

The Community Advice Bureau

Living in Hong Kong

We are here to help you

Contact us with any questions!

Tel: 2815 5444

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website: www.cab.org.hk

Living in Hong Kong

This booklet has been compiled by the Community Advice Bureau (CAB), which has been operating an English-speaking information service and referral agency in Hong Kong since 1974. As a registered charity it is supported by a grant from The Swire Group Charitable Trust, amongst others. It is run by a group of volunteers of different nationalities with a wealth of experience of life in Hong Kong. They answer the telephones, respond to emails, update the database and serve on the Council.

Here are some examples of the topics on our database:

Acupuncture, bauhinia emblem, calligraphy, dim sum baskets, expat services, feng shui, gambling problems, hawkers, identity cards, jade markets, kung fu courses, legal matters, mahjong tables, Noonday Gun, oriental art, Peak Tram, qigong, rattan furniture, Shamshuipo, tenancy problems, Urbtix, visas, walking groups, x-rays, yachting.

If you have a query or a problem no matter how large or small

call: **2815 5444**

email: **cab@cab.org.hk**

or visit : **www.cab.org.hk**

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Whilst every care has been taken in the preparation of this booklet, the **CAB** does not accept any responsibility for any inaccuracies which may appear in the following pages, nor for any information or advice given by any persons or organisations mentioned.

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Useful Telephone Numbers

Emergencies

Police, fire, ambulance	999
Emergency Fax/SMS for Deaf (registration required)	992
Police hotline	2527 7177
China Light & Power (emergency service)	2728 8333
Dangerous buildings, signs, etc.	2629 1270
Dangerous slopes	1823
Gas (24-hr emergency hotline)	2880 6999
Home Affairs emergency hotline (during severe weather)	2835 1473
Hongkong Electric Co. Ltd (emergency service)	2555 4000
Hong Kong St. John Ambulance Hotline	2524 4888
Police hotline	2527 7177
Samaritans (crisis intervention)	2896 0000
SPCA (emergency service – animal welfare)	2711 1000
Storm warnings (recorded weather forecasts)	187 8200
Water fault reports	2824 5000

Government Departments

Citizens' Easy Link Hotline	1823
Education and Manpower Bureau	2891 0088
Environmental Protection (recycling of waste)	2755 2750
Environmental Protection (construction noise complaints)	2838 3111
Fire Services Communications Centre (24-hr hotline)	2723 2233
Health	2961 8989
Hong Kong Police (enquiries)	2860 2000
Hong Kong Post (24-hr hotline)	2921 2222
Home Affairs general	2835 2500
Hospital Authority	2300 6555
I.D. Cards (24-hr hotline appointment booking)	2598 0888
Immigration (24-hr hotline)	2824 6111
Inland Revenue Department Office (24-hr hotline)	187 8088
Labour Department (24-hr hotline)	2717 1771
Rating & Valuation Dept. (24-hr rent control)	2835 1579
Tourism Board	2508 1234
Transport & taxi Complaints Unit	2889 9999
Transport Department Licensing Office	2804 2600

Other

Citybus	2873 0818
CityLine (ticket bookings)	2317 6666
Community Advice Bureau	2815 5444
Consumer Council	2929 2222
Directory Enquiries (English service) PCCW	1081
Customer Care	2945 8888
H K Ticketing (ticket booking)	3128 8288
New World First Bus (NWFB)	2136 8888
Taxi booking service	2861 1008 / 2574 7311
Tel-Law (24-hr hotline)	2522 8018
URBTIX (ticket booking)	2111 5999
YWCA (English Speaking Members' Department)	3476 1340

Call the CAB helpline 2815 5444

Useful Websites

Airport	www.hongkongairport.com
AsiaXPAT	www.asiaxpat.com
American Women's Association	www.awa.org.hk
Australian Association	www.ozhongkong.com
China Light & Power	www.clpgroup.com
Citybus & NWFB	www.nwstbus.com.hk
CityLine	www.cityline.com.hk
Consumer Council	www.consumer.org.hk
Department of Health	www.dh.gov.hk
District Councils	www.districtcouncils.gov.hk
Doctors	www.hkdoctors.org
Dollarsaver	www.dollarsaver.com.hk
Education & Manpower Bureau	www.ed.gov.hk
English Schools Foundation	www.esf.edu.hk
Environmental Protection Dept	www.epd.gov.hk
Food & Environmental Hygiene	www.fehd.gov.hk
Gas	www.towngas.com
Geoexpat	www.geoexpat.com
HK Cable TV	www.i-cable.com
Hongkong Electric Co. Ltd	www.hec.com.hk
Hong Kong Fire Services Dept	www.hkfsd.gov.hk

Hong Kong Police	www.info.gov.hk/police
Hong Kong Observatory	www.hko.gov.hk
HK Ticketing	www.hkticketing.com
Hong Kong Tourism Board	www.discoverhongkong.com
Hospital Authority	www.ha.org.hk
Immigration Department	www.immd.gov.hk
Inland Revenue Department	www.ird.gov.hk
Leisure & Cultural Services	www.lcsd.gov.hk
Libraries	www.hkpl.gov.hk/eindex.htm
Maps (Lands Department)	www.centamap.com
M.T.R.	www.mtr.com.hk
Open University of Hong Kong	www.ouhk.edu.hk
PARKnSHOP	www.parknshop.com
RTHK	www.rthk.org.hk
Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals	www.sPCA.org.hk
South China Morning Post	www.scmp.com
The List	www.thelist.com.hk
Transport Department	www.info.gov.hk/td
Water Services Department	www.info.gov.hk/wsd
Wellcome	www.wellcomehk.com
Yellow Pages	www.yP.com.hk
Y.W.C.A. (ESMD)	www.esmdywca.org.hk

Hong Kong

On 1st July 1997, Hong Kong became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of The People's Republic of China (PRC). The SAR has its own constitution, the Basic Law, and its own government, and in many ways is an independent international city. Although there are people of more than 50 different nationalities living in Hong Kong, 95% of the population is ethnically Chinese and so its heart and spirit, its traditions, customs and etiquette, remain Chinese. Sensitivity to cultural differences is appreciated but Hong Kong is also a dynamic place where things can change quickly.

The SAR comprises Hong Kong Island, a mainland peninsula (Kowloon and the New Territories) and a number of outlying islands – the largest of all being Lantau, where The Hong Kong International Airport (more often known as “Chep Lap Kok”) is situated.

Local maps/ Government Bookstore:

www.gov.hk/en/residents/government/publication/publication/bookstore.htm

Language

The languages of Hong Kong are Chinese and English. Cantonese is the most widely spoken dialect but the use of Mandarin (also known as Putonghua) is now widespread. English is commonly spoken in business, major shopping areas and hotels. It is helpful to have some Cantonese for use in taxis and at wet markets.

Climate

The climate of Hong Kong is subtropical. January to March can be very cool with some fog and rain, and lightweight winter clothing is needed. March to May, like spring everywhere, is unpredictable with a wide range of temperatures and high humidity. Wardrobe heaters and dehumidifiers can help to combat the effects of damp clothes and shoes. May to September is hot (regularly over 30°C) and humid (over 90 per cent), with high rainfall. From October to December the temperature drops and the weather becomes drier.

Tropical cyclones (typhoons) may occur between May and November. Rain can be particularly heavy during the months of May and June but there have been major typhoons as late as October. Both the **Hong Kong Observatory** and the **Education**

Bureau (EDB) provide guidelines when the strong rainfall and tropical cyclone signals are issued; regular advisory bulletins on the status of storms and typhoons, transport services, road conditions and school closures are also broadcast on television and radio.

Kindergartens and special schools close when there is a No.3 tropical cyclone signal and other schools and offices when the No.8 signal is raised. It is not safe to be out on the streets during No. 8 and 10 signals. During Red and Black Rainstorm Warnings children should stay at home. If they are already at school, they will not be sent home until it is safe to do so.

Education Bureau: www.edb.gov.hk

Hong Kong Observatory: www.weather.gov.hk/contente.htm

Signal information: www.weather.gov.hk/informtc/tcsignal.htm

Environment

Like the rest of the world, Hong Kong faces waste problems and air and noise pollution. The **Environmental Protection Department (EPD)** handles pollution, construction and non-domestic noise complaints.

Recycling of domestic waste is increasing and there are now recycling bins for paper, aluminium cans and plastics in many locations.

Domestic noise complaints - contact nearest police station:

www.police.gov.hk / 2527 7177 (hotline) / 999 (emergencies)

Environmental Protection Department (EPD): www.epd.gov.hk/epd / 2838 3111

EPD Waste Reduction and Recycling: www.wastereduction.gov.hk

Friends of the Earth: www.foe.org.hk / 2528 5588

Recycling Helpline: recycling-helpline@epd.gov.hk

Currency and Banking

The unit of currency is the Hong Kong Dollar, which is linked to the US Dollar at the approximate exchange rate of HK\$7.8 to US\$1. Interchangeable bank notes are issued by **HSBC**, **Standard Chartered Bank** and **Bank of China**. There are no restrictions

on how much domestic or foreign currency may be brought into or taken out of Hong Kong.

Anyone wishing to open an account must hold a Hong Kong I.D. card or have proof of application, as well as produce proof of address. The personal services desk in any bank will provide further information.

Autopay, for the settlement of payments especially for utilities by pre-arranged banking instructions, is widely used in Hong Kong as is PPS, a bill payment service allowing settlement by a tone phone or the internet and automatic transfer from the designated bank account to the merchant's account.

The majority of banks are open Monday to Friday from 0900-1630 and Saturday from 0900-1230. Banks have automated teller machines (ATM) and offer a wide range of services including telephone and internet banking. There may be service charges associated with the use of ATMs.

Bank of China (Hong Kong): www.bochk.com

HSBC: www.hsbc.com.hk

PPS: www.ppshk.com

Standard Chartered Bank: www.standardchartered.com.hk

Personal Financial Services

Insurance brokers or anyone selling a financial product which includes an insurance element, however small, must be members of either **The Hong Kong Confederation of Insurance Brokers** or the **Professional Insurance Brokers Association**, and registered by the **Office of the Commissioner of Insurance**. In addition, all appointed agents and sub-agents acting for insurance companies must be registered with **The Hong Kong Federation of Insurers**.

To check if a financial adviser is registered contact the **Securities and Futures Commission**, which also publishes a public information leaflet Know Your Broker.

Office of the Commissioner of Insurance: www.oci.gov.hk

Professional Insurance Brokers Association: www.piba.org.hk

Securities and Futures Commission: www.sfc.com / 2840 9222

The Hong Kong Confederation of Insurance Brokers: www.hkcib.org

The Hong Kong Federation of Insurers: www.hkfi.org.hk

Tipping

A ten per cent service charge is normally included on restaurant bills. Leaving five per cent extra is usually enough. The norm at most other establishments, including hairdressers, is ten per cent, but for taxi drivers rounding up to the next dollar or two is sufficient. Most clubs do not allow tipping.

Religion

The traditional Chinese religions of Taoism and Buddhism coexist with the faiths of Christians, Muslims, Jews, Hindus and Sikhs. Local people are also influenced by the philosophy of Confucianism and by ancestor worship (hence the grave-sweeping festivals). Every major faith is practised with complete freedom. Details of English-speaking religious services are published in the Saturday edition of the South China Morning Post newspaper. Sunday School classes are held at both the Anglican and Catholic Cathedrals as well as at St Joseph's College attached to St Joseph's Church on Garden Road.

Anglican Churches: www.1.hkskh.org

Catholic Churches: www.catholic.org.hk

Hindu Temple: Happy Valley, 1-B Wong-Nei-Chong Road / 25725284

Jewish Synagogue: www.ohelleah.org

Mosques: www.islam.org.hk

Customs

While knowledge of Chinese customs, beliefs and etiquette will be acquired over time, a few are best learned immediately. Various numbers have significance, with the number four being extremely unlucky as it is a homonym for 'death'. On the other hand, the number eight is considered very lucky as it is the homonym for 'wealth'.

Gifts (such as flowers) or tips should never be given in multiples of four. Other unlucky or inappropriate gifts are clocks and sharp objects such as knives. Flowers are not given to the unwell; fruit is the preferred gift. Presents should be wrapped in brightly coloured paper (avoid grey or black). A Chinese recipient will open the gift privately later. It is inappropriate to give effusive thanks for a gift. It is quite usual to give a cheque as a gift at a wedding. If unsure, Chinese colleagues or friends will usually be happy to advise.

At Chinese New Year it is traditional to give red lai see packets (symbolising good luck) containing a new note or notes. The money must amount to an even number and only given on or after the first day of the new Lunar Year.

At formal Chinese banquets there is usually an order of precedence that dictates where people sit. It is also usual for couples to be seated next to each other; there may be mahjong sessions before the meal starts. The gathering may end somewhat abruptly after dessert has been served, often signalled by placing oranges on the table.

Business cards (usually printed in English on one side and Chinese on the other) are very common. They should be presented to a Chinese person by holding in both hands, Chinese side up. Business cards should also be received with two hands and then placed within view until the acquaintance has left.

Chinese Festivals

There are five major Chinese festivals, the most important being at Lunar New Year (Jan/Feb) – the only time when all shops and businesses close. This is followed by Ching Ming (4th or 5th Apr), Dragon Boat (June), Mid Autumn Festival (Sept/Oct) and Chung Yeung (Sept/Oct).

