rest is sent to Singapore’s offshore landfill site.

Education

Places at local state schools are rarely available for the children of expatriates because of overcrowding. Foreign minors or students who do not hold a Dependant’s Pass, must apply for a Student’s Pass from the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) to enrol in full−time educational programmes in Singapore, both private and public. Many schools offer their home country curriculum and the International Baccalaureate (IB) programme.

Where applicable, all costs are quoted in local currency except where stated otherwise.
Singapore

ACS (International)
61 Jalan Hitam Manis, 278475
Ages: 12 to 18
Languages: English
Curriculum: International, UK
Boarding: Yes
Fees (day pupils) up to: 36960 payable per annum

Anglo–Chinese School (Independent)
121 Dover Road, 139650
Ages: 12 to 18
Languages: English
Curriculum: International
Boarding: Yes
Fees (day pupils) up to: 30000 payable per annum

Australian International School
1 Lorong Chuan, District 19, 556818
Ages: 3 to 18
Languages: English
Curriculum: International, Australian
Fees (day pupils) up to: 42852 payable per annum

Canadian International School
7 Jurong West Street 41, 649414
Ages: 3 to 18
Languages: English
Curriculum: International
Fees (day pupils) up to: 40900 payable per annum

Chatsworth International School
Orchard Campus, 37 Emerald Hill Road, 229313
Ages: 2 to 18
Languages: English, Local
Curriculum: International, UK
Fees (day pupils) up to: 32788 payable per annum

Dover Court International School
301 Dover Road, 139644
Ages: 3 to 18
Languages: English
Curriculum: International, UK
Fees (day pupils) up to: 33855 payable per annum

DPS International School
36 Aroozoo Avenue, 539842
Ages: 2 to 18
Languages: English
Curriculum: International, UK, Indian
Fees (day pupils) up to: 15408 payable per annum

Dulwich College Singapore
71 Bukit Batok West Avenue 8, 658966
Ages: 2 to 18
Languages: English
Curriculum: International, UK
Fees (day pupils) up to: 46840 payable per annum
Eton House International School Broadrick  
51 Broadrick Road, 439501  
Ages: 1 to 11  
Languages: English  
Curriculum: International  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 29526 payable per annum

Eton House International School Orchard  
10 Tanglin Road, 247908  
Ages: 5 to 18  
Languages: English  
Curriculum: International  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 34989 payable per annum

GEMS World Academy  
2 Yishun Street 42, Singapore 768039  
Ages: 3 to 18  
Languages: English  
Curriculum: International  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 40640 payable per annum

German European School Singapore  
72 Bukit Tinggi Road, 289760  
Ages: 1 to 18  
Languages: English, German  
Curriculum: International, German  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 34810 payable per annum

Global Indian International School  
1 and 3 Mei Chin Road, Queenstown, 149253  
Ages: 3 to 18  
Languages: English  
Curriculum: International, UK, Indian  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 31074 payable per annum

Hillside World Academy  
11 Hillside Drive, 548926  
Ages: 3 to 18  
Languages: English, Mandarin  
Curriculum: International  
Boarding: Yes  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 33900 payable per annum

Hollandse School  
65 Bukit Tinggi Road, 289757  
Ages: 2 to 12  
Languages: English, Dutch  
Curriculum: International, Dutch  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 23150 payable per annum

Hwa Chong International School  
663 Bukit Timah Road, Singapore 269783  
Ages: 12 to 18  
Languages: English  
Curriculum: International  
Boarding: Yes  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 28890 payable per annum

Insword Institute  
100 Beach Road, 19 Floor, Shaw Tower, Singapore 189702  
Ages: 12 to 18  
Languages: English  
Curriculum: International, UK  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 34000 payable per annum
International Community School  
27A Jubilee Road, 128575  
Ages: 4 to 18  
Languages: English  
Curriculum: US  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 33635 payable per annum  

ISS International School of Singapore  
High School, 21 Preston Road, 109355  
Ages: 5 to 18  
Languages: English  
Curriculum: International  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 41354 payable per annum  

Konohana Kindergarten  
16 Ramsgate Road, 437462  
Ages: 2 to 5  
Languages: English, Japanese  
Curriculum: Japanese  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 15600 payable per annum  

Lycee Francais de Singapour  
3000 Ang Mo Kio Avenue 3, 569928  
Ages: 3 to 18  
Languages: English, French  
Curriculum: French  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 26990 payable per annum  

Middleton International School  
2 Tampines Street 92, Singapore 528889  
Ages: 3 to 18  
Languages: English  
Curriculum: International, UK  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 19376 payable per annum  

Nexus International School Singapore  
201 Ulu Pandan Road, 596468  
Ages: 3 to 18  
Languages: English  
Curriculum: International, UK  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 40760 payable per annum  

One World International School  
696 Upper Changi Road East, 486826  
Ages: 3 to 16  
Languages: English  
Curriculum: International, UK  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 21546 payable per annum  

Overseas Family School  
81 Pasir Ris Heights, 519292  
Ages: 4 to 18  
Languages: English  
Curriculum: International, UK  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 41000 payable per annum  

Pat's School House  
15A Changi Business Park, Central 1, #07-01 The Eightrium, 486035  
Ages: 2 to 6  
Languages: English  
Curriculum: International  
Fees (day pupils) up to: 19902 payable per annum
Rosemary Hall Montessori Kindergarten
14 Robinson Road, Far East Finance Building, #05−01, 048545
Ages: 2 to 6
Languages: English
Curriculum: International, Montessori
Fees (day pupils) up to: 18500 payable per annum

