

## PRIVATE HOUSING – BUYING AND RENTING RESIDENTIAL PERMITS



Migration to other cities in China is almost non-existent. Most couples will set up their home in the same neighborhood as their parents. The average house consists of an apartment with one or two bedrooms.

In larger cities, especially where more affluence exists, there will be a bathroom in the apartment. The apartment will also contain a cooking area and living area combined, relatively small in size. According to statistics, the average rural living space has increased from 8.1 square meters in 1978 to 20.5 square meters today.

### BUYING

It is now possible for foreigners to buy accommodation; apartments, townhouses, courtyards, etc., in most cities throughout China. Any person or company contemplating doing so should check, very carefully, the extent of title (ownership) and the transfer of title process with competent authorities before transferring any funds.



To buy in a Beijing or Shanghai building similar to that illustrated above: 10,000 元 m<sup>2</sup>. To lease: 10,000 元 per month. Almost all apartments are sold and leased furnished.

**Land and ownership title in China is very different to that of ALL Western Countries.**

Apartment prices in major cities will range from two hundred thousand to one million renimbi (元) (USD \$25,000 - \$125,00). The lower price is for an apartment outside the city, whereas the higher price is in the center of the city or close to the center in cities like Beijing and Shanghai.

### RENTALS

Rental accommodation is readily available in all cities with monthly rentals ranging from 500 元 (USD \$62.50) for a basic bed-sitter to 10,000 元 (USD \$1,250) for a three bedroom, two bathroom fully furnished apartment in a new building in major city.



### RESIDENTIAL PERMITS

ALL foreigners working in China and living other than in a hotel or government authorized serviced apartment (private hotel) must be registered with the Public Security Bureau in the city where they reside.

If accommodation **is not** Foreign Affairs Office approved **and** the employer accredited to employ foreign experts **and** house the foreigners in the authorized and allocated accommodation, the foreigner **must** obtain a **Residential Permit** by registering with the Public Security Bureau (Foreign Residency Section).

Foreign enterprises, whether wholly owned, cooperative or joint-venture, should check with the local (county level) PSB with respect local registration requirements.

It should not be taken for granted that because you or your company owns or is leasing a property that residency privileges are automatically granted to the occupants.

Foreigners found to be residing illegally in China will be fined and may have their visa revoked. *Ignorance is not considered an excuse.*

**Why do I have to register my residential address.**

Many foreigners view registering with the PSB as an excuse for the “authorities” to snoop and pry and an infringement of their right to privacy; however there are three very valid reasons registering:

1. It is required by Law and an integral part of your visa or residency requirements.
2. It is highly advisable that the PSB know where foreigners are residing so as to avoid any unpleasant surprises and embarrassing, unintended international incidents.
3. Should events or circumstances require that, as a foreigner, you should be advised, the PSB can locate you quickly and evacuate you if need be.



As for appliances, here is a general look at what the average home has. In general, appliances are sparse. Clothes dryers for example are almost non-existent. You will find clothes hung out windows of apartments everywhere you go. (Note: Conditions may vary significantly in different parts of the country, especially when comparing city to city or rural to rural conditions).

<b><u>Appliance:</u></b>	<b><u>City Home</u></b>	<b><u>Rural Home</u></b>
Washing Machine	Increasingly common	Rare
Dryer	Rare	Rare
Microwave Oven	Increasingly common	Rare
Gas Cooker	Common	Common
Refrigerator	Increasingly common	Rare
Freezer	Rare	Virtually non-Existent
Television	Most homes	Increasingly common

Radio	Common	Common
Telephone	Common	Common
DVD	Common	Uncommon
Cell Phones	Common	Increasingly common