Festivals are observed with traditional celebrations, which are well publicised in newspapers and by the **Hong Kong Tourism Board** who have information centres at the Airport, Lo Wu station, the Star Ferry Concourse, Kowloon and the Peak Piazza Centre next to Victoria Peak Tram station.

Hong Kong Tourism Board: www.discoverhongkong.com / 2807 6543 / 2508 1234

Public Holidays

A gazetted list is available on the government website.

Schools, banks, Civil Service departments and courts are not open on public holidays. All employees, including domestic helpers, but excluding civil servants, are entitled to twelve statutory holidays (marked *):

Every Sunday

- * First weekday in January
- * Lunar New Year's Day (in late January/early February)
- * The second day of the Lunar New Year

- * The third day of the Lunar New Year
- * Ching Ming Festival (4th or 5th April)
 - Good Friday
 - Easter Saturday
 - Easter Monday
- * Labour Day (1st May)
 - Buddha's Birthday
- * Tuen Ng (Dragon Boat Festival) (June)
- * HKSAR Establishment Day (1 July)
- * Day following Chinese Mid Autumn Festival (full moon in September/October)
- * National Day (1 October)
- * Chung Yeung Festival (9th day of 9th month of lunar calendar)
- * Christmas Day (25 December) or Chinese Winter Solstice Festival – 22nd December – at discretion of employer
 - First weekday following Christmas Day

Domestic workers are entitled to an additional day's holiday if their rest day falls on a statutory holiday.

Gazetted holiday list: www.gov.hk/en/about/abouthk/holiday

Newcomer programmes

The **YWCA English Speaking Members' Department (ESMD)** welcomes people of all nationalities. "At Home" groups are organised from time to time throughout the year. This programme is especially helpful for newcomers and provides an opportunity to learn about Hong Kong and to meet others who have arrived recently. YWCA membership is required.

Both the **American Women's Association (AWA)** and the **Australian Association** also hold newcomers' events.

American Women's Association (AWA): www.awa.org.hk

Australian Association: www.ozhongkong.com

YWCA ESMD: www.esmdywca.org.hk / 34761340

Yearbooks and Guides

Hong Kong Yearbook, a government publication, is the most comprehensive source of information about Hong Kong, with a review of the previous year and statistics covering population, economics, trade, education and social welfare. It is a useful reference book for households and businesses.

The **Hong Kong Guide** produced by the Survey & Mapping Office of the Lands Department has a wealth of useful information including indexes of places and villages, streets, estates and buildings, schools, hotels, public services, leisure and culture facilities as well as details of public transportation and location maps.

The guide can be purchased from major post offices, some bookstores or through the online **Government Bookstore**.

Hong Kong Guide: www.landsd.gov.hk/mapping/en/paper_map/spg.htm

Hong Kong Yearbook: www.yearbook.gov.hk

Government Bookstore :

www.gov.hk/en/residents/government/publication/publication/bookstore.htm

Many books have been written about Hong Kong. Here are a few recommendations

Dictionary Of Hong Kong Biography May Holdsworth and Christopher Munn (eds.) (HKU Press; available December 2011)

Foreign Devils: Expatriates in Hong Kong May Holdsworth

Forgotten Souls Patricia Lim

Getting Heard: a Handbook for Hong Kong Citizens Christine Loh

Gweilo Martin Booth

Hong Kong 1997 David Bonavia

Hong Kong: Borrowed Time, Borrowed Place Richard Hughes

Hong Kong: Epilogue to an Empire Jan Morris

Hong Kong: China's New Colony Stephen Vines

Hong Kong's Wild Places: An Environmental Exploration Edward Stokes

<i>Myself a Mandarin</i>	Austin Coates
<i>Not the Slightest Chance, the defence of Hong Kong, 1941</i>	Tony Banham
<i>Streets: Exploring Hong Kong Island</i>	Jason Wordie
<i>Streets: Exploring Kowloon</i>	Jason Wordie

Societies and Associations

There are many associations that promote the exploration of Hong Kong's and the region's history and culture.

Friends of the Art Museum, The Chinese University of Hong Kong:
www.cuhk.edu.hk/ics/friends

Friends of the Hong Kong Museum of Art: www.museumfriends.org.hk

Royal Geographical Society Hong Kong: www.rgshk.org.hk

The Oriental Ceramic Society of Hong Kong Limited:
www.orientalceramics.org.hk

The Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch: www.royalasiaticsociety.org.hk

The University of Hong Kong Museum Society: www.hkums.com

Call the CAB helpline 2815 5444

Keeping on the Right Side of the Law

Legal System

Hong Kong has three sources of law. These are the Basic Law (a quasi constitutional document that came into effect when China resumed sovereignty over Hong Kong in 1997), statute law, and the rules of common law and equity. The judiciary is independent.

The courts of justice are the Court of Final Appeal, the High Court (which includes the Court of Appeal and the Court of First Instance), the District Court (which includes the Family Court), the Lands Tribunal, the Magistrates' Courts (which include the Juvenile Court), the Coroner's Court, the Labour Tribunal, the Small Claims Tribunal, and the Obscene Articles Tribunal. The Courts function as juvenile courts when necessary, likewise the District Court as the Family Court.

Government Offices

Addresses and telephone numbers of Government departments and District Offices (Home Affairs Bureau) are given in the front of the White Pages Business Telephone Directory and on the **government website** . The government also has a **Help Desk**. Government office working hours are 0900-2000 daily.

Government Help Desk: 183 5500 / enquiry@1835500.gov.hk

Government website: www.gov.hk

Government Information Service (GIS)

GIS publishes a series of useful fact sheets and leaflets on a variety of subjects. These and other publications are available on line or from GIS offices.

GIS forms: www.gov.hk/en/residents/forms / Room 402, 4/F Murray Building, Garden Road

GIS publications: 25371910 / puborder@isd.gov.hk

Hong Kong Fact Sheets: www.gov.hk/en/about/abouthk/factsheets/index.htm

Jury Obligations

All residents of Hong Kong with sufficient knowledge of one of the languages (Chinese or English) used in conducting court proceedings and between the ages of 21 and 65 are eligible for jury service. Jurors are randomly selected; at least fourteen days' notice is given. There is automatic exemption for solicitors, barristers, certain Civil Service employees, doctors, full-time students and a few others. The Registrar of the High Court may exempt on other grounds if a written application is made immediately on receipt of a summons. Business commitments are not normally considered to be a sufficient reason to warrant exemption. However, if an exemption is not granted, a further request can be made to the trial judge when selected by ballot as a juror. Exemption is normally granted for mothers of infants, those who would not be able to be impartial, and others with valid reasons (e.g. medical grounds).

Judiciary, Jury: www.judiciary.gov.hk

Tel-Law / Free Legal Advice

The Duty Lawyer Service provides useful, free, taped legal information over the telephone in English on over 65 topics. Subjects include matrimonial law, tenancy, employment and the Small Claims Tribunal.

The Duty Lawyer Service: www.dutylawyer.org.hk / 2522 8018 / 2521 3333

Visas

All foreign nationals wishing to enter Hong Kong for employment, investment, education, training or residence (including dependants) require an entry visa prior to arrival. Under the General Employment Policy, an entry visa application for employment requires employers to state reasons why the post cannot be filled locally.

Application forms (ID (E) 936), a Guidance Note (ID (E) 937) and sponsorship forms are available directly from the **Immigration Department** and on its website. Applications can be made through the Chinese Embassy or Consulate General in the applicant's place of domicile or directly to **Receipt & Despatch Unit** or can be submitted through sponsors. Applications take 4 to 6 weeks to process.

An employment visa is valid only for the position for which it is specifically issued; a new visa is required for a change in employment. If the holder of the visa becomes unemployed, that person reverts to visitor (tourist) status.

Dependent visa holders are free to take up both paid and unpaid work. There is no need to apply for a separate visa. Dependants do not require prior permission from the Director of Immigration to study in Hong Kong.

Non-permanent residents of Hong Kong do not need re-entry visas if they resume residence within their permitted stay limit, providing there is no change in their status. Applications for extension of stay should be made within one month of date of expiry of stay.

The majority of tourists visiting Hong Kong do not require entry visas. In certain cases it may be necessary to produce a return or onward ticket and/or proof of means of support. It is illegal for the holder of a visitor's (tourist) visa to work, including casual employment such as in bars or restaurants. Visitors are discouraged from changing their visa status once they have entered the SAR.

Immigration Department (including Receipt and Despatch Unit):

www.immd.gov.hk / Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Road, Wanchai Mon-Fri 08.45-16.30, Sat 0900-1130 / **2824 6111**) / **enquiry@immd.gov.hk**

Hong Kong Identity Cards (HKIDs)

All persons permitted to stay in Hong Kong for more than 180 days are required to apply for a HKID within 30 days of arrival. It is very important that priority be given to obtaining an ID card as it is required so often.

IDs are compulsory for all adults and for children aged 11 and over; children must apply for a juvenile card within 30 days of their 11th birthday and young people must apply for an adult card within 30 days of reaching 18 years of age.

By law, all persons over the age of 15 are required to carry either HKID or the form showing an application has been made or a current passport. Expatriates are not exempt from police checks and proof of identity must be produced on demand.

Lost, defaced and damaged cards must be reported to the nearest **Registration of Persons Office** and application made for a new one within 14 days. Applicants under the age of 18 should be accompanied by a parent or guardian who will need to produce his/her identity card. Recovered cards should be returned; it is an offence for anyone to hold two identity cards. A charge is made for replacement.

Persons, not of Chinese nationality, who have ordinarily resided in Hong Kong for a continuous period of seven years can apply for a permanent identity card which will

then give them right of abode in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR).

Under the Code of Practice issued by the **Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data** there is *“No right to compel an individual to provide an ID card number unless authorised by law”*.

ID appointment bookings (up to 24 working days ahead):

www.gov.hk/en/residents/immigration/idcard/hkic/whereapply.htm / 2598 0888
(requires Hong Kong ID number, Hong Kong birth certificate (registered on or after 06-11-1995) or travel document; collection can be by someone other than the applicant provided the necessary authorisation form has been completed at the time of registration) / **enquiry@immd.gov.hk**

Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data:

www.pcpd.org.hk/english/ordinance/code_data_1.html / 2827 2827

Registration of Persons Offices (others in Kowloon and the New Territories):

- **8/F Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong / 2824 6111** (Island)
- **3/F Cheung Sha Wan Govt. Office, 303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Cheung Sha Wan, Kowloon / 2150 7933** (Kowloon)

Passports

Foreign nationals should contact their consulates for information regarding loss, renewal, etc. Passports should have at least 6 months validity remaining before travelling. Airlines may refuse boarding if a passport has less than 6 months validity.

Taxation

Currently, the maximum salaries tax payable by an individual is 15% of gross income. Gross income includes cost of living allowance, bonuses, a percentage charge for accommodation if supplied by the employer, etc. There is no sales tax and no tax on capital gains and dividends. Salaries tax is not deducted by employers. There is no Estate Duty (Inheritance Tax) payable in Hong Kong.

The tax year runs from 1 April to 31 March. A salaries tax return should be submitted in May for the preceding tax year. Persons liable for tax who have not received a form should write to the Inland Revenue, giving name, Hong Kong ID number, correspondence address, and the name and business registration number of their

employer. If a married taxpayer and spouse, living together, wish to be assessed individually rather than jointly, both must agree.

An assessment notice in respect of the current tax year together with adjustments for the preceding tax year is usually received in the autumn, requiring payment in two instalments; - the first due in January/February and the second about three months later.

Tax Reserve Certificates, at preferred interest rates, can be purchased from most banks (with a service charge) or from the Inland Revenue Department (without a service charge). The electronic Tax Reserve Certificates (TRC) Scheme provides an easy way to save and pay tax bills.

A Brief Guide to Taxes Administered by the Inland Revenue Department:
www.ird.gov.hk/eng/pdf/tax_guide_e.pdf

Inland Revenue Department: www.ird.gov.hk/eng/welcome.htm

- **Revenue Tower, 5 Gloucester Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong**

General enquiries: 187 8088 (24-hr hotline) / taxinfo@ird.gov.hk

Tax Reserve Certificates: www.ird.gov.hk/eng/tax/trc.htm

Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF)

Most employees in Hong Kong are required to join an MPF scheme. Under this Government regulated system, the employer selects which of the various approved MPF providers they will use and the employee chooses how to invest his/her contributions from the range of investment funds offered by that provider.

Both employees and employers are required to contribute 5% of earnings each, up to a maximum income of HK\$20,000 per month (i.e. maximum monthly contributions of HK\$1,000 each or \$24,000 per year in total). These mandatory balances are 100% vested immediately but have to be preserved in the MPF system until the employee retires, even on changing employers.

Both the employer and the employee may however pay additional (“voluntary”) contributions which are not subject to the same restrictions. Exemption from the MPF is available for employees whose companies have been exempted because they have their own approved retirement schemes regulated under the Occupational Retirement Schemes Ordinance (ORSO), those who are on an employment contract not exceeding one year, those who are members of a suitable pension plan in their home countries, and domestic employees. Self-employed people are not exempt if they earn more than HK\$60,000 per annum.