Rosemount International School
25 Ettrick Terrace, 458588
Ages: 2 to 7
Languages: English
Curriculum: International
Fees (day pupils) up to: 21952 payable per annum

Saint Joseph's Institution International School
490 Thomson Road, 298191
Ages: 4 to 18
Languages: English
Curriculum: International
Boarding: Yes
Fees (day pupils) up to: 34058 payable per annum

Singapore American School
40 Woodlands Street 41, 738547
Ages: 3 to 18
Languages: English
Curriculum: US
Fees (day pupils) up to: 35328 payable per annum

Singapore Korean International School
71 Bukit Tinggi Road, Singapore 289759
Ages: 2 to 18
Languages: Korean
Curriculum: Korean
Fees (day pupils) up to: 21346 payable per annum

St Francis Methodist School
492 Upper Bukit Timah Road, 678095
Ages: 12 to 18
Languages: English
Curriculum: International, UK, Singaporean, Australian
Fees (day pupils) up to: 20501 payable per annum

St Gerard's School
231 Mountbatten Road, Block B, 01−01, 397999
Ages: 2 to 6
Languages: English
Curriculum: International

Stamford American International School
279 Upper Serangoon Road, (1 Woodleigh Lane), 347691
Ages: 2 to 18
Languages: English
Curriculum: International
Fees (day pupils) up to: 42590 payable per annum

Swiss School Singapore
38 Swiss Club Road, 288140
Ages: 2 to 12
Languages: English, German
Curriculum: International, Swiss
Fees (day pupils) up to: 24720 payable per annum
Tanglin Trust School
95 Portsdown Road, 139299
Ages: 3 to 18
Languages: English
Curriculum: International, UK
Fees (day pupils) up to: 45828 payable per annum

The Japanese School Singapore
Primary School, Clementi Campus, 95 Clementi Road, 129782
Ages: 6 to 14
Languages: Japanese
Curriculum: Japanese
Fees (day pupils) up to: 7639 payable per annum

The Little Skool House International
229 Mountbatten Road, 398007
Ages: 1 to 6
Languages: English, Local
Curriculum: International

United World College of South East Asia
1207 Dover Road, 139654
Ages: 4 to 18
Languages: English
Curriculum: International, UK
Boarding: Yes
Fees (day pupils) up to: 38955 payable per annum

Waseda Shibuya Senior High School
57 West Coast Road, 127366
Ages: 15 to 18
Languages: Japanese
Curriculum: Japanese
Boarding: Yes
Fees (day pupils) up to: 22870 payable per annum

International schools networks

Finding the right school can be an important part of planning for going on assignment. The following organisations offer educational support for expatriates:

Agence pour l'Enseignement Français à l'Étranger (AEFE) Serves and promotes a worldwide network of over 500 French schools.

Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA) Membership organisation.

British Schools in the Middle East (BSME) Organisation for English medium, British curriculum schools.

Comité pour Ecoles suisses à l'étranger (Switzerland) Swiss overseas schools.

Council of British International Schools (COBIS) A membership association of British schools worldwide.

European Council of International Schools (ECIS) Publishes the annual ECIS International Schools Directory.

Good Schools Guide International (GSGI) Provides independent reviews of English−language international schools worldwide.

Independent Schools Council (ISC) (UK) Independent schools in the United Kingdom.

International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) Offers IB programmes in over 130 countries worldwide.

Mission laïque française Worldwide network of non−religious French schools.

Stichting Nederlands Onderwijs in het Buitenland (NOB) (Netherlands) Schooling for Dutch children temporarily overseas.

The International Montessori Index Provides detailed comparative information to assist in the selection of schools and training centres.
Weltverband Deutscher Auslandsschulen (WDA) Global association of German foreign schools.

**Distance learning**

In some assignment locations, the difficulties associated with children's education can be such that distance learning is a more feasible option. This method of teaching uses a combination of internet and paper sources to enable students to follow a set curriculum without being physically present in a classroom.

Distance learning can be used as an alternative to traditional education when local schools do not offer a suitable curriculum and international schools are unavailable. It allows expatriate children to maintain the educational standards of their home country. This method of education may also be considered when international schools are either oversubscribed, too expensive or require debentures to secure a place.

It can help prevent gaps in the education of children who are often moving to different locations by allowing them to follow a set curriculum without the upheaval of moving schools. It can also assist with reintegration once an assignment is complete, as children can re-join schools in their home countries more easily, having not fallen behind or been studying a different curriculum.

The following organisations provide distance learning services (curriculum):

- Distance Education ACT (Australian)
- Distance Education Queensland (Australian)
- External Education SA (Australian)
- Northern Territory Distance Learning (Australian)
- NSW Rural and Distant Education (Australian)
- SIDE WA (Australian)
- Tasmanian eSchool (Australian)
- Virtual School Victoria (Australian)
- Alberta Distance Learning Centre (Canadian)
- Fraser Valley Distance Education School (Canadian)
- CNED (French)
- Cours Lengendre (French)
- Cours Sainte Anne (French)
- Deutsche Fernschule (German)
- Forum-DistancE-Learning (Germany)
- Wereldschool (Netherlands)
- Globalskolen (Norwegian)
- Briteschool (UK)
- First College (UK)
- ICS (UK)
- InterHigh Education (UK)
- Primary Home Education UK (UK)
- Worldwide Education Service (UK)
- Ablaze Academy (US)
- American School (US)
- Calvert Homeschool (US)
- Citizens' High School (US)
- Laurel Springs School (US)
- The Keystone School (US)
Sports and social clubs

There is an excellent selection of sports and social clubs available for the use of expatriates and their families.

