

Intro

[Teaching English](#) in South Korea is a great idea! English teachers in Korea can earn a competitive salary and enjoy generous holidays. The working hours are reasonable, and the food is delicious and healthy. Teaching opportunities are widely available in South Korea. If you're interested in teaching English in South Korea, there are a few things you need to know to get started.

Table of Contents



- [Intro](#)
- [Getting a Job](#)
- [The pay is good](#)
- [The working hours are reasonable](#)
- [The holidays are generous](#)
- [The food is healthy and delicious](#)
- [Safety](#)
- [FAQ](#)
- [Conclusion](#)

With a little bit of planning and preparation, you can be on your way to teaching English in South Korea! Teaching English in South Korea is a great way to save, travel, experience Korean culture, and learn new skills.



- Getting a job
- The pay is good
- The working hours are reasonable
- The holidays are generous
- The food is healthy and delicious
- Safety
- Conclusion

Getting a Job

Getting a job in South Korea can be a bit of a challenge if you don't know where to look. The best place to start your search is online. Just Google "teach English in South Korea", and you will find a myriad of the latest teaching job openings in South