Mandatory Provident Fund Authority: www.mpfa.org.hk

Driving Licences – cars and motor cycles

Driving licences (including provisional licences) for motor cycles, private cars and light goods vehicles are not issued to persons under the age of 18 years. Learner drivers can receive lessons **only** from authorised driving instructors.

Visitors over the age of 18 (someone who does not reside in Hong Kong for longer than 12 months) can drive using an overseas driving licence or international driving permit. This does NOT apply to residents who must obtain a Hong Kong licence. All drivers must carry a licence while driving and failure to produce it on demand is a punishable offence.

Residents holding full overseas driving licences are eligible for a licence without a test if their existing licence has been issued by an approved country and is valid or has not expired for more than 3 years. Conditions apply.

All other applicants should contact the **Transport Department Licensing Office** for further information.

Residents are permitted to drive during the interim period between application and issue of the driving licence (approximately two weeks), but should carry their overseas licence and letter showing an application has been made for a local licence. Hong Kong driving licences are valid for ten years.

International driving licences for use overseas can be obtained from Transport Department Licensing Offices. They will be issued only to Hong Kong residents who hold a valid Hong Kong driving licence.

Application for Renewal of Driving Licence: www.td.gov.hk

Forms also available from: Licensing Offices (various locations), the Home Affairs Department Public Enquiry Service Centres and Post Offices, by fax: 2804 260; email enquiries - licensing@td.gov.hk

Seat Belts

Car drivers, passengers and anyone travelling in a taxi are required by law to wear seat belts (child restraints in the case of passengers under three years of age) if they are fitted.

Transport Department: www.td.gov.hk / 2804 2600 / 1823

Departure Tax/Duty Free Allowance

Hong Kong charges an airport departure tax (as at September 2010, \$120) for adults and children over 12 years which is usually included in air ticket prices. Hong Kong allows passengers to bring in a limited amount of duty-free goods.

Duty-free Concessions:

www.customs.gov.hk/en/passenger_clearance/duty_free/index.html

Hong Kong International Airport (Chek Lap Kok): www.hongkongairport.com

Police

Complaints can be made to any police station or to the **Complaints Against the Police Office (CAPO)** either in person, by letter, by telephone or online.

CAPO: 2866 7700

e-Report Room: http://www.police.gov.hk/ppp_en/02_er_room

Hong Kong Police Force: www.police.gov.hk / 2527 7177 (24-hr hotline) / 999 (emergencies)

Fire

The Fire Services Department is responsible for formulating and enforcing fire safety regulations, including obstructions in domestic buildings and dangerous goods stored without a licence on open land or in buildings. In rural areas, including Country Parks, green, yellow or red signals indicate the fire danger. Fires may be lit only in designated barbecue areas.

Fire, ambulance, complaint calls:

www.hkfsd.gov.hk/home/eng/source/safety/fire_information.html /

hkfsdenq@hkfsd.gov.hk / 2723 8787

Fire Danger warning signals: www.hko.gov.hk/publica/gen_pub/fdw_e.htm

Hong Kong Fire Services Department: www.hkfsd.gov.hk / 2723 8787 / 999 (emergencies)

Call the CAB helpline 2815 5444

Setting Up A Home

Finding Accommodation

There are two main kinds of apartment to rent. One is a tenanted property usually arranged through a property agent or, less often, directly with the owner. The other is a serviced apartment, which can be located through the internet, property agents or via specialist publications. All types of apartments are also advertised in the classified sections of the English newspapers, e.g. Wednesday and Saturday editions of the South China Morning Post; Thursday in The Standard and in specialist property magazines, some of which can be taken away for free from coffee bars, agent offices and other venues. All agents and serviced apartments have websites.

Property agents generally accompany clients to view properties. An agent's fee (usually one half of the first month's rent), stamp duty (split between tenant and landlord), legal fees and security deposit are normal additional expenses. Serviced apartments generally do not incur stamp duty/fees and are often available on more flexible leasing terms.

Buildings managed by major landlords and serviced apartment companies are usually efficiently run. Renovation noise can be a major problem when apartments are individually owned within a building.

Leases should be read very carefully. Common provisions may include tenant responsibility for repairs, prohibition against subletting, indemnity insurance requirements, leaving the property in precisely the same condition it was in on occupation etc. Failure to comply with any condition may result in a refusal to refund the deposit. Everything is open to negotiation, including painting and refurbishment.

However, in non-serviced apartments, rates are the responsibility of the tenant. There is, for example, no limitation on the amount of security deposit that may be charged and no requirement that interest be paid on the deposit. If tenants wish to renew their tenancies and landlords oppose the renewal it is possible to appeal to the Lands Tribunal, as is also possible if a tenant considers a rent increase unreasonable .

Lands Tribunal: www.judiciary.gov.hk/en/crt_services/pphlt/html/lands.htm

Rating and Valuation Department: www.rvd.gov.hk / 2152 2152 /1823

Insurance

When insuring household effects, a comprehensive home contents insurance policy should include storm, flood/landslip and typhoon damage. Items left out in the open, i.e. on a balcony, are frequently excluded together with damage arising from dampness. Banks and private insurance firms can offer cover.

Utilities

Most utility companies require a deposit on completion of an application form for connection of services. Receipts for utility deposits should be carefully saved since utility companies will not refund the deposit without the original receipt.

Electricity

Electricity supply is provided by **HK Electric** to Hong Kong Island and Lamma, and by **China Light & Power (CLP)** to Kowloon, the New Territories and other outlying islands.

Electricity in Hong Kong is 200/220 volts and 50 hertz. Voltage transformers are available for appliances which do not conform and should be purchased from a reputable outlet. Hertz cannot be changed by a transformer; thus 60 hertz appliances (such as American electric mixers and clocks) should not be used in Hong Kong. Australian appliances should have the plug changed; use of adapters is not recommended. Televisions purchased in the United States and Australia must be multi-system to operate in Hong Kong.

It is very advisable to use a Registered Electrical Contractor for repairs which can be located via the **Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD)**.

China Light & Power Co. Ltd. (CPLP): www.clpgroup.com / 2678 2678 / 2728 8333 (emergencies)

Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD): www.emsd.gov.hk / 1823

HK Electric Company Ltd.: www.hec.com.hk / 2887 3411 / 2555 4000 (emergencies)

Gas

Natural gas or "town gas" is available in most areas, though not all of the New Territories. The alternative is liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), distributed by major oil companies.

LPG: check internet for suppliers eg Shell and Sinopec

The Hong Kong and China Gas Co. Ltd. (generally known as Towngas) :
www.hkcg.com / www.towngas.com / 2880 6988 / 2880 6999 (emergencies).

Water

Although water is usually not disconnected between tenancies, it is necessary to change the name on the water account. The **Water Supplies Department** has various methods available to do this.

Tap water fully complies with guidelines set by the World Health Organisation. Fluoride is added at source. Sometimes problems arise from poorly-maintained storage tanks and pipes so water should either be run off or boiled before drinking. Several companies deliver distilled water to domestic users; water filters and mineral water are readily available. Baby formula should only be made with freshly boiled tap water, not mineral water, which can harm a baby's immature kidneys. It is also preferable to use freshly boiled tap water for children; distilled and mineral waters are not recommended.

Water Supplies Department: www.wsd.gov.hk / 2824 5000

Telephone Lines - fixed/Mobiles/Internet/Fax

Pacific Century Cyberworks Ltd (PCCW) is the main service provider for telephone and internet connections. **New World Telecom** is also licensed to provide telephone services. Both companies offer a range of value added services, including IDD calls.

Telephones/mobiles can be purchased from a range of telecom shops in Hong Kong. Line rental is charged monthly and local calls are free.

One set of complimentary residential telephone directories in Chinese or English, may be collected by completing a Telephone Directory Redemption Coupon (available from all PCCW Shops) Business line customers are entitled to Business and Yellow Page directories. New editions of directories are not automatically distributed; collection dates and centres are announced in daily newspapers. If the public issue is

missed, a recent PCCW bill can be taken to one of the Daily Issue Centres. Distribution centres are listed on the PCCW website.

Some shops, restaurants and hotels allow the public to use their telephones without charge. From public telephone boxes and pay telephones the usual cost is \$1 or \$2 for local calls. PCCW SmartCards, phone cards, Octopus cards and major credit cards can also be used at many public telephone boxes. Hi-tech phones installed in public areas such as MTR stations have touch sensitive screens and provide extensive directory information, transport details, etc.

New World Telecom: www.newworldtel.com

Pacific Century Cyberworks Ltd (PCCW): www.pccw.com / 1000 (hotline) / 109 (repairs)

Distribution Centres: www.pccw.com Customer services, Directory Inquiries

Postal Services

The opening hours of post offices vary. Most are open on Saturday mornings; some small branches close for lunch. Details of postal rates are outlined in the leaflet Postage Rates and Services. An international special delivery service called Speedpost is also operated. Post Office boxes are available on application. Some people prefer using an office address for their postal deliveries.

A notification card is always left for collection of large parcels at a designated post office on presentation of an ID card and address, or other identification. Storage fees are charged if the parcel is not collected promptly.

Stamps in booklets of the three commonly used denominations can be purchased from 7-Eleven convenience stores.

Hongkong Post: www.hongkongpost.com

Domestic Help/Maids/Amahs

The majority of Hong Kong households employ part-time or live-in domestic help. The best way to find a helper is by word of mouth, personal recommendation, in the classified section of newspapers, via asiaxpat or by checking news boards in supermarkets. Domestic employment agencies charge an introduction fee which is generally no more than one month's salary. Many agencies also hire direct from overseas. The YWCA, amongst others, runs home management and cookery courses

for members' domestic helpers. It is advisable to make duties, such as cleaning, cooking, car washing, dog walking, appearance and other household matters clear at the initial interview.

All employees must be insured against accidents occurring at work. It is the responsibility of all employers to keep a record of their employee's HKID number.

Foreign Domestic Helpers

Most foreign domestic helpers come from the Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Nepal. Employment is strictly controlled by the Immigration Department and all foreign domestic helpers must have an employment visa. It is the responsibility of the employer to make sure that a prospective helper is legally employable and all original documents, such as passport and identity card, and references should be carefully checked rather than simply relying on an applicant's answers to enquiries. **It is illegal to employ a foreign domestic helper on a part-time basis if he/she is already contracted to another person.** Domestic helpers are only permitted to do domestic duties and only at the address on the contract; working in an office or shop is not allowed.

There is a standard two-year contract, legal minimum wage, vacation policy and paid statutory public holiday requirement when employing foreign domestic helpers. The employer is responsible for the cost of processing the contract and visa and passport renewal fees in addition to food, lodging, health care costs and a round trip air fare to the helper's country of origin. The employer is also responsible for paying a levy of HK\$400 per month to the Government, payable every six months (HK\$2,400). Currently this has been suspended until 31st July 2013. Pregnant employees are protected against dismissal and entitled to 10 weeks unpaid maternity leave after working for an employer for more than 4 weeks. Paid maternity leave is due after employment of 40 weeks. Most helpers take their holiday at the end of a contract but this requirement is often waived by Immigration when there is a change of employer.

End of contract renewal, release or early termination are subject to formalities and the employer should check with the relevant government departments/websites and proceed with care.

Classifieds: www.asiaxpat.com; local newspapers

Employees Compensation Ordinance:
www.labour.gov.hk/eng/legislat/content1.htm

Employment Rights and Benefits:
www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/wcp/FDHLeaflet_Eng.pdf

Foreign Domestic Helpers and Employers:

www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/wcp/AdvancedContractRenewal.pdf

Guidebook for the Employment Of Domestic helpers from Abroad:

www.immd.gov.hk/ehhtml/hkvisas_5.5.htm

Hiring a Domestic Helper:

www.gov.hk/en/residents/employment/recruitment/domestichelper.htm

Points to Note for Employers on Employment of Foreign Domestic Helpers:

[www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/wcp/PointToNotesForEmployersOnEmployment\(FDH\).pdf](http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/wcp/PointToNotesForEmployersOnEmployment(FDH).pdf)

Chinese Amahs

Chinese amahs rarely live in; preferring to work part-time for an hourly rate. Local Chinese amahs, both full and part-time, expect an extra month's salary at Chinese New Year, traditionally presented in a red lai see packet. Helpers must work at least 18 hours per week in order to be eligible for protection under the Employment Ordinance and entitled to benefits such as sick leave and holiday pay.

Hiring Local Domestic Helpers:

www.gov.hk/en/residents/employment/recruitment/localdomestichelper.htm

Assistance for Helpers

Some problems are caused by language misunderstandings. Instructions should be confirmed and if necessary, written down. The following agencies can assist both helpers and employers:

Asian Migrants Centre: www.asian-migrants.org / 2312 0031 (non-Filipino helpers)

Domestic Helpers & Migrant Workers Programme: [www.christian-action.org.hk/DMW\(f-e\).htm](http://www.christian-action.org.hk/DMW(f-e).htm) / 2739 6193 (all nationalities)

Helpers for Domestic Helpers: www.stjohnscathedral.org.hk/domestic.html / 2523 4020 (all nationalities)

Mission for Migrant Workers: www.migrants.net / 2522 8264: (Filipino helpers)

Race Relations Unit: www.cmab.gov.hk/rru/english/aboutus/aboutus_rru.html / 2835 1579 (all nationalities)

Call the CAB helpline 2815 5444

Transport and Travel

The, predominantly Chinese, street guide **Hong Kong Directory** shows bus routes. The **Transport Department** has a guide to provisions for people with disabilities. There are various reduced fares for children and senior citizens (over 65).