Singapore

American Club
10 Claymore Hill, Singapore 229573

Australian and New Zealand Association
47A Kampong Bahru Road, Singapore 169361

British Club
73 Bukit Tinggi Road, Singapore 289761

Hollandse Club
22 Camden Park, Singapore 299814

Keppel Club
Bukit Chermin Road, Singapore 109918

Republic of Singapore Yacht Club
52 West Coast Ferry Road, Singapore 126887

Seletar Country Club
101 Seletar Club Road, Singapore 798273

Sentosa Golf Club
27 Bukit Manis Road, Singapore 099892

Singapore Cricket Club
Connaught Drive, Singapore 179681

Singapore Island Country Club
180 Island Club Road, Singapore 578774

Swiss Club
36 Swiss Club Road, Singapore 288139

Tanah Merah Country Club
25 Changi Coast Road, Singapore 499803

The Tanglin Club
5 Stevens Road, Singapore 257814

Virgin Active
Tower 2, 1 Raffles Place, Singapore 048616

Warren Golf and Country Club
81 Choa Chu Kang Way, Singapore 688263
### Everyday

#### The workplace

#### Public holidays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>1 January, Friday</td>
<td>New Year's Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>12 February, Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>2021</td>
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<td>Hari Raya Puasa (End of Ramadan)</td>
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<td>26 May, Wednesday</td>
<td>Vesak Day (Buddha Day)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Hari Raya Haji (Feast of Sacrifice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
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<td>National Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>4 November, Thursday</td>
<td>Deepavali</td>
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<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>25 December, Saturday</td>
<td>Christmas Day</td>
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<th>Year</th>
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<td>15 April, Friday</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Labour Day</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Hari Raya Puasa (End of Ramadan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>3 May, Tuesday</td>
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<td>Vesak Day (Buddha Day)</td>
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<td>16 May, Monday</td>
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<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>9 August, Tuesday</td>
<td>National Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>24 October, Monday</td>
<td>Deepavali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>25 December, Sunday</td>
<td>Christmas Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>26 December, Monday</td>
<td>Christmas Holiday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Public holidays falling on a Sunday are moved to the following Monday. Where two public holidays coincide, an extra day may be given immediately after. Muslim holidays are coordinated with Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia and Malaysia. The date of Deepavali is based on the Indian almanacs and is announced by the Ministry of Manpower towards the end of the preceding year. Embassies usually observe the local holidays together with some or all of their own national holidays.

Muslim festivals are calculated according to local sightings of various phases of the moon – the dates given are approximate. During the lunar month of Ramadan preceding Eid al−Fitr, normal business may be disrupted as Muslims fast during the day and feast at night. This may continue into Eid al−Fitr itself. The festivals of Eid al−Fitr and Eid al−Adha may last between two and ten days, depending on the region.

#### Office hours

08.30/09.00 to 17.00/17.30/18.00 Monday to Friday. A one−hour break is usually taken between 13.00 and 14.00. Some companies open 08.30 to 17.00 Monday to Friday and 08.30 to 13.00 Saturday.

#### Business practices

Singapore business culture is generally formal, straightforward and international in outlook. The workforce is highly skilled and productive. Status and hierarchy are important, and decisions taken by senior management are rarely questioned or criticised, at least in public.

Appointments should be made at least two weeks in advance. Small talk usually precedes any business negotiations and visitors may be asked about their family or home life. There are no restrictions or differences for female business visitors.

Punctuality should be observed.
There are four official languages – English, Malay, Mandarin and Tamil. English is widely spoken in business and official circles, although translators and interpreters can be found through hotel business centres if required. Most Singaporeans are bilingual and speak English and their mother tongue.

Typical business dress includes dark trousers, shirts and ties for men and blouses and skirts or trousers for women. Allowances are made for the hot, humid climate and jackets are not usually required.

Business cards are essential. They should be presented with both hands with the name facing the recipient. Elaborate bowing is unnecessary; a firm handshake is sufficient.

When addressing Chinese people, the family name is given first; when addressing Malay people, the first of their two family names should be used. Singaporeans of Indian descent should be addressed by their family name.

Personal business relationships and networking are important. Etiquette varies between different ethnic groups.

**Trade organisations**

ADB–DutchCham (Singapore)
American Chamber of Commerce in Singapore (AmCham Singapore)
Australian Chamber of Commerce, Singapore (AustCham)
Belgian Luxembourg Business Group in Singapore (BLBG)
British Chamber of Commerce Singapore (BritCham Singapore)
Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Singapore (CanCham)
Danish Business Association of Singapore (DABS)
European Chamber of Commerce in Singapore (EuroCham)
French Chamber of Commerce in Singapore (FCCS)
Irish Chamber of Commerce (Singapore)
Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry Singapore (JCCI)
Norwegian Business Association (Singapore) (NBAS)
Singapore Business Federation (SBF)
Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI)
Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB Singapore)
Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SICCI)
Singapore International Chamber of Commerce (SICC)
Singaporean–German Chamber of Industry and Commerce (SGC)
Swedish Chamber of Commerce Singapore (SwedCham)

**Clothing**

Singaporeans dress conservatively but with style. Cool and washable cottons and cotton blends are the best fabric choices in Singapore’s heat and humidity. A jacket or sweater may be required as air-conditioning can be extreme. Men will typically wear lightweight suits in the evenings when dining in hotels, restaurants and clubs. Women wear short- or long-sleeved and sleeveless dresses. Casual summer daytime wear is appropriate for everyday activities. Children typically wear local ready-made clothes, although imported brands are available. Ready-made shoes are available, but large sizes are available only in the more expensive European imports. Sports shoes in popular brands are readily available.

