

2026 Guidelines for Foreign Nationals Entering China¹

Last Updated: January 19, 2026 **Source:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, National Immigration Administration (NIA)

As an international exhibition organizer, we welcome exhibitors and visitors from all over the world. China has significantly optimized its visa policies to facilitate cross-border travel. Please find below the specific entry requirements applicable to your country.

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1. Visa-Free Entry (Unilateral Exemption)

Applicable Policy: Citizens holding ordinary passports from the following countries are exempt from visa requirements for entry into China. **Permitted Activities:** Business, tourism, family visits, and transit.² **Duration of Stay:** Up to 30 calendar days per entry, calculated from the day following the date of entry. **Validity:** Valid until **December 31, 2026.**²⁵

Eligible Countries (Alphabetical):

- **A-D:** Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Brunei, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Canada, Denmark.
- **E-H:** Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary.²⁷
- **I-L:** Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg.⁷
- **M-P:** Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Peru, Poland, Portugal.²⁷
- **R-S:** Romania, Russia, RussiaSaudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, **Sweden** (Added Nov 10, 2025), **Switzerland.**⁷
- **U-Z:** Uruguay, UK.

Note:

- *Sweden: Officially added to the visa-free list effective November 10, 2025.*

¹ * Russia: Citizens holding ordinary passports may enter visa-free for up to 30 days for business or tourism from September 15, 2025, to September 14, 2026. ³ ⁵

*The unilateral visa-free policy for holders of ordinary passports from other 48 countries is valid until December 31, 2026.

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC <http://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/>

2. Mutual Visa Exemption Agreements

Applicable Policy: Citizens of countries with comprehensive mutual visa exemption agreements can enter China without a visa for stays usually up to 30 days (check specific agreement details).⁵

Major Countries with Mutual Exemption (Ordinary Passports):

- **Asia:** Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, Maldives, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan.⁷
- **Europe:** Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, San Marino, Serbia.²⁷
- **Americas:** Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Ecuador, Grenada, Suriname.⁷
- **Africa:** Mauritius, Seychelles.⁷
- **Oceania:** Fiji, Tonga.⁷

Requirement: Travelers must enter for purposes defined in the agreement (usually tourism/business/family visit). For stays longer than the agreed period, a visa is required.⁴

Source: Consular Service Network, MFA http://cs.mfa.gov.cn/wgrlh/lhqz/jqzhhmivisa_free/

3. 240-Hour (10-Day) Visa-Free Transit

Applicable Policy: Updated in late 2025, the previous 72/144-hour transit policy has been expanded to **240 hours (10 days)**.⁸ **Eligibility:** Citizens of **55 countries** holding valid international travel documents and connecting tickets to a third country/region with a confirmed date and seat within 240 hours. **Permitted Area:** Travelers can enter via designated ports (including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Chengdu, etc.) and travel within the permitted regions.

Eligible Countries (55):

- **Europe (40):** Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, **Sweden, Switzerland**, Russia, UK, Ireland, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania, Monaco, Belarus, Norway.²⁷
- **Americas (6):** United States, Canada, Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Chile.²⁷
- **Oceania (2):** Australia, New Zealand.²⁷
- **Asia (6):** , Japan, Singapore, Brunei, UAE, Qatar.⁷
- **Others (1):** Indonesia (Added June 2025).⁸

Important: This policy requires you to be in transit to a third country (e.g., USA -> China -> Thailand). A round trip (USA -> China -> USA) does not qualify.

Source: National Immigration Administration (NIA) <https://en.nia.gov.cn/>

4. Regional Visa-Free Policies

For exhibitions held in specific regions, the following policies apply:

1. Hainan Province 30-Day Visa-Free Entry:

- **Scope:** Citizens of **59 countries** (including US, UK, Canada, France, Germany, **Switzerland, Sweden**, etc.) can enter Hainan visa-free for up to 30 days for business, exhibition, tourism, etc.²
- **Requirement:** Must enter via a port in Hainan (e.g., Haikou, Sanya).

2. Shanghai Cruise Visa-Free:

- **Scope:** Tour groups organized by travel agencies entering Shanghai via cruise ships can stay visa-free for 15 days.

3. Guangdong Province (Hong Kong/Macau Entry):

- **Scope:** Foreigners in Hong Kong/Macau entering the Pearl River Delta region in tour groups for up to 144 hours (6 days).

4. Guilin, Guangxi:

- **Scope:** ASEAN tour groups entering Guilin Airport for up to 144 hours (6 days).

5. Port Visas (Visa on Arrival)

Applicable Policy: Foreign nationals needing to enter China urgently for humanitarian reasons, urgent business, or rush repair work, and who hold materials proving that approved authorities have agreed to issue a port visa, may apply for a port visa at the port of entry. **Documents Required:**

- Invitation letter explaining the emergency.

- Supporting documents from the exhibition organizer or relevant Chinese authority.

Source: National Immigration

Administration <https://en.nia.gov.cn/n162/n227/c58934/content.html>

6. Standard Visa Application (M Visa)

Applicable To: Citizens of countries **not listed above** or those wishing to stay longer than the visa-free period. **Visa Type:** **M Visa** (issued to those who intend to go to China for commercial and trade activities). **Process:**

1. **Online Application:** Complete the COVA (China Online Visa Application) form at <https://cova.mfa.gov.cn> and obtain the online visa application voucher after review approval.
 2. **Invitation Letter:** Applicants need an official template invitation letter issued by a Chinese domestic commercial and trade partner (the exhibition organizer is one of the eligible issuers), which must include the applicant's personal information, purpose of visit, duration of stay, source of expenses, and be sealed with the official seal and signed by the legal person.
 3. **Submission:** Submit the **online visa application voucher**, original passport, printed and signed application form and other materials to the nearest CVASC or Embassy within 14 natural days after receiving the confirmation email. The passport shall have a validity period of at least 6 months from the date of application with at least 2 blank visa pages.
 4. **No Appointment Required:** Walk-in submission is available at most Visa Centers (check local embassy notices).
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7. APEC Business Travel Card (ABTC)

- **Virtual & Physical Cards:** Holders of a valid APEC Business Travel Card with a valid "CHN" (China) entry can enter China without a visa for up to 60 days per entry.

Disclaimer: Visa policies are subject to change. Please verify the latest information with the Chinese Embassy or Consulate in your country of residence before booking travel.

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