Hong Kong Directory (available from bookshops)

Transport Department guide: www.td.gov.hk/en/public_services

Octopus Card

Octopus is a smart card payment system which is widely used in Hong Kong for public transport of all kinds (amongst other things). Cards can be bought at MTR Customer Service Centres and other transport ticket offices with a refundable deposit. They can be easily topped up at MTR stations, 7 Eleven convenience stores, Watsons, Mannings as well as most supermarkets and elsewhere.

Cards are valid for 3 years but can be reactivated on request.

Octopus: www.octopuscards.com / **2266 2222** (hotline) / **2266 2266** (lost cards)

Buses

Bus routes cover almost all of Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories. Buses are generally frequent and air-conditioned. They normally operate daily 0600–0000, with a few all-night services at weekends. Fare displays are exact and should be paid on entering – either with cash or an Octopus card. No change is given. On some routes between the north and south sides of Hong Kong Island and in the New Territories the fare is collected when getting off.

Free travel is available for children 4 and under; concessions are available for 4 to 12 year olds and senior citizens over 65 years. Cross-harbour tunnel buses normally have a red route sign; "M" indicates bus feeder routes to MTR stations, "T" to a train station, "R" for Sunday and public holidays services only, "X" for express services and "N" for night services.

Airport buses: www.hongkongairport.com/eng/transport/to-from-airport/bus_from_hkia.html

Citybus: www.nwstbus.com.hk / 2873 0818 (Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, New Territories, Hong Kong International Airport, Disneyland).

KMB: www.kmb.hk / 2745 4466 (Hong Kong, Kowloon, New Territories)

New Lantau Bus Company: www.newlantaobus.com / 2984 9848 (Lantau Island)

New World First Bus.: www.nwstbus.com.hk / 2136 8888 (Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, New Territories)

Minibuses (public light buses (PLB))

There are two types of PLB - red and green. Red minibuses are not tightly regulated so do not have fixed routes and fares are not displayed. Green minibuses are regulated so run scheduled services on fixed routes with fixed fares paid by cash or Octopus card. Minibuses pick up passengers and let them off anywhere along the route in accordance with traffic regulations. Passengers must flag down the bus to board and call out "yau lok" to get off.

Mass Transit Railway (MTR)

The MTR is a main form of transportation in Hong Kong and runs trains between Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories. It also operates the Airport Express and a Light Rail network. Trains are frequent and generally run from about 05.30 to 01.00 depending on the line.

Trains are very congested during rush hours. Eating, smoking, large luggage or animals are not permitted in stations or on trains.

Tickets can be bought from station concourse machines or from MTR Service Centres. Mostly, people use Octopus cards for greater convenience. Children, students and senior citizens over 65 years are eligible for concessionary (reduced) fares except during peak hours.

There are generally no toilets on concourses. There is help available for disabled passengers if they call the hotline before travelling.

MTR: www.mtr.com.hk / 2881 8888 (08.00–18.00)

Mainland China Train Services

The **MTR** runs 12 through trains a day from Hung Hom to Guangzhou (approx 2 hrs). Some stop at Dongguan and one at Foshan. Through trains to and from Beijing West (approx 24 hrs) and Shanghai (approx 20 hrs) run from Hung Hom on alternate days.

MTR: www.mtr.com.hk / 2881 8888 (08.00–18.00)

Ferries

Comprehensive details of all ferry timetables can be viewed on the government's **Transport Department** website. Hard copies may be obtained from the ferry companies or the **Hong Kong Tourism Board**.

Hong Kong Tourism Board: www.discoverhongkong.com / 2807 6543 / 2508 1234

**Transport Department:
www.td.gov.hk/en/transport_in_hong_kong/public_transport/ferries**

StarFerry

This is the cheapest way to cross the harbour and runs between Central and Tsim Sha Tsui from 0630-2330, Central and Hung Hom from 0700-1930 and Wanchai and Tsim Sha Tsui from 0730-2300.

The “Star” Ferry Company Ltd: www.starferry.com.hk

Outlying island ferries

Ferries sail from the Outlying Islands' Piers opposite IFC as follows:

- Pier 3 to Discovery Bay
- Pier 4 to Lamma Island (Yung Shue Wan or Sok Kwa Wan)
- Pier 5 to Cheung Chau
- Pier 6 to Mui Wo (Silvermine Bay) on Lantau and Peng Chau.

Some local ferry services only operate on Sundays and public holidays such as from Tai O to Tsuen Wan via Tuen Mun and Sha Lo Wan.

There are also ferries from Aberdeen to Lamma and between various islands.

Outlying island ferries: www.hongkongextras.com/ferries_outlying

Kaitos (local ferries for hailing to outlying islands)

www.td.gov.hk/en/transport_in_hong_kong/public_transport/ferries/service_details

Other companies

First Ferry (NWFF): www.nwff.com.hk / 2131 8181

HKR International Ltd (Discovery Bay): www.hkri.com/ 2238 1188

The Hong Kong & Kowloon Ferry Co (HKKF): www.hkkf.com.hk/ / 2815 6063

Trams

Trams (streetcars) run along the north shore of Hong Kong Island between Kennedy Town in the west and Shau Kei Wan in the east. Trams operate 0600-2400. A small payment (currently HK\$2) is paid on exiting with coins or Octopus card. Children under 12 and seniors over 65 pay half fare.

Special trams are available for hire for parties.

Hong Kong Tramways Ltd.: www.hktramways.com

Peak Tram

The Peak Tram (funicular railway) operates 0700-2400 daily between the lower terminus under St. John's Building (opposite the American Consulate on Garden Road) and the Peak, with four stops en route. Children under 12 pay reduced fares; return (round-trip) fares are cheaper; non-transferable monthly season tickets allow holders priority boarding, obtainable from the Peak Tram office, lower terminus with two photos and HKID. Shuttle buses operate between Star Ferry and the lower terminus (15C).

The Peak Hong Kong: www.thepeak.com.hk/ / 2522 0922

Taxis

Taxis are numerous and readily available and reasonably priced compared to many international cities. Red taxis operate in Hong Kong, Kowloon and the New Territories except Tung Chung Road and roads in South Lantau. They are legally obliged to carry passengers from one place to another though most taxi drivers prefer to drive in familiar areas.

Green taxis operate in the New Territories in the districts of Tuen Mun, Yuen Long, Tai Po North, and the Ma On Shan area of Shatin and most areas of Sai Kung except for Tseung Kwan O New Town. They can carry passengers along specified routes from these areas to Tsuen Wan MTR station, Prince of Wales Hospital, Shatin Race Course, Tsing Yi Airport Express Station, Hang Hau MTR and Shun Lee Estate in Kwun Tong. Different taxi ranks operate for Shatin KCR and Shatin Hospital.

Blue taxis operate on Lantau. The flagfall (minimum fare) for green, blue and red taxis is different.

Not all taxi drivers speak English and some are not familiar with maps, even in Chinese; therefore it is useful to know the destination in Cantonese or have it written in Chinese.

Taxis can be hailed in the street or picked up from designated taxi stands but cannot stop on double yellow lines and certain other locations. Taxis can stop for disabled and visually impaired passengers with a "pink certificate" issued by the Transport Department in certain restricted zones.

A red "for hire" flag on the dashboard and a lighted roof dome indicate availability. An "Out of Service" sign is displayed if the driver is off duty or on the way to a telephone booking.

It can be difficult to get a taxi on rainy days and race days, during rush hours and driver changeover times but drivers may not refuse a fare except at cross-harbour taxi stands when they are permitted to refuse hire for non cross-harbour journeys.

All taxis can go to and from the Hong Kong International Airport as well as Disneyland. There are additional fares for luggage, tunnel fees, waiting times, etc., all of which are clearly displayed in the cab. Payment will include the return toll for the Lantau Link (to/from the airport). Receipts are only generally issued on request.

The photograph of the driver and his name and number are displayed on the dashboard; passengers are required to wear seatbelts.

Radio taxi booking service: 2861 1008/2574 7311 (extra charge for telephone booking)

Taxi Lost and Found: 187 2920

Transport Complaints Unit: www.info.gov.hk/tcu / 2889 9999

Useful information: www.discoverhongkong.com (trip-planner, transport, taxis); **www.td.gov.hk** (English, publications, leaflets, guide to taxi services)

Mid-Levels Escalator

The Mid-Levels escalator provides free transport between the Hang Seng Bank building, Des Voeux Road Central and Conduit Road with access points en route. The service operates downwards from Conduit Road between 0600-1000, and in reverse from 1000-2400. Steps next to the escalator can be used when it is not operating or is travelling in the ‘wrong’ direction.

Private Cars

New cars in Hong Kong depreciate between 25 and 30 percent in the first two years, making used cars an attractive alternative. Second-hand cars are advertised daily in English and Chinese newspapers and on websites such as asiaxpat. Cars over six years old cannot be licensed without a valid Certificate of Roadworthiness from a Designated Car Testing Centre. The Certificate is valid for relicensing only during the four months immediately after date of issue.

Purchaser and vendor should go to the **Transport Department** together to ensure the transfer is registered properly within 72 hours of sale and take original ID cards or passport and insurance certificates. A Certificate of Clearance (valid for 72 hours) will avoid inheriting parking tickets or other penalties incurred by the previous owner.

Vehicle licence costs vary according to cylinder capacity. There are different fee rates for 4-month and 1 year periods and a Traffic Accident Victims Fund levy is included. Licences can be renewed in person or by post within four months of the expiry date. The licence must be displayed on the windscreen.

Hong Kong traffic drives on the left-hand side of the road; mainland China drives on the right. Left-hand drive vehicles are generally not allowed in Hong Kong.

The speed limit is 50km/hr unless signs indicate otherwise; speed traps are not uncommon. Rules of the road and parking regulations are outlined in the leaflet the

Road Users' Code. Private cars can be driven to the airport but may not be used on any other Lantau road without a permit.

Minor contraventions against traffic laws are dealt with by fixed penalty.

Third party car insurance is compulsory by law. The **Hong Kong Automobile Association** can provide advice on car insurance.

Parking is allowed only in designated areas. Most parking meters operate 0800-2400 on weekdays, 1000-2200 on Sunday and public holidays.

Car parks are very expensive; many have high minimum charges, which are displayed at the entrance. Some increase their charges on public holidays and race days. Most car parks take payment by credit or Octopus cards. Some supermarkets and restaurants offer free parking vouchers which must be presented for validation when paying.

Hong Kong Automobile Association: www.hkaa.com.hk / 2739 5273

Road Users' Code: www.td.gov.hk (English, road safety)

Transport Department: www.td.gov.hk / 2804 2600 / 1823

Tunnels

Three tunnels (Cross Harbour, Western and Eastern Harbour crossings) connect Hong Kong Island to Kowloon with other tunnels on the Island and in Kowloon. Tunnel fee payment is by cash, autopass or pre-paid vouchers.

Autotoll Ltd Tel: www.autotoll.com.hk / 2627 8888

Hang Seng Bank: www.hangseng.com (pre-paid vouchers)

The Cross-Harbour (Holdings)Ltd.: www.crossharbour.com.hk /2161 1888

The New HK Tunnel Co. Ltd.: www.easternharbourtunnel.com.hk / 2348 0011
(24-hr hotline, autopass/pre-paid vouchers)

Western Harbour Tunnel Co. Ltd: www.westernharbourtunnel.com / 2302 5888
(24-hr hotline)

Car Hire

Companies require drivers to be over 25 years of age and possess a driving licence from the country of residence or an international driving licence. Third party insurance is compulsory.

Avis: www.avis.com.hk / 2890 6988 (Kowloon), 2882 2927 (Island)

Hertz: www.hertz.com / 2525 1313

Driving Licence – minimum age 18

A visitor to Hong Kong can drive on their home licence or international licence for a period of 12 months. New residents should apply for their driving licence as soon as they have their Hong Kong I.D. cards.

See also: Driving Licences – cars and motor cycles (Keeping on the Right Side of the Law section)

Transport Department: www.td.gov.hk / 2804 2600 / 1823

To/From the Airport

Details are available from both the **Hong Kong Tourism Board's** and **Hong Kong International Airport's** website .

1. **Airport Express** train: from Hong Kong station (approximately 26 minutes), Kowloon station and Tsing Yi station; check in for flights at Hong Kong or Kowloon stations from 1 day to 90 minutes before take off; also to Asia World Expo, one minute from the airport station
2. **MTR Tung Chung Line:** to Tsing Yi Station and then by shuttle bus to airport
3. **Franchised airport buses:** from various points throughout Hong Kong.

All taxis serve the airport and if there are three people travelling then a taxi may be cheaper than the Airport Express. If travelling by private car, there is ample long- and short-term car parking space available.