Frequent laundering is necessary, and clothes fade and wear rapidly. Laundry facilities are generally speedy and efficient, and most hotels have their own laundries where a 24-hour service is usually available. Dry-cleaning facilities are also common but expensive and not always reliable.

**Money**

**Currency**

The unit of currency is the Singapore dollar (SGD) (symbol: $), divided into 100 cents. The following denominations are in circulation:

Notes: 2, 5, 10, 50, 100, 1 000 and 10 000 SGD.

Coins: 5, 10, 20 and 50 cents; 1 SGD.

Brunei Darussalam currency is accepted and the Brunei dollar (BND) has the same value as the Singapore dollar (coins may not be accepted).

US dollars (USD), Australian dollars (AUD), Japanese yen (JPY) and British sterling (GBP) are also accepted at most major shopping centres in Singapore.
Exchange rates

For the latest exchange rates, please refer to the Exchange Rates Tool provided on ECA's website.

Credit cards and ATM services

All the major international credit cards (American Express, Diners Club, Mastercard and Visa) are widely accepted. Most branches of commercial banks have ATMs. Many ATMs will accept foreign credit cards.

The following links provide useful information for locating ATMs/banks throughout the world:

American Express
Mastercard
Visa

Tipping

*Cafés and bars*: Tipping is not customary.

*Hotels*: Tipping is not customary and is discouraged. However, porters may be tipped one or two dollars per bag carried.

*Restaurants*: A service charge of 10% is usually included in the bill. Additional tips are discretionary.

*Taxis*: Tipping is not expected although passengers may round-up a fare for convenience.

Communications

Post

Singapore Post (SingPost)

International courier services are an alternative to the national post service. Companies include:

Aramex
DHL
FedEx
TNT
UPS

Telephone

Singtel is the main provider of fixed-line services. M1 and StarHub also offer fixed-line services.

Singapore Yellow Pages

Cellular phones

4G LTE and 5G networks are available. Coverage is good nationwide. Roaming agreements exist with international mobile/cellular phone companies. Mobile/cellular prefixes: 8, 9.

Circles Life
Grid Mobile
M1
Singtel
StarHub
TPG Telecom
Emergency and useful numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambulance (995; 1777 (non-emergency ambulance))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International access code (to call abroad from Singapore)</td>
<td>001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country code for Singapore</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International directory enquiries</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National directory enquiries</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Internal dialling codes

There are no internal dialling codes in Singapore.

Internet

Wireless@SGx is a free city-wide Wi-Fi service. Most hotels provide Internet access for guests. Internet cafés can be found across the city. Internet service providers offer a range of packages for residential subscribers. Fibre connections are widely available.

Internet domain for Singapore: .sg.

Internet service providers

M1
MyRepublic
Singtel
StarHub
ViewQwest
WhizComms

Local media

Television

Mediacorp, Singapore’s leading broadcaster, operates the following channels: Channel 5 (English entertainment and lifestyle), Channel 8 (24-hour Chinese news and entertainment), Channel U (youth, entertainment), Channel NewsAsia (regional news channel), okto (children's programmes), Suria (Malay, entertainment) and Vasantham (Indian community channel). Multichannel television is available from Singtel TV and StarHub TV+.

Newspapers

Singapore Press Holdings Ltd (SPH) publishes many of Singapore's newspaper and magazine titles, and a number of web sites. The leading English-language newspapers are The Business Times, The Straits Times and Today. The press is highly regulated.

Foreign newspapers, such as the Financial Times and The New York Times International Edition, and weeklies, such as Bloomberg Businessweek, The Economist and Time, are available locally.
Health

Medical facilities

Medical equipment and facilities are among the best in the world and there are many private doctors/physicians, dentists and opticians. Many specialists have been trained overseas. Doctors and dentists are listed in the Singapore Yellow Pages. Most hotels have their own doctor on call 24–hours. The cost of medical treatment in government outpatient clinics is not high, but most expatriates prefer to consult private doctors. A deposit is payable on admittance to hospital. Credit cards are accepted. Private health insurance is strongly recommended.

Pharmaceuticals are available from numerous outlets, including supermarkets, department stores, hotels and shopping centres. Pharmacies are well stocked. Registered pharmacists work from 09.00 to 18.00, with some shops open until 22.00. Those importing medications should bring a doctor's letter or copy of the prescription as proof they are for personal use. Some prescribed and over-the-counter medicines available outside Singapore are considered controlled substances in Singapore and require an import permit from the Health Sciences Authority (HSA).

Hospitals.SG. Singapore hospitals, healthcare information and medical news.

Ministry of Health (MOH)

Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF). 1777 non-emergency ambulance.

Singapore Dental Association (SDA)

Hospitals and clinics

Singapore

Alexandra Hospital, 378 Alexandra Rd, Singapore 159964
Changi General Hospital, 2 Simei St 3, Singapore 529889
Gleneagles Hospital Singapore, 6A Napier Rd, Singapore 258500
KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH), 100 Bukit Timah Rd, Singapore 229899
Mount Alvernia Hospital, 820 Thomson Rd, Singapore 574623
Mount Elizabeth Hospital, 3 Mount Elizabeth, Singapore 228510
National University Hospital (NUH), 5 Lower Kent Ridge Rd, Singapore 119074
Raffles Hospital, 585 North Bridge Rd, Singapore 188770
Singapore General Hospital (SGH), Outram Rd, Singapore 169608
Thomson Medical Centre, 339 Thomson Rd, Singapore 307677