Airport Express: www.mtr.com.hk/eng/airport_express/intro_index.html / 2881 8888

Franchised airport buses: www.hongkongairport.com/eng/transport/to-from-airport/bus_from_hkia.html

Hong Kong International Airport: www.hongkongairport.com/eng/transport

Hong Kong Tourism Board: www.discoverhongkong.com / 2807 6543 / 2508 1234

MTR: www.mtr.com.hk / 2881 8888 (08.00–18.00)

Travel to Mainland China (PRC)

Although Hong Kong is part of China, a visitor's visa is required to cross the border; package tours include visas; independent travellers can obtain visas through the **China Travel Service** or the **China Visa Office** - price varies according to nationality. It is possible (and sometimes cheaper) to obtain a visa at the border though some nationalities may be refused. Travellers resident in Hong Kong must present both passports and HKID to cross the border.

Recommended destinations: Beijing, Guangzhou, Guilin, Hangzhou, Shanghai, Suzhou and Xian; **Shenzhen** is popular for shopping.

China Travel Service (Hong Kong) Ltd.: www.ctshk.com / 2315 7171

China Visa Office: 5th Floor, Lower Block, China Resource Building Harbour Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong / 2827 1811

Shenzhen shopping: www.shopinshenzen.com

Travel to Macau

The former Portuguese colony of Macau is just forty miles from Hong Kong and offers a pleasant break. It has a fascinating history and retains much of its Portuguese flavour in the central part which is a Unesco site. It also offers the Macau Grand Prix, shows such as Circe de Soleil, furniture shopping and golf as well as the casinos.

There are a number of ways to go there – jetfoil, hydrofoil and helicopter. Permanent Residents may use their ID cards at immigration, but Hong Kong Residents (not to be confused with Permanent Residents) and overseas visitors need to show their passports.

For airline passengers there is a ferry service from the airport.

Cotai Jet: cotaijet.com.mo

First Ferry Macau: www.nwff.com.hk / 2121 8181

Macau ferry services:

www.gov.hk/en/residents/transport/crossboundary/ferryservices.htm

Macau Tourist Office: www.macautourism.gov.mo / 2857-2287 (information counter in Hong Kong), (853) 2833 3000 (Macau office).

Turbojet: www.turbojetseaexpress.com.hk / 2859 333

Call the CAB helpline 2815 5444

Children

Education Generally (non-Chinese-speaking children)

Expatriate students are not eligible for free education. There is however a growing number of expatriate parents who are choosing to educate their children at local schools, particularly at kindergarten and primary levels.

Education Bureau: www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeID=4211&langno=1 (non-Chinese speaking children)

International Schools

There are several international schools catering for different languages and education systems, including British, American, Australian, Canadian, French, German-Swiss, Japanese, Jewish, Korean, Norwegian and Singaporean. There are also some small independent schools. Parents are advised to apply early, and to more than one school as waiting lists can be lengthy.

Some international schools require individual debentures, meaning that a sum of money is paid which may be refunded when the child leaves, or may depreciate over a set period to zero; corporate debentures may facilitate instant admission. Other schools charge an entrance levy which is non-refundable. Most schools offer bus services at extra cost.

Complete list of schools : contact the CAB.

Shambles: www.shambles.net/pages/countries/hk_schools/

The English Schools Foundation: www.esf.edu.hk / 2574 2351

Pre-School

Some international schools offer pre-school classes. **The Hong Kong Pre-School Playgroups Association (HKPPA)** also runs playgroups.

Hong Kong PreSchool Playgroups Association (HKPPA): www.hkppa.org
/ 2523 2599

List of other schools: contact the CAB.

Special Needs

Facilities in Hong Kong for special needs children are limited. **The English Schools Foundation (ESF)** makes every effort to integrate special needs students into its regular classes provided the student can wholly or partially participate in the normal school day.

Education Bureau's Special School Placement Unit: 3698 3727

ESF Bradbury School: www.esf.edu.hk/our-schools/special-educational-needs/ / 2574 2351(primary)

ESF Jockey Club Sarah Roe School: www.esf.edu.hk/our-schools/special-educational-needs/ / 2574 2351 (5-18 years)

ESF South Island School: www.esf.edu.hk/our-schools/special-educational-needs/ / 2574 2351 (secondary)

Springboard: www.springboardhk.org / 2813 4508 (5 and above + Youth Club)

The Child Development Centre at Matilda: www.cdchk.org / 2849 6138(birth to six years)

The Nesbitt Centre: www.hkvc.org.hk (2813 4550 (post-school students and adults).

Out of School Activities

Parks and beaches tend to be crowded at weekends and on public holidays so it is often best to take pre-school children during school hours. In winter beaches are comparatively quiet.

The **Leisure & Cultural Services Department** supervises playgrounds and public sporting facilities, including swimming pools. There are many playgrounds including those at Mount Austin Road (Peak), the Botanical Gardens (Central), Wanchai Gap, Hong Kong Park, Bowen Road (Mid-levels), Victoria Park (Causeway Bay), Quarry Bay Park and Choi Sai Woo Park (North Point), Salisbury Road (Tsimshatsui near Sheraton Hotel), Kowloon Park, Cox's Road (Kowloon), Central Kwai Chung, Sha Tin Central Park, and Tuen Mun Town Park. After-school sports programmes are plentiful and include gymnastics, swimming, riding, mini-rugby, mini-hockey, little league baseball, and cricket. The **ESF** runs many activities as does Multi-Sport. There are also many dance schools, art classes, music lessons and drama activities available in Hong Kong.

The Warehouse, in Aberdeen, is a supervised club for teenagers (ages 13-25) of all races and cultures (but many local Chinese) providing outdoor sports, computer facilities, music lounges, dance, drama and social functions.

ESF Educational Services: www.esf.org.hk / 2711 1280;

**Hong Kong PreSchool Playgroups Association (HKPPA): www.hkppa.org
/ 2523 2599**

Hong Kong With Kids: www.hkwithkids.com

Leisure & Cultural Services Department: www.lcsd.gov.hk

Multi-Sport: www.multi-sport.com.hk / 2540 1257

The Warehouse: www.warehouse.org.hk / 2873 2244

Baby Equipment & Toys

The Toys and Children's Products Safety Ordinance requires that items comply with internationally recognised safety standards. Nevertheless, parents should exercise discretion in choosing locally made toys and nursery equipment. High quality, imported baby equipment and toys are widely available at specialist shops.

The YWCA on MacDonnell Road has cots (cribs) and high chairs for hire; diaper (nappy) services are not available in Hong Kong.

Bumps to Babes: www.bumpstobabes.com / 2552 5000

Mothercare: www.mothercare.com.hk / 2627 0035

Toys Club: www.itoysclub.com / itoysclub@hotmail.com

Wise Kids: www.wisekidstoys.com

YWCA: www.ywca.org.hk / 3476 1300

Baby-Sitting/Child Care

There are several evening baby-sitting and long- and short-term childcare services available in Hong Kong.

Annerley: /2983 1558

Quality HealthCare Nursing Agency: www.qhms.com / 2975 2392

Rent-a-Mum: www.rent-a-mum.com / 2523 4868

Call the CAB helpline 2815 5444

Health

Precautions

Family health is best maintained by good hygiene, such as hand washing and prompt refrigeration of leftover food. Tap water is safe to drink, but most people prefer to boil it or use water dispensers or bottled water.

Hong Kong has a good public health service and immunisation programme and it is easy to keep routine vaccinations, including polio and tetanus, up to date. All babies born in Hong Kong are given a full vaccination programme including BCG and Hepatitis B.

Persons travelling extensively in the region should consult a physician regarding appropriate vaccinations for different countries. The **Department of Health** also runs two travel health centres which require users to produce a passport or ID. Travel kits and up to date information on travel vaccinations, malarial advice and alerts can be obtained from the travel clinic at the **Matilda** hospital on the Peak and its medical centre in Central. Other private hospitals will also provide advice on travellers' health, inoculations and drugs that may be useful whilst travelling.

Hepatitis A, caused by contaminated food and water, may be transmitted by raw shellfish, by food handlers with poor hygiene or by swallowing contaminated seawater. All seafood should be well cooked, and vegetables purchased from local markets thoroughly washed and soaked. **Hepatitis B** can be passed from one person to another by blood and body fluids; there are a large number of carriers in Hong Kong. Vaccines are available for both A and B, including a paediatric Hepatitis A injection.

HIV is a growing problem in Southeast Asia which is being addressed in Hong Kong by a public education and awareness programme. HIV is a common health threat in the regional sex industry and appropriate care should be taken.

Sunburn is not uncommon and sunscreen is advisable, even on cloudy days. Dermatologists advise that babies under six months should never be exposed to direct sunlight. Imported sun-protective swimwear and clothing is available in Hong Kong. Heat rash is also common due to Hong Kong's high temperatures and humidity.

Fungal foot infections and "*swimmers' ear*" are common during humid summer months. Proprietary treatments are available but a doctor should be consulted if symptoms persist.

SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) first appeared in Hong Kong in spring 2003. The government issues health warnings and advice as necessary.

Adventist Hospital: www.hkah.org.hk 3651 8888

Canossa Hospital: www.canosahospital.org.hk 2522 2181

Department of Health, Travel Health Service: www.travelhealth.gov.hk /
2961 8840 (Island) / 2150 7235 (Kowloon)

Immunization programme for children:

www.fhs.gov.hk/english/health_info/class_topic/ct_child_health/ch_immunization_i10.html

Matilda Hospital: www.matilda.org 2849 0111

Public Toilets

Lavatories in shopping arcades and hotels tend to be more modern and cleaner than those in public areas. It is good practice to carry a supply of tissues, wet-wipes or anti-bacterial hand gel.

Pest Control

Homes may need regular spraying against cockroaches, termites, fleas and mosquitoes by pest exterminating companies, who also deal with rodents. Contact the **CAB** for a list of reputable companies. Mosquito coils are useful for outdoor areas.

BioCycle: www.biocycle.com.hk

Yellow Pages: www.yip.com.hk

Snakes & Snakebites

Snakebites are uncommon in Hong Kong. Most occur after summer rains and at night. To treat any snake bite, cover it with a bandage or cloth, remove anything that could constrict the flow of blood (such as a wristwatch), and seek professional care. If the snake is dead, take it for identification.

The local police station should be called if there is a live snake in a house or garden. A police officer will come to check that there is a snake and arrange to call a snake

catcher if necessary. No action will be taken unless a snake is seen. It is believed that sulphur applied to the surrounding area may be useful.

Rabies

Rabies occurs infrequently in Hong Kong. Bites from any warm blooded animal should be reported to the police and the bite medically treated as soon as possible.

Medical Care

Government clinics and hospitals are open to all holders of Hong Kong ID cards and charges are low for all treatments. Appointments cannot be made and waiting times may be lengthy.

Medical and dental fees at private clinics and hospitals are high. An understanding of the charges should be reached prior to treatment. The ‘Class’ register for an inpatient at a private hospital generally covers surgeon, anaesthetist, operating theatre and room costs.

Medical insurance, often included in an expatriate employment package, is available from **Blue Cross, BUPA, HSBC**, and others. Most practices and some hospitals also provide schemes for consultation and/or treatment.

Many private practices have English-speaking male and female doctors. Registered doctors can be traced through **The Hong Kong Doctors Homepage**, or via the **Medical Council of Hong Kong’s** list. The CAB has a list of doctors’ surgeries often used by expats.

The Family Planning Association has clinics throughout Hong Kong. - and several independent Well Woman clinics.

Quality HealthCare offers many services, including both expatriate and Chinese nurses for hospital and home care, and medical equipment for sale and hire. The **Community Nursing Service** requires a doctor’s referral.

There are many different alternative medicine practitioners – call the **CAB** for details.

Blue Cross: www.bluecross.com.hk / 3608 2988

BUPA: www.bupa.com.hk / 2517 5860

Community Nursing Service: www.ha.org.hk

HSBC: www.hsbc.com.hk / 2233 3131

Medical Council of Hong Kong: www.mchk.org.hk

Quality HealthCare: www.qhms.com / 2598 9133

The Family Planning Association: www.famplan.org.hk / 2575 4477

The Hong Kong Doctors Homepage: www.hkdoctors.org

Prescription Drugs

Most doctors' surgeries are licensed to sell prescription drugs. Shops registered as dispensaries display a red-cross logo, employ the services of a licensed pharmacist and are permitted to sell Schedule Three drugs to customers holding a prescription.

Drug Abuse

Drugs are as available in Hong Kong as they are in every city and town around the world, and parents should be vigilant. The **Community Drug Advisory Council** publishes a newsletter and organises courses for teachers and talks to parents and students. Information concerning support groups, such as **Kely**, is available from the CAB.

Community Drug Advisory Council: www.cdac.org.hk / 2521 2880

Kely: www.kely.org/en/index.html

Hospitals & Medical Emergencies

The quickest and most efficient way to receive emergency treatment is to dial 999 for an ambulance. Ambulance officers decide which hospital is the most appropriate. The **Hospital Authority** operates a non-emergency ambulance service for transfers between hospitals and clinic appointments at government hospitals. **Hong Kong St. John Ambulance** also provides emergency and non-emergency services serving both private and government hospitals.

For elective surgery or treatment requiring hospitalisation, it is wise to research the available facilities, since areas of expertise may vary among institutions. Currently, holders of HKIDs are eligible for inexpensive treatment at government hospitals. Some private rooms are available. Before being admitted to a private hospital, a patient is required to prove ability to pay.

Fire Services Department (ambulance):

www.hkfsd.gov.hk/home/eng/source/safety/uambu.htm / 999 (emergency)

Hong Kong St. John Ambulance: www.stjohn.org.hk / 2524 4888

Hospital Authority: www.ha.org.hk

Hospitals - Hong Kong

Adventist Hospital, Stubbs Road: www.hkah.org.hk / 3651 8888 **

Canossa Hospital, Old Peak Road: www.canosahospital.org.hk / 2522 2181

Hong Kong Central Hospital, Lower Albert Road: www.hkch.org / 2522 3141

Matilda International Hospital, Peak: www.matilda.org / 2849 0111

Queen Mary Hospital, Pokfulam: www.ha.org.hk / 2855 3838 *

Ruttonjee Hospital, Wanchai: www.ha.org.hk/haho/ho/hesd/100144e.htm / 2291 2511 *

Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital: www.ha.org.hk/pyneh / 2595 6111 *

Saint John Hospital, Cheung Chau: www.ha.org.hk/haho/ho/hesd/100146e.htm / 2981 9441

St. Paul's Hospital, Causeway Bay: www.stpaul.org.hk / 2890 6008

Hospitals - Kowloon

Hong Kong Baptist Hospital, Waterloo Road: www.hkbh.org.hk/eng/home.php / 2339 8888

Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Gascoigne Road: www.ha.org.hk/qeh / 2958 8888*

St. Teresa's Hospital, Prince Edward Road: www.sth.org.hk / 2711 9111

**United Christian Hospital, Hip Wo St, Kwun Tong
www.ha.org.hk/haho/ho/hesd/100156e.htm / 2379 9611 ***

Hospitals -New Territories

North District Hospital, Fanling: www.ha.org.hk/ndh/index.htm / 2683 8888*

Pok Oi Hospital, Yuen Long: www.pokoi.org.hk/tc/index.html / 2486 8000*

Prince of Wales Hospital, Shatin: www3.ha.org.hk/pwh / 2632 221 *

Princess Margaret Hospital, Lai Chi Kok: www.ha.org.hk / 2990 1111*

Tsuen Wan Adventist Hospital: www.twah.org.hk/new/eng / 2276 7676

Tseung Kwan O Hospital: www.ha.org.hk/haho/ho/hesd/101326e.htm / 2208 0111**

Tuen Mun Hospital: www.ha.org.hk/tmh/ewelcome.html / 2468 511*

Yan Chai Hospital, Tsuen Wan: www.ha.org.hk/haho/ho/hesd/100165e.htm / 2417 8383*

Union Hospital, Tai Wai, Shatin: www.union.org / 2608 3100

* Designated hospitals for transfer by ambulance in cases of acute illness and emergency

** Other hospitals offering Accident & Emergency facilities

Maternity

Many public and private hospitals have maternity wings and out-patient clinics. There is enormous demand for Hong Kong's maternity hospital services from women coming from the mainland, so it is wise to book a place in a hospital as soon as possible. Maternity costs may not be covered by private insurance; hospitals charge different fees.

La Leche League offers free antenatal and post-natal advice and offers help with breast feeding problems.

Baby clinics are held weekly at various locations including the **Matilda** on the Island and many medical practices. [See "Utilities - Water" for advice on baby formula.]

La Leche League: www.lllhk.org

Matilda International Hospital: www.matilda.org / 2849 0321 (maternity unit)

Counselling, Personal Help, Support Groups

The **CAB** has a comprehensive list of support groups and hot lines for cancer, bereavement, alcoholism, marriage guidance, family counselling, drug support and others. The service is confidential and callers requesting information are not asked to provide any personal details.

Bereavement

It is a legal requirement to register a death in Hong Kong. The **Immigration Services** can provide details. There are several funeral homes; traditional Western funerals may be arranged by contacting the **Hong Kong Funeral Home**.

The **Islamic Union** arranges funerals for those of the Muslim faith. **The Samaritans** operate a 24-hour listening service and are able to give grief support. The **CAB** can provide other information concerning funerals and bereavement.

Hong Kong Funeral Home: www.hongkongfuneralhome.com / 2561 5226/8

Immigration Services:

www.gov.hk/en/residents/immigration/idcard/#/en/residents/immigration/bdmreg

Islamic Union : www.iuhk.org / 2575 2218

Muslim Cemetery Manager: 2575 2967.

The Samaritans: www.samaritans.org.hk / 2896 0000

Call the CAB helpline 2815 5444

Shopping

Consumer Rights

These are minimal in Hong Kong. If goods sold are not fit for purpose, the consumer is entitled to a credit note, a refund, replacement of, or, repair of goods. It is advisable to keep all receipts. Complaints may be made to the **Consumer Council**.

The **Consumer Goods Safety Ordinance** requires that consumer goods supplied in Hong Kong are "reasonably safe". Food and pharmaceuticals are covered by the **Food & Drug Regulation (Composition and Labelling)**.

Consumer Council: www.consumer.org.hk / 2929 2222

Consumer Goods Safety Ordinance (Chapter No 456):
www.hklii.org/hk/legis/en/ord

Food & Drug Regulation (Composition and Labelling):
www.cfs.gov.hk/english/food_leg/food_leg_nl_guidance.html

Shopping Hints

The availability and range of goods obtainable in Hong Kong (including imported food items) varies from day to day. A good rule of thumb is "if you see a thing you like, buy it - it may not be there tomorrow". Many shops are open on Sunday and late in the evening. Department and chain stores have fixed prices and give guarantees for electrical goods. It is often possible to bargain at outlets and market stalls – but the price may be reflected in the quality. Factory outlets come and go and opening hours vary so it is best to check before setting out.

Department Stores

Central

- Lane Crawford: Podium 3, IFC / **2118 3388**
- Marks & Spencer: Central Tower, Queens Road / **2921 8059**
- Sincere: 173 Des Voeux Road / **2544 2688**
- Wing On: 211 Des Voeux Road / **2852 1888**

Admiralty

- Lane Crawford: Pacific Place / **2118 3668**
- Seibu: Pacific Place / **2971 3888**

Causeway Bay:

- Ikea: Basement, Park Lane Hotel / **3125 0888**
- Lane Crawford: G/F & 1/F Times Square / **2118 3638**
- Marks & Spencer: 4/F & 6/F Times Square / **2923 7970**
- Sogo: East Point Centre, 555 Hennessy Road / **2833 8338**

Taikoo Shing/Kornhill:

- Jusco: Kornhill Plaza South, Quarry Bay / **2884 6888**
- Marks & Spencer: 100 & 217, City Plaza 1 / **2922 7234**
- UNY: City Plaza 2 / **2885 0331**
- Wing On: City Plaza 1 / **2885 7588**

Kowloon:

- Chinese Arts & Crafts: Star House / **2735 4061**
- Ikea: L4 Megabox, 38 Wang Chiu Rd, Kowloon Bay / **3125 0888**
- Lane Crawford: Unit 100 Ocean Terminal / **2730 2393**
- Marks & Spencer: 101/ 201, Festival Walk, Kowloon Tong / **2928 2213**
- Marks & Spencer: 251-260 Ocean Centre / **2926 3346**
- Marks & Spencer: 1-3 Phase 1, Telford Plaza, Kowloon Bay / **2148 6012**
- Sincere: Dragon Centre, 37 Yen Chow Street, Sham Shui Po / **2708 6688**
- Yue Hwa Chinese Products Emporium: 301 Nathan Road / **2384 0084**

New Territories:

- Ikea: Level 6, Grand Central Plaza, Sha Tin / **3125 0888**
- Jusco: L1-L4 Tsuen Wan Plaza, Tai Pa Street, Tsuen Wan / **2412 8686**
- Marks & Spencer: 101 Plaza Hollywood, Diamond Hill / **2927 6494**
- Marks & Spencer: Shop 428 New Town Plaza, Shatin / **2929 4332**
- Seiyu: New Town Plaza III, Sha Tin / **2694 1111**

Free advertising magazines

There are many of these kinds of booklets that provide useful information on shops, clothing, businesses run from home, bazaars and more.

HK Dollarsaver: www.dollarsaver.com.hk / 2528 0825

HK Magazine: hk.asia-city.com.hk / 2850 5065

The List: www.thelist.com.hk / 2534 9512

Private sale of goods

Private individuals can advertise goods/services on notice boards in supermarkets, in the "Trading Post" section of Sunday's **South China Morning Post**, in free advertising magazines and websites such as **AsiaXPAT** and **GeoExpat**. There are also some second-hand shops.

AsiaXPAT.com: www.asiaxpat.com.hk

GeoExpat: hongkong.geoexpat.com

South China Morning Post: www.SCMP.com

Food

There are several supermarket chains such as **City'super**, **PARKnSHOP** and **Wellcome**. They have various associated company outlets such as Great, International, Taste, Fusion (PARKnSHOP) and Marketplace, Oliver's and Three Sixty (Wellcome). Most supermarket outlets offer online shopping and delivery services as well as parking vouchers (depending on amount spent) for use in some shopping centre car parks.

Locally, there are also many grocery shops and bakeries as well as convenience stores such as 7-Eleven and Circle K.

7-Eleven: www.7-eleven.com.hk

CircleK: www.circlek.com

City'super: www.citysuper.com.hk

Farm Milk Company: (home deliveries) / 2832 9218

PARKnSHOP: www.parknshop.com / 2606 8658

Wellcome: www.wellcome.com.hk / 2299 1133

Wet markets

Chinese “wet” markets sell fresh vegetables, meat and fish. It is helpful, but not essential, to learn enough Cantonese to read the prices and labels.

Martha Dahlen's book **A Cook's Guide to Chinese Vegetables** is a good reference book. Vegetables purchased from local markets should be thoroughly washed before consumption to remove pesticide residues. Prices are often higher after bad weather and at holiday times. Traditional Chinese weights (1 catty = 1 1/3 lbs. = 600 grams) are often used.

A Cook's Guide to Chinese Vegetables

Martha Dahlen

Organic and Specialist Health Food, Wine and Spirits

Health foods are available from specialist shops, of which the **CAB** has a list. Supermarkets stock organic vegetables; some can be ordered direct from organic farms in Hong Kong or elsewhere. Call the **CAB** for details. Wines and spirits are available from supermarkets as well as a number of specialist retailers who will make deliveries and offer discounts for bulk purchases.

Clothing

Clothing and shoes are available in all sizes but choice may be limited. The **CAB** can provide information on shops carrying Western sizes. Markets are a good source of inexpensive clothing (but often don't allow buyers to try on). Factory outlets are also available. Sizes may be shown as American, British or European. A conversion chart and tape measure are useful.

Bumps to Babes stocks Start-Rite shoes for children.

Casual shoes are available from department stores, shoe shops, alley shops and street markets. The shoe shops in Wong Nei Chong Road, Happy Valley will make copies. There are individual shoe repairers who work at street level (eg: Theatre Lane Central) and chain shoe repair shops some of which are located on the concourse level of MTR stations.

There are vast numbers of dressmakers and tailors but even with a strong recommendation, it is wise to have one item made before ordering another. Copying an existing garment is an option that may be more successful since ideas are not always

interpreted as anticipated. Alteration and mending services can be found in World Wide Plaza, Wellington Street, Admiralty and Melbourne Plaza in Central.

Bumps to Babes: www.bumpstobabes.com / 2552 5000

Factory outlets: www.hkoutlets.com

Dry-Cleaning/Laundrying

There are many dry-cleaning outlets, including well-known chains. Collection may be possible by telephoning but it should be made clear whether dry-cleaning or laundrying is required. The **Consumer Council** advises that if a garment is damaged, delivery should not be accepted. In the case of a dispute, contact the Council, which may take the case to the Small Claims Tribunal. The Control of Exemption Clauses Ordinance does not allow dry-cleaners to disclaim responsibility for damage.

Consumer Council: www.consumer.org.hk / 2929 2222

Sewing, Craftwork & Haberdashery

Sham Shui Po is an excellent area in which to look for craft materials, fabrics, ribbons, Velcro, etc.; MTR to Sham Shui Po, exit Cheung Sha Wan Road.

Fabric is widely available, but quality varies. Western Market, the Lanes (Li Yuen Street East and Li Yuen Street West) in Central, Queen's Road West near the junction with Wellington Street, the junction of Bowring and Pilkem Streets (Jordan MTR) all sell materials. Wholesalers in Yu Chau Street and Ki Lung Street, Sham Shui Po retail small quantities of fabric.

Haberdashery can be purchased from stalls along Pottinger Street (the ladder street above Queen's Road Central); Sham Shui Po; at **Kam Wah Fashion Accessories Co.** ; from **Ho Ka Yuen**; and from **The Tailor and Alteration Needlework Club** in Causeway Bay.

Ho Ka Yuen: 72 Bute Street (Mongkok MTR) / 2393 7782

Kam Wah Fashion Accessories Co.: 1/F, 43 Parkes Street,(nr Bowring St), Kowloon / 2730 0431

The Tailor and Alteration Needlework Club: www.needleworkclub.com / 2525 9822

Furnishings, Rugs, Linen

Custom-made rosewood furniture can be ordered to specification from shops in Queen's Road East (Island) and the Canton Road area (Kowloon). Most antique Chinese furniture will have been restored and some is reproduction. Italian and locally made contemporary furniture shops are located in Wong Nei Chong Road, Happy Valley. There are many furniture stores, both contemporary and antique, in **Horizon Plaza, Ap Lei Chau**.