Dentists

Singapore

Healthway Dental Group, 6A Shenton Way, OUE Downtown Gallery, #02–15, Singapore 068815
National Dental Centre Singapore, 5 Second Hospital Ave, Singapore 168938
Specialist Dental Group, Mount Elizabeth Orchard, 3 Mount Elizabeth, #08–03/04/10, Singapore 228510
T32 Dental Centre, 1 Orchard Blvd, 17th Fl, Camden Medical Centre, Singapore 248649
Pharmacies

Branches across Singapore:

Guardian
National Healthcare Group (NHG) Pharmacy
Unity Pharmacy
Watsons

Singapore

Guardian, 313 Orchard Rd, #B3–13/14, Singapore 238895
Watsons, 8 Marina View, #02–07, Asia Sq Twr 1, Singapore 018960

Medical and repatriation insurance

A number of companies offer worldwide medical insurance cover (including repatriation cover) for expatriates and their families overseas. The majority also offer group schemes for companies and organisations with employees working abroad. Companies include:

Aetna International
ALC Global Health Insurance
AVIVA International Solutions
AXA PPP healthcare
BUPA Global
CIGNA
Clements Worldwide
Expacare
Mondassur Compares travel health insurance policies for expatriates and those travelling abroad.

Shopping

Online shopping

- AliExpress
- Amazon
- Lazada
- Qoo10

Singapore

Quality and availability

A broad range of goods and services can be found in Singapore.

Where expats shop

All information below is from expats living in the city or ECA's own researchers who visit regularly.

Shopping districts

- Bugis, Harbour Front, Marina Bay, Marina Centre.
- Orchard Rd and surrounding streets – the premier shopping street (malls, upmarket department stores, boutiques, restaurants).

Malls

- Bugis Junction (Victoria St).
- Far East Plaza (Scotts Rd).
• ION Orchard (Orchard Turn).
• Mandarin Gallery (Orchard Rd).
• Mustafa Centre (Syed Alwi Rd).
• Ngee Ann City (Orchard Rd).
• Paragon (Orchard Rd).
• Suntec City (Temasek Blvd).
• VivoCity (Harbourfront Walk).

Department stores

• BHG Singapore
• Isetan
• Marks & Spencer
• Metro
• OG
• Robinsons
• Takashimaya
• Tangs

Supermarkets

• 7-Eleven
• Cold Storage
• FairPrice
• Giant
• Jasons
• Market Place
• RedMart – online grocery shopping.
• ShengSiong

Specialist outlets

• Books Kinokuniya – English, French, German, Chinese and Japanese books.

Shopping guides

• Singapore Tourism Board – shopping guide to Singapore.
• The Culture Trip – a guide to shopping on Orchard Rd.
• Time Out Singapore – comprehensive guide to the best Singapore shopping, style and fashion.

Shopping hours

10.00 to 21.00 Monday to Sunday, including public holidays. Some stores are open 24 hours.
10.00 to 22.00 Monday to Sunday (shopping malls).
Typical costs

Prices from ECA's Cost of Living survey:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shopping basket items</th>
<th>Average price in SGD</th>
<th>Average price in USD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bread: white loaf (1 kg)</td>
<td>6.22</td>
<td>4.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice: long grain (1 kg)</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant milk powder/formula (1 kg)</td>
<td>69.63</td>
<td>51.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar of chocolate (100 g)</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft drink: can (50 cl)</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk: fresh, pasteurised (1 l)</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs (twelve)</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh or chilled chicken (1 kg)</td>
<td>7.73</td>
<td>5.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apples (1 kg)</td>
<td>7.36</td>
<td>5.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomatoes (1 kg)</td>
<td>10.62</td>
<td>7.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinema ticket</td>
<td>13.50</td>
<td>9.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red wine: good quality (75 cl)</td>
<td>36.01</td>
<td>26.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men's business shirt</td>
<td>198.73</td>
<td>145.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's jeans</td>
<td>185.35</td>
<td>135.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat screen TV</td>
<td>1 072.44</td>
<td>785.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcoholic drink at bar</td>
<td>18.79</td>
<td>13.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee at cafe or bar</td>
<td>6.43</td>
<td>4.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SGD 1 = USD 0.7325

Sales tax

Goods and services tax (GST) is levied on a range of goods and services at the standard rate of 7%. International services such as international transport, and exports are zero-rated. The provision of certain financial services and the sale or lease of unfurnished residential properties are exempt.

Eating out

Local cuisine

Local food stalls, found throughout the city, sell inexpensive Chinese, Malay and Indian dishes, and hawker centres such as at Newton Circus and Lau Pa Sat are popular for sampling local foods. Local coffee shops (kopitiam) can be found throughout the city.

Malay cuisine, which relies heavily on spices and coconut milk, is very popular. National specialties in Singapore include beef rendang (coconut milk beef curry), chicken sambal, gado gado (fruit and vegetable salad in peanut sauce), and satay (skewers of marinated meat cooked over charcoal and served with a peanut sauce, cucumber, onion and rice).

Bars and cocktail lounges tend to have table and counter service. The famous Singapore Sling (a cocktail containing gin, cherry liqueur, Cointreau, Bénédictine, Grenadine, pineapple juice, lime juice and Angostura Bitters) was invented by a Raffles Hotel bartender. Non-alcoholic beverages include teh arak tark (ginger tea with milk), soya bean milk, and sugar cane juice.

Singapore

Where expats eat

Visitors will find an abundance of restaurants and other dining establishments, ranging from street stalls to five-star international restaurants. For fine dining and more upmarket restaurants, Orchard Rd and Marina Bay are where many world-renowned chefs choose to locate their businesses. Robertson Quay and Clarke Quay are Singapore's nightspots where busy restaurants, bars, cafés and nightclubs can be found along the Singapore River. Holland Village is another popular place for dining and relaxing and is popular with the expatriate community. It offers a wide range of restaurants, bars and cafés with reasonably-priced menus.