Home Essentials offers furniture rental or a complete package, which includes soft furnishings. A wide range of soft furnishing fabrics is available from the many drapery and upholstery shops along Queen's Road East (Island). Brand name designer fabrics are sold at specialist stores.

Light fittings, lamps and lampshades are readily available from department stores, shops and outlets. Silk shades can be made to order. There are oriental rug shops on Wyndham Street, Central. Household linens can be purchased from department stores, specialist shops, factory outlets and markets.

Home Essentials: www.homeessentials.org / 2870 1400

Horizon Plaza:

www.metropolasia.com/Hong_Kong's_Shopping_Districts/Horizon-Plaza

Ikea: www.ikea.com/hk/

Household Appliances

Natural gas (most residential apartments) appliances are available from **The Hong Kong and China Gas Co. Ltd. (Towngas)**. LP appliances are available from **Hong Kong L.P Gas (Holdings) Ltd.**

Electric appliances are widely available in **Fortress, Gilman Home Appliances** and in department stores. It is advisable to buy brand name products and to ensure that spare parts and repair services are available. It is also important to check that an apartment's power supply is adequate for major appliances. Second-hand appliances are available from certain stores and from expatriate sales. **Home Essentials** hire second hand household appliances.

Dehumidifiers and low voltage electric cupboard (closet) heaters are useful to avoid mould forming during the humid summer months.

Fortress: www.fortress.com.hk / 2555 5788

Gilman Home Appliances: www.gilman-group.com / 8210 8210

Home Essentials: www.homeessentials.org / 2870 1400

Hong Kong L.P Gas (Holdings) Ltd.: www.hklpg.com.hk / 26676662

The Hong Kong and China Gas Co. Ltd. (Towngas): www.towngas.com / 2880 6988

Books, Magazines and Stationery

Major booksellers are **Dymocks**, **Hong Kong Book Centre**, **Bookazine**, **Kelly & Walsh**, **Page One** and **Swindon Book Co Ltd**.

Other useful sources are:

St. John's Cathedral Bookstore - children's, general interest and religious books, greeting cards, gift wrapping.

YWCA - general interest books on China and Hong Kong, cards, gift-wrapping

Cultural Centre Bookshop - books relating to opera and music

Museum of Art Bookshop - art books.

The online **Government Bookstore** - books and publications relevant to life in Hong Kong: copies of ordinances, Transport Guide, maps of country parks and hiking trails, books on local flora and fauna and historical guides are available at reasonable prices.

Many clubs, including the **YWCA**, offer second-hand book swaps for their members. Their shop, **Collectables**, buys and sells second-hand books. **Oxfam** also has second-hand books.

Hong Kong Public Libraries has several libraries throughout Hong Kong and the New Territories for residents to borrow books. **Paddyfield** is Hong Kong's Amazon.

Bookazine: www.bookazine.com.hk

Cultural Centre Bookshop:
www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/HKCC/en/about/art_shop.html

Dymocks: www.dymocks.com.hk

Government Bookstore:
www.gov.hk/en/residents/government/publication/publication/bookstore.htm

Hong Kong Book Centre: www.hongkongbookcentre.com

Hong Kong Public Libraries: www.hkpl.gov.hk/

Kelly & Walsh: www.kellyandwalsh.com

Museum of Art Bookshop: www.lcsd.gov.hk/ce/Museum/Arts/

Paddyfield: www.paddyfield.com

Page One: www.pageonegroup.com

St. John's Cathedral Bookstore: www.stjohnscathedral.org.hk/bookstore.html

Swindon Book Co Ltd: www.swindonbooks.com

YWCA: www.ywca.org.hk

Newspapers

English language newspapers are available at street stalls or can be delivered. Overseas newspapers are available from some bookstores/street vendors and can be ordered for home delivery from importers. International magazines are widely available and some (e.g. Economist, Time, USA Today) can be delivered. They can be ordered from South Asia Publications Ltd.

Asian Wall Street Journal (Mon-Fri): www.wsj-asia.com / 2573 7121

International Herald Tribune (Mon-Sat): www.ihinfo.com / 2922 1188

South Asia Publications Ltd: www.saphk.com / 2730 6556

South China Morning Post (SCMP): www.scmp.com / 2565 2222

The Financial Times (Mon-Sat): www.financialtimes.net / 2905 5555

The Standard (Mon-Fri free): www.thestandard.com.hk / 2798 2323

Computers

Major outlets for computer software and hardware are **Wanchai Computer Centre**, **Star Computer City**, **Golden Computer Arcade**, **Windsor House** and **Mongkok Computer Centre**. Counterfeit software and hardware can still be found in Hong Kong and are illegal.

Golden Computer Arcade: www.goldenarcade.org (MTR Sham Shui Po station)

Mongkok Computer Centre: Nelson Street, Mongkok

Star Computer City: 2nd fl., Star House, Salisbury Rd., Tsim Sha Tsui

Wanchai Computer Centre: 130 Hennessey Road, Wanchai MTR

Windsor House: 10/F, 311 Gloucester Road, Causeway Bay

Leisure Activities

General

Artslink (free): www.hkac.org.hk/en/publications.php lists events taking place at the Hong Kong Arts Centre.

bc MAGAZINE (free twice a month): www.bcmagazine.net has a more cultural approach to events, arts etc.

HK (free weekly): hk.asia-city.com / 2850 5065 covers restaurants, events, nightlife, news and travel.

TimeOut Hong Kong: www.timeout.com.hk looks at things to do in Hong Kong.

What's On page of the South China Morning Post: www.scmp.com

Adult Education

Various courses are available at the following places:

The Open University of HK: www.ouhk.edu.hk / 2711 2100

University of HK School of Professional & Continuing Education:
[www.hkustspace.hku.hk](http://www.hkustpace.hku.hk) / 3762 6562

YWCA (English Speaking Members Department): www.esmdywca.org.hk / 3476 1340

YMCA: www.ymca.org.hk / 2771 9111

Beaches

Beaches are crowded on summer weekends but less so midweek and out of season. There are 41 gazetted beaches, 32 with lifeguards during the summer months. Many have toilets and changing facilities; these are cleared of litter at regular intervals. Bathers are advised to stay away from beaches for 3 or 4 days after heavy rain since pollutants from storm water drains may have entered coastal waters. Nude public bathing is prohibited.

Shark attacks occasionally occur in Hong Kong waters; nets have been installed at 32 beaches, including 10 beaches in Southern, 9 in Islands, 6 in Tuen Mun, 1 in Tsuen Wan and all 6 beaches in Sai Kung.

Environmental Protection Department (beach water quality): www.epd.gov.hk

Cinemas

English language films are advertised in the South China Morning Post and The Standard newspapers. Many are reviewed in arts magazines. Trailers can also be watched on Cable channel 118. Films are also shown at the **British Council Film Festival**, the **Arts Centre** and by the **Goethe Institute**. An international film festival is held in April.

HK Film Rating

Category I: Suitable for all ages.

Category IIA: Not suitable for children. Suggested for over 12s

Category I1B Not suitable for children. Suggested for over 15s.

Category III: Restricted to aged 18 and above; proof of identity may be required; no children admitted.

Tickets for a number of cinemas, including UA, can be booked online and by telephone through **CityLine** or **AMC**. Payment is made by credit card and tickets collected from cinema vending machines. A small service charge is made on each ticket sold.

AMC: www.amccinemas.com.hk / 2265 8933

British Council Film Festival: www.britishcouncil.org

CityLine: www.cityline.com / 2317 6666

Goethe Institute: www.goethe.de/hongkong

Hong Kong Arts Centre: www.hkac.org.hk

UA Cinemas: www.uacinemas.com.hk

Clubs & Societies

Most private clubs are expensive to join and have long waiting lists. Application for membership should be made as soon as possible after arrival. Expert players wishing to join a sports club may be invited to bypass the waiting list. Some clubs offer corporate debentures which are usually transferable. Some clubs also offer temporary memberships particularly geared to expatriates.

There are numerous special interest groups, clubs and societies, including those for archaeology, art appreciation, backgammon, bird watching, bridge, chess, dancing,

dining, gardening, natural history, philately, photography, singing and textiles as well as health clubs.

For those wishing to learn more about the history, art and culture of Asia there are groups such as the **Royal Asiatic Society**, the **Asia Society**, the **Hong Kong Anthropological Society**, The **Oriental Ceramics Society** and **The University of Hong Kong Museum Society**. **Jason Wordie** takes groups on historical walks.

There are many arts support societies including **Friends of the Hong Kong Ballet**, **Friends of the Art Museum of the Chinese University** and **Friends of the Hong Kong Museum of Art**.

American Women's Association (AWA): www.awa.org.hk

Asia Society: www.asiasociety.org

Australian Association: www.ozhongkong.com

Friends of the Art Museum, The Chinese University of Hong Kong:
www.cuhk.edu.hk/ics/friends

Friends of the Hong Kong Ballet: hkballet.com

Friends of the Hong Kong Museum of Art: www.museumfriends.org.hk

Hong Kong Anthropological Society: www.cuhk.edu.hk/ant/others

Hong Kong Arts Development Council: www.hkadc.org.hk/en/ / 2827 8786

Jason Wordie's Walks: www.jasonswalks.com

The Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch: ww.royalasiaticsociety.org.hk

Royal Over-Seas League: www.rosl.org.hk

The Helena May: www.helenamay.com

The Oriental Ceramics Society: orientalceramics.org.hk

The University of Hong Kong Museum Society: www.hkums.com

YWCA (English Speaking Members Department): www.esmdywca.org.hk / 3476 1340

Country Parks, Walking, Hiking and Cycling

There are 21 country parks with **hiking/walking trails**, picnic areas and barbecue pits. Maps and guidebooks are available from the **Hong Kong Tourism Board** and the online **Government Bookstore**. There are many hiking trails in Hong Kong, ranging from nature, scenic and heritage routes. For further information on hiking trails,

contact the **Leisure and Cultural Services Department**. One of the most beautiful areas for hiking is **Sai Kung**.

There are several **hiking groups** such as Hiking Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Trampers, the Natural History Society and hikes are also organised by the AWA, Australian Association and YWCA.

The use of bicycles is uncommon as roads in Hong Kong are not cycle friendly on the whole, but they can be hired in certain areas for recreation. Children under the age of 11 may not hire bicycles; those between the ages of 11 and 16 must be accompanied by an adult. It is illegal to ride on the pavement (sidewalk). There are several **mountain bike trails** in Hong Kong but permits are required in these designated areas, available from the **Country and Marine Parks Authority**.

The **Hong Kong Cycling Association** organises races around Hong Kong.

Country and Marine Parks Authority (permit application form): www.afcd.gov.hk

Government Bookstore:

www.gov.hk/en/residents/government/publication/publication/bookstore.htm

Hiking groups: www.hktrampers.com

Hiking Hong Kong: www.hiking-hong-kong.com

Hiking/walking trails: www.afcd.gov.hk

Hong Kong Cycling Association: www.cycling.org.hk / 2504 8176

Hong Kong Tourism Board: www.discoverhongkong.com / 2807 6543 / 2508 1234

Leisure and Cultural Services Department: www.lcsd.gov.hk

Mountain bike trails: www.afcd.gov.hk

Natural History Society (for hikes & boat trips): www.hknhs.org

Sai Kung: www.travelinsaikung.org.hk

Golf

Kau Sai Chau, run by the Jockey Club, is the only public golf club in Hong Kong. Most private clubs have limited weekday walk-in arrangements which it is best to check beforehand. Otherwise there are numerous excellent golf courses across the border in Guangdong province.

Clearwater Bay Golf & Country Club (private): www.cwbgolf.org / 2335 3700

Discovery Bay Golf Club (private): www.dbgc.hk / 2987 3750

Driving ranges: www.golfinhongkong.com

Hong Kong Golf Club (private): www.hkgolfclub.org / 2670 1211

Kau Sai Chau Public Golf Course (public): www.kscgolf.org.hk / 2791 3380

Shek-O Country Club (private, no visitors): 2809 4458

Skycity Nine Eagles Golf Course (public, 9 holes): www.nine-eagles.com / 3760 6688

Horseracing

There are two racecourses in Hong Kong, one at Happy Valley (Hong Kong Island) where races are held on Wednesdays and one at Shatin (New Territories) where races are held on Sundays. Races are sometimes held on Saturdays and public holidays. The **Hong Kong Tourism Board** organises horseracing tours.

The Hong Kong Jockey Club: www.hkjc.com

Hong Kong Tourism Board: www.discoverhongkong.com / 2807 6543 / 2508 1234

Horse riding

The Jockey Club runs three public riding schools at Tuen Mun, Pokfulam and Lei Yue Mun. The Lo Wu Saddle Club has a privately run riding school.

The Hong Kong Jockey Club – Public Riding Schools:
www.hkjcridingschools.com

Lo Wu Saddle Club: www.lowusaddleclub.org

Ice-Skating and Ice Hockey:

There are several ice-skating rinks in Hong Kong, mainly in shopping malls:

Elements (Tsim Sha Tsui): www.rink.com.hk

Festival Walk (Kowloon Tong): www.glacier.com.hk

Hong Kong Island, City Plaza One (Taikoo Shing): www.icepalace.com.hk

Megabox (Kowloon Bay): www.megaice.com.hk

Riviera Plaza (Tseun Wan): www.rivieraicechalet.net

Libraries

Public libraries come under the Leisure & Cultural Services Department's remit. Joining is free of charge and application forms are available at any public library.