International food

Singapore is one of the world's most cosmopolitan cities and all the world's major cuisines are represented. The major international fast-food chains can also be found.
Expat recommendations

- **Art Restaurant & Bar (St. Andrew's Rd)** – contemporary Italian; bar.
- **Lawry's The Prime Rib Singapore (Orchard Rd)** – American, steakhouse.
- **Long Beach** (multiple locations) – Asian, Chinese, seafood.
- **Ps. Cafe** (multiple locations) – European café.

Restaurant guides

- **Burpple Guide** – guide to good food and the best restaurants in Singapore. Written by locals. Explore by category or neighbourhood.
- **Deliveroo, Foodpanda** – online food ordering and delivery in Singapore.
- **HungryGoWhere** – restaurant, hawker and food reviews, deals, delivery, takeaway, guides and online reservations.
- **Singapore Tourism Board** – comprehensive dining guide.
- **Time Out Singapore** – the best restaurants and cafés in Singapore, including restaurant reviews and editors’ picks.

Average meal prices

Prices from ECA’s Cost of Living survey:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meal</th>
<th>Average price per head in SGD</th>
<th>Average price per head in USD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take-away meal</td>
<td>8.46</td>
<td>6.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch at cafe</td>
<td>30.14</td>
<td>22.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinner at restaurant</td>
<td>89.29</td>
<td>65.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business dinner</td>
<td>198.78</td>
<td>145.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SGD 1 = USD 0.7325

Leisure

Singapore

Colourful local festivals and performances of ballet, classical music, operas and plays are staged throughout the year. There is a lively nightlife scene centred on the waterfront area.

Expat clubs and cultural institutes

The following organisations arrange regular concerts, film screenings, exhibitions and socials:

- **Alliance Française**
- **American Association of Singapore (AAS)**
- **American Women’s Association of Singapore (AWA)**
- **Association Française de Singapour (AFS)**
- **Australian & New Zealand Association (ANZA)**
- **Belgian and Luxembourg Association of Singapore (BLAS)**
- **British Council**
- **Expat groups in Singapore**
- **Goethe-Institut**
- **InterNations**
- **Istituto Italiano di Cultura**
- **Swiss Association of Singapore (SAS)**
The British Association (BA) of Singapore

Film, theatre and music

- Cathay Cineplexes (multiple locations) – cinema chain.
- Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay (Esplanade Dr) – major performing arts centre with several theatres and stages.
- FilmGarde Cineplex (multiple locations) – cinema chain.
- Golden Village (multiple locations) – cinema chain.
- Shaw Theatres (multiple locations) – cinema chain.
- Singapore Dance Theatre (Victoria St) – classic ballet and contemporary works.
- Singapore Symphony Orchestra (Victoria Concert Hall, Empress Pl) – Singapore’s most respected orchestra.

Museums and galleries

- Asian Civilisations Museum (Empress Pl) – pan-Asian history, culture and religions.
- National Gallery Singapore (St. Andrew’s Rd) – world-class collection of 19th-century and modern South-east Asian art.
- National Museum of Singapore (Stamford Rd) – history and culture of Singapore.
- Singapore Art Museum (Bras Basah Rd and Queen St annex) – contemporary South-east Asian art.

Parks and recreation

- Fort Canning Park (Fort Canning Rd) – historic urban park with a lake.
- Gardens by the Bay (Marina Gardens Dr) – futuristic botanical gardens.
- Jurong Bird Park (Jurong Hill) – home to some 400 species of birds.
- Merlion Park (Fullerton Rd) – small park with bay views and iconic Merlion statue.
- Sentosa (Sentosa Gateway) – island resort with theme parks, an aquarium and golden beaches.
- Singapore Botanic Gardens (Cluny Rd) – botanical gardens and National Orchid Garden.
- Singapore Flyer (Raffles Ave) – Asia’s largest giant observation wheel.
- Singapore Zoo (Mandai Lake Rd) – extensive zoological park and gardens.

Events and festivals

- Singapore International Festival of Arts – dance, theatre and music performances.
- Singapore International Film Festival – international films and the best of Singapore and South-east Asian cinema.

Leisure guides

- National Parks Board
- Singapore Tourism Board
- SISTIC Singapore – ticket agency.
- Time Out Singapore
- Visitors Singapore
Background

History

14th century: The tiny fishing village of Temasek existed on the island prior to its establishment as a thriving port of the Srivijayan Empire (based in Sumatra). According to Malay legend, a visiting Srivijayan prince named the site Singa Pura (Lion City) after seeing a lion (though it was more likely a tiger). After this time, Singapore's importance declined as Malacca, on the west coast of the Malaysian Peninsula, became the region's major port.

1819: Sir Stamford Raffles, a British East India Company administrator, established a trading settlement on Singapore island.

1826: Singapore, Malacca and Penang were combined as the British colony of the Straits Settlements.

1832: Singapore became the capital of the Straits Settlements. The port attracted thousands of migrants from China, India, and other parts of Asia.

1867: The Straits Settlements became a crown colony of the British Empire.

1869: Following the opening of the Suez Canal, trade boomed for Singapore.

1922: Singapore became the main British naval base in East Asia.

1941: During World War II, Japan bombed Singapore.

1942: Singapore fell to the Japanese, who renamed it Syonan (Light of the South).

1945: Following the defeat of Japan, Singapore went under British military administration.

1946: Singapore became a separate crown colony.

1959: Singapore attained self-government, with Lee Kuan Yew as prime minister.