The public libraries in City Hall and the Central Library Causeway Bay have a comprehensive selection of English language books, and an excellent reference library. The Arts Resource Centre at the Central Library is for reference only.

There are a number of member-only libraries in Hong Kong as well. The **Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (APA)** has a library for its staff and students but people wishing to use it for a specified period may also apply.

Alliance Francaise de Hong Kong: www.alliancefrancaise.com.hk / 2527 7825
(Wanchai) / 2730 3257 (Kowloon)

English-Speaking Union: www.esuhk.org / 2186 8449

Goethe Institute: www.goethe.de/ins/cn/hon / 2802 0088

Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts (APA): www.hkapa.edu / 2584 8523

Public Libraries: www.hkpl.gov.hk

The Helena May: www.helenamay.com / 2522 6766

Music, Theatre, Dance and Events

Hong Kong has professional orchestras (**Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, City Chamber Orchestra of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Chamber Orchestra** and **Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra**), dance companies (**City Contemporary Dance Company, Hong Kong Ballet** and **Hong Kong Dance Company**) and Chinese and English language theatre groups (**Chung Ying Theatre Company, Springtime Group, Zuni Icosahedron**). There are frequent performing arts' events by local and visiting artists presented in a variety of venues (e.g. **Hong Kong Arts Centre, Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (APA), City Hall, Fringe Club, Academic Community Hall, Hong Kong Cultural Centre, Ko Shan Theatre, Kwai Tsing Theatre, Hong Kong Coliseum**, and many more).

The **Hong Kong Arts Festival** is held annually featuring overseas and local artists in music, theatre, dance, popular entertainment, film and exhibition programmes. The festival is 4-5 weeks long and is held from February to March. Other annual arts events are **Le French May**, the **International Film Festival** and the **Literary**

Festival. In addition there are a number of English language amateur choirs, theatre, music and dance groups.

Free concerts are given at **St. John's Cathedral** every Wednesday lunchtime, at the **Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (APA)** on Mondays and in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre** foyer several times a week.

Tickets for most events can be obtained from **URBTIX** and for some events also from **HK Ticketing** and **Cityline**. Other visiting events include comedy performances, circuses, musicals, pop concerts, sporting events and firework displays.

Academic Community Hall: www.ach.hkbu.edu.hk

Chung Ying Theatre Company: www.chungying.com

City Chamber Orchestra of Hong Kong: www.ccohk.com

City Contemporary Dance Company: www.ccdc.com.hk

City Hall: www.cityhall.gov.hk

CityLine: www.cityline.com.hk

Fringe Club: www.hkfringe.com.hk / 2521 7251

HK Ticketing: www.hkticketing.com/ 31 288 288 (hotline)

Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (APA): www.hkapa.edu / 2584 8523

Hong Kong Arts Centre: www.hkac.org.hk

Hong Kong Arts Festival: www.hkartsfestival.org

Hong Kong Ballet: hkballet.com

Hong Kong Chamber Orchestra: www.hkchamber.org

Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra: www.hkco.org

Hong Kong Coliseum: www.lcsd.gov.hk/hkc

Hong Kong Cultural Centre: www.lcsd.gov.hk/hkcc

Hong Kong Dance Company: www.hkdance.com

Hong Kong International Film Festival: www.hkiff.org.hk

Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra: www.hkpo.com

Ko Shan Theatre: www.lcsd.gov.hk/kst

Kwai Tsing Theatre: www.lcsd.gov.hk/ktt

Le French May: www.frenchmay.com

Literary Festival: www.festival.org.hk

Springtime Group: www.springtime.com.hk

St. John's Cathedral: www.stjohnscathedral.org.hk

URBTIX: www.urbtix.hk / 2734 9009 (1000-2000)/ 2111 5999

Zuni Icosahedron: www.zuni.org.hk

Museums & Exhibitions

Information on museums, their opening hours and locations are available from the **Hong Kong Tourism Board, Leisure and Cultural Services Department** or the **CAB**. Details of special exhibitions at museums and galleries are announced in newspapers and magazines. A weekly **Museum Pass** is available for a small fee and offers unlimited free admission to the Hong Kong Museum of History, Hong Kong Science Museum, Hong Kong Museum of Art, Hong Kong Space Museum (except Space Theatre), Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Museum of Coastal Defence and the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum. Forms for the pass are available at the museums or online. On Wednesdays no charge is made for admission to these museums.

Hong Kong Tourism Board: www.discoverhongkong.com / 2807 6543 / 2508 1234

Museum Pass: www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/forms_lcs25.pdf

Pets

Bringing pets to Hong Kong is very easy. It is necessary to obtain a veterinary certificate which shows the animal's medical history and vaccination record, and an import permit from the **Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)**. The application form is available on the AFCD website. There is a fee for the permit and you need to apply fairly well in advance. It is valid for 6 months after issuance. The animal will be checked by a veterinarian upon arrival in Hong Kong. If all conditions of the permit have been met, there is usually no quarantine for animals from Group I and II countries (including but not limited to the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA). The conditions under which quarantine is required are outlined in the leaflet Guide to Import and Export of Pet Animals and Birds.

Pet shops are now licensed, but extreme caution should still be exercised when acquiring a pet. If possible, the animal should be checked by a veterinarian before purchase. The Kennel Club and the Cat Council are good sources of information. The **Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)** has many healthy abandoned animals available for adoption. **Hong Kong Dog Rescue (HKDR)** is a registered charity which rescues and finds new homes for abandoned dogs.

All dogs over the age of five months must be inoculated against rabies by a veterinarian, the SPCA or at one of the AFCD Animal Management Centres. When the inoculation is given, a licence (free) is also provided. Boosters must be given every three years. A microchip implantation programme has been introduced as a dog registration measure. It is also advisable to inoculate cats.

The SPCA has boarding kennels; there are also private kennels available; holiday periods can be busy.

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD): www.afcd.gov.hk / 1823

Doghouse Hong Kong (info for dog owners): doghouse-hk.org

Hong Kong Alleycat Watch: www.hkalleycats.com / 9310 0744

Hong Kong Animal Rescue: animal.rescueme.org.hk

Hong Kong Dog Rescue (HKDR): www.hongkongdogrescue.com / 2875 2132 (Tai Po) / 3480 0061 (Aberdeen)

Society for Abandoned Animals (Yuen Long): www.saa.org.hk / 2838 0633

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA): www.spca.org.hk / 2802 0501 / 2711 1000 (emergencies)

Stray Dog Control Unit: 2362 6083 (Kowloon) / 2551 8586 (Hong Kong)

Radio & Television

Radio programmes are broadcast in the English language on **RTHK** Radio 3 (567 AM and depending on location on 106.8, 97.9 and 107.8 FM). BBC World Service is rebroadcast by RTHK on 657 AM. RTHK Radio 4 (97.6-98.9 FM) is bilingual. Metro Plus broadcasts in several languages on 1044 AM. Programmes are also available on the Internet. Radio reception is not uniform and may at times be poor, especially on the south side of Hong Kong Island.

There are two English language terrestrial television channels (ATV World and TVB Pearl) and two Chinese language terrestrial channels (ATV Home and TVB Jade). **Cable TV** is available from PCCW's very popular combined television and computer **NOW Broadband TV** service and Cable TV.

Programme complaints can be made to the **Broadcasting Authority**.

Persons under 18 may not buy, rent or return Category III DVDs.

Broadcasting Authority: www.hkba.hk

Cable TV: www.i-cable.com / 183 2888 (subscriber hotline)

NOW Broadband TV: www.now-tv.com / 2888 0008

RTHK: www.rthk.org.hk

Rugby Sevens

The **Cathay Pacific/HSBC Hong Kong Sevens** is held annually during the last weekend of March and is organised by the **Hong Kong Rugby Football Union**.

Cathay Pacific/HSBC Hong Kong Sevens: www.hksevns.com / 2504 8311

HK Rugby Football Union: www.hkrugby.com

Sporting Facilities

Details of public facilities available for a large variety of sporting activities such as archery, swimming, bowling, horse riding, squash and tennis can be found on the **Leisure & Cultural Services Department** website. These facilities are heavily utilised, especially at weekends and in the evening. The majority of swimming pools are open air and are closed from mid October to April or May.

The **South China Athletic Association, Hong Kong & Kowloon** has a health centre, swimming pool, indoor golf, bowling, squash, badminton whilst the **YMCA** in Kowloon has an indoor swimming pool, fitness centre (with exercise classes for adults and children), squash, badminton and climbing wall. At the **YMCA's King's Park Centenary Centre** there are tennis, a climbing wall and an inline hockey rink facilities.

Leisure & Cultural Services Department: www.lcsd.gov.hk

South China Athletic Association, Hong Kong & Kowloon: www.scaa.org.hk / 2577 6932

YMCA (Kowloon): www.ymcahk.org.hk / 2268 7070

YMCA's King's Park Centenary Centre: www.kpcchk.org

Tennis and Squash

There are many public tennis courts in Hong Kong run by the **Leisure & Cultural Services Department**. Most courts may be booked in advance. There are also several private tennis and squash clubs such as The Ladies Recreation Club, the Hong Kong

Football Club, Kowloon Cricket Club and Hong Kong Cricket Club. Many apartment complexes have tennis and squash courts. There are active Tennis Leagues organised by the **Hong Kong Tennis Association** and the **Hong Kong Ladies Tennis League**. The Hong Kong squash league is organised by **Hong Kong Squash**.

Hong Kong Ladies Tennis League: www.hkladiestennis.com

Hong Kong Squash: www.hksquash.org.hk

Hong Kong Tennis Association: www.tennishk.org

Leisure & Cultural Services Department: www.lcsd.gov.hk

Voluntary Work

Many opportunities exist. Contact the **CAB** for a list of organisations seeking volunteers and check the websites of **Ho-Sum** and **HandsOn Hong Kong**.

Ho-Sum: www.ho-sum.org

HandsOn Hong Kong: handsonhongkong.org

Water Sports and Activities

Pleasure boats (other than sailing dinghies) and operators must be licensed by the **Marine Department** which also runs certificate courses as do the **Mariners' Club** and the **Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club**; non-members are welcome. Motorised pleasure craft third party insurance can be obtained from **The Hong Kong Federation of Insurers**.

Canoeing

Facilities are available at various places.

Dragon Boating

This is popular, with practises working up to the festival in June each year.

Kayaking

The **Leisure & Cultural Services Department** runs kayaking courses and there are facilities in **Sai Kung**, Stanley and Tai Po.

Rowing

This is available at Middle Island (Hong Kong) and on the Shing Mun River (Shatin, New Territories) and at the Island Paddle Club.

Sailing

The **Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club**, **Aberdeen Boat Club**, **Aberdeen Marina Club** and **Hebe Haven Yacht Club** are the main venues for this activity.

Scuba diving

Details are available from Splash Hong Kong.

Surfing

Many people go to Big Wave Bay (Island) and Tai Long Wan Bay (New Territories).

Swimming

The **Leisure & Cultural Services Department** runs many public pools and there are often pools at private clubs and apartment complexes.

Water skiing

The **Hong Kong Water Ski Association** and **Deepwater Bay Speedboat Company** can advise on this activity.

Windsurfing

Boards can be hired at Big Wave Bay beach, Stanley beach, Sai Kung, Cheung Chau and Tai Po. Contact the Windsurfing Association of HK for more information.

Aberdeen Boat Club: www.abclubhk.com / 2552 8182

Aberdeen Marina Club: www.aberdeenmarinaclub.com / 2555 8321

Deep Water Bay Speedboat Company: 2812 0391

Hebe Haven Yacht Club: www.hhyc.org.hk / 2719 9682

Hong Kong Canoe Union : www.hkcucanoe.com.hk / 2504 8186

Hong Kong China Rowing Association: www.rowing.org.hk

Hong Kong Dragon Boat Association: www.hkdba.com.hk / 8106 8134

Hong Kong Hobie Club: www.hobie.com.hk / 2813 5003

Hong Kong Island Paddle Club (dragon boating): www.hkipc.com

Hong Kong Rowing Association: www.rowing.org.hk 2699 7271

Hong Kong Sailing Federation: www.sailing.org.hk / 2504 8159

Hong Kong Water Ski Association: www.waterski.org.hk / 2504 8168

Leisure & Cultural Services Department: www.lcsd.gov.hk

Marine Department Training Centre: www.mardep.gov.hk / 2542 3711

Mariners' Club: www.marinersclub.org.hk / 2368 8261

Outrigger Canoe Club: www.hkoutrigger.com

Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club: www.rhkyc.org.hk / 2832 2817

Sai Kung (kayaking): www.kayak-and-hike.com / 9300 5197

Sai Sha Watersports Centre, Sai Kung (kayaking): www.sai-sha.com / 2792 8307

Splash Hong Kong: www.splashhk.com / 2792 4495

South China Diving Club: www.scdc.org.hk

Windsurfing Association of HK: www.windsurfing.org.hk

Call the CAB helpline 2815 5444

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