1963: Singapore joined the Federation of Malaya, Sabah and Sarawak in the newly created Federation of Malaysia.

1965: Amid political and ethnic tensions, Singapore left the Federation of Malaysia, at Malaysia's invitation. The territory became an independent republic and joined the United Nations.

1967: Singapore became a founder member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

1971: The last British military forces were withdrawn from Singapore.

1984: Two opposition MPs were elected to parliament for the first time.

1990: Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, the father of modern Singapore, stood down after 31 years. However, he continued to exert significant influence as a senior minister. Goh Chok Tong succeeded Lee Kuan Yew as the new prime minister.

1993: Ong Teng Cheong became Singapore's first directly-elected president.

1995: British trader Nick Leeson's dealings on the Singapore Stock Exchange led to the collapse of Barings, Britain's oldest merchant bank.

1997: Singapore slipped into recession for the first time in 13 years during the Asian financial crisis. The publication of Lee Kuan Yew's memoirs soured diplomatic relations between Singapore and Malaysia.

1999: S R Nathan became president without election after he was declared the only candidate eligible to run. Nick Leeson was released early from jail for good behaviour.

2001: Malaysia and Singapore agreed to end their disputes and to build a new bridge and a tunnel. There was a general election landslide victory for the governing People's Action Party (PAP), which secured all but two of the 84 seats.

2002: In January, Japan and Singapore signed a free trade agreement.

2003: The pneumonia-like SARS virus broke out in Singapore. Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong announced the outbreak was the worst crisis Singapore had ever faced. Singapore became the first Asian nation to sign a free trade deal with the United States.

2004: In August, Lee Hsien Loong, the eldest son of former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, was sworn in as prime minister.

2005: Singapore and Malaysia settled a bitter dispute over land reclamation work in their border waters. The government approved a controversial plan to legalise casino gambling, paving the way for the construction of two multi-billion-dollar resorts. President S R Nathan began a second term after winning elections from which his rivals were disqualified.

2006: In May, Lee Hsien Loong survived his first real popularity test when his ruling PAP won the general elections.

2008: In February, Mas Selamat Kastari, suspected leader of the Islamist militant group Jemaah Islamia (JI), escaped from jail sparking a huge manhunt.
2009: The economy rebounded from the worst recession on record with rapid expansion between April and June.

2010: In November, British author Alan Shadrake was found guilty of insulting the Singapore judiciary in his book about the death penalty.

2011: Opposition parties made unprecedented gains in parliamentary elections, although the ruling PAP won all but six seats in parliament; Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong referred to the occasion as a 'watershed election'. Tony Tan won the first contested presidential elections held in 18 years.

2012: In January, a government review body recommended substantial pay cuts for ministers, the prime minister and president. In November, the first strike since the 1980s took place as Chinese bus drivers walked out complaining their pay was lower than that of local and Malaysian drivers.

2013: In May, demonstrations were held against government plans to boost the population with foreign workers. In December, rioting by foreign workers followed the death of an Indian migrant worker involved in a bus collision.

2014: In March, Singapore joined the United States in regulating virtual currencies such as bitcoins, in an attempt to prevent money-laundering.

2015: In January, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong announced anti-corruption measures following several high-profile graft scandals. In March, Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's founding father, died. In August, Singapore marked the 50th anniversary of independence from Malaysia. In September, a snap general election was won convincingly by the PAP.

2016: In May, Singapore announced it would expand the capacity of its military training bases in Australia. In August, Parliament approved a controversial contempt law which could see offenders jailed for up to three years.

2017: In September, Halimah Yacob was named Singapore's first female president after being declared the only eligible candidate. Hundreds of Singaporeans protested the uncontested nature of the election.

2020: In January, Singapore moved rapidly to contain the spread of coronavirus (COVID–19), imposing border controls and quarantine measures, cancelling mass events, and closing bars, entertainment venues and places of worship. In April, the government announced the closure of schools and non-essential workplaces, and made the wearing of masks outside compulsory. In July, general elections were won by the PAP with a reduced majority.

**Government**

Singapore is a parliamentary republic. Legislative power rests with the unicameral Parliament. Its 89 members are elected by universal adult suffrage for a term of five years (subject to dissolution – general elections must then be held within a period of three months) in single- and multi-member constituencies. Up to 12 'non-constituency' seats may be offered to opposition parties. The government may also nominate up to nine politically neutral members; nominated members have restricted voting rights.

The President (currently Halimah Yacob) is directly elected by compulsory universal adult suffrage (from age 21) for a term of six years as constitutional Head of State. The President has limited powers of veto in financial affairs, public appointments and detentions for reasons of national security.

Executive authority rests with the Cabinet, led by the Prime Minister (currently Lee Hsien Loong), who is appointed by the President and is responsible to Parliament.

Halimah Yacob was sworn in as Singapore's first female president in September 2017. July 2020 general elections were won by the People's Action Party (PAP) with a reduced majority, taking 83 seats. The Workers' Party (WP) secured ten seats, its best result. Presidential elections are due in 2023. Legislative elections are due in 2025.

**Elections Department Singapore (ELD)**

**Government of Singapore**

**Parliament of Singapore**

**President's Office**

**Prime Minister's Office (PMO) Singapore**

**The Cabinet**

**Political parties:**

**People's Action Party (PAP)**

**The Workers' Party (WP)**
Economy

Economic growth

Gross domestic product (GDP), 2018: 3.4%, 2019: 0.7%; IMF forecasts (Oct 20), 2020: −6.0%, 2021: 5.0%.

The open, trade-dominated economy of Singapore has withstood the deceleration of Chinese growth in recent years but suffered in 2019 because of the US-China trade war and worsening export environment and has witnessed its deepest ever recession, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, in 2020. Initial success in containing the virus, through a city-wide lockdown, was followed by successive outbreaks, especially among the many foreign workers housed in dormitories. Most indicators have slumped, although manufacturing output may avoid outright contraction for the year as a whole.

Singapore has boosted long-term prospects by investing heavily in future technologies. A substantial training programme aims to build the necessary skills to make the most of the expanding digital economy. Without natural resources, however, it is essential to achieve sustained productivity growth. That is being made more difficult by an ageing population (only partially addressed by immigration) and greater inequality. The coronavirus crisis has caused setbacks too, but an economic rebound is forecast for 2021.

Cost of living

Inflation, 2018: 0.4%, 2019: 0.6%; IMF forecasts (Oct 20), 2020: −0.4%, 2021: 0.3%.

Price pressures are negative. The Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) manages the value of the Singapore dollar partly to control prices. Official annual inflation was −0.4% to the end of August 2020.

The Singapore dollar’s value is regularly adjusted by MAS with reference to an undisclosed basket of other currencies. In the 12 months to 5 October 2020, the currency fell 6% against the euro, 4% against the British pound and 1% against the Japanese yen, while being unchanged overall against the US dollar.

Labour market

Unemployment, 2018: 2.1%, 2019: 2.3%; IMF forecasts (Oct 20), 2020: 3.0%, 2021: 2.6%.

Singapore’s impressive economic performance over decades has produced extremely low unemployment. The tight labour supply means foreign workers fill many roles, but with Covid-19 causing joblessness to rise, the government has taken measures to curtail numbers and immigration and has asked businesses to reduce reliance on manpower by boosting productivity.

Official data show average pay across the economy increased by 1.5% annually in the last two years (to July 2020).
Resources

Country guides and links for Singapore


[Enter Singapore](#). Expat portal with apartment database.

[Expat Living](#). Guide for moving to and living in Singapore.

[Expat Woman](#). Singapore guide.

[Singapore Expat](#). One-stop residential Singapore property guide, renting procedure and information directory for expatriates living or relocating to Singapore.

[Singapore for Kids](#). Resource by parents for parents in Singapore.

Cross-cultural training

Effective preparation and planning can increase the chances of a successful assignment. The following organisations offer language tuition and training to prepare assignees for the cross-cultural challenges they may face during their assignment:

[Babel Language and Cultural Training](#) (UK) Translations, language training and tailored cultural briefings.

[Carl Duisberg](#) (Germany) Language and intercultural training.

[Communicaid](#) (UK) Culture and communication skills consultancy specialising in language and cultural awareness training.

[Dwellworks](#) Global consultancy (formerly known as ‘dfa Intercultural Global Solutions’) specialising in cross-cultural information, training and research.

[Eszett Business Language Services](#) Language and cross-cultural training, translation and interpretation services.

[Farnham Castle Intercultural Training](#) (UK) Providers of bespoke ‘global mobility programmes’ for expatriates and business travellers, ranging from half day to two days in duration, and ‘intensive language training’ covering any language.

[International House World Organisation (IHWO)](#) Worldwide network of language schools.

[IOR Global Services](#) Global relocation services.

[Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen/Royal Tropical Institute (KIT)](#) (Netherlands) Cross-cultural training programmes, intensive language tuition and country orientation briefings for expatriates and businesses.

[Language Studies International (LSI)](#) Language and cultural training.

[Linguarama](#) Tailored language training and cultural awareness programmes to businesses and individuals.

[Richard Lewis Communications](#) (UK) Language courses, communication skills, and cross-cultural executive training services, with offices across Europe, Argentina and Chile, as well as Hong Kong and Japan.

[TMA World](#) International business training.

Language resources


[A Native Translation (ANT)](#), [Berlo International](#), [Chambers Translation](#). Translation and interpretation services.

[Berlitz, inlingua School of Languages](#), English, Malay and Mandarin Chinese language courses.
Conversion tables

Weights and measures

The metric system is in force, but local units are also used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric/Imperial</th>
<th>Imperial/Metric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 cm</td>
<td>0.39 in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1 km</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 g</td>
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<td>1.759 imp pint</td>
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<td>0.219 imp gal</td>
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Clothing sizes

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Women’s shoe sizes

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Men’s shoe sizes

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Home country rights and duties

Voting rights of expatriates

Each country has its own laws governing the voting rights of its citizens who are working/resident abroad and, where expatriates are permitted to vote, the electoral arrangements vary (e.g. in some cases polling stations are installed at the embassy while other countries require their nationals to appoint a proxy). Information is available from district electoral registrars in the home country, from embassies and consulates and from the expatriates’ organisations.

Military service

If military service is compulsory in the home country, expatriates are advised to check which regulations apply to them and their families while abroad; in some instances failure to register and/or to fulfil the required service can result in severe penalties.

Children born abroad

Children born abroad to expatriate parents may find their citizenship rights affected, either by the laws in the country of assignment or by those of the home country. It is therefore very important to check on both sets of regulations well before the child is born.
Notes

Updates

This report was last updated on 7 October 2020.
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See the full range of available data and tools according to your subscription in the MyECA area of the website:

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<th>Calculators &amp; tools</th>
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<td>Transport</td>
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- Policy and salary benchmarking
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- Policy workshops
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- International Commuters Survey
- International Rotators Survey
- Localisation Survey
- Managing Mobility Survey
- Permanent Transfers Survey
- Short-term Assignments Survey

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New York +1 212 582 2333 Sydney +61 (0)2 8923 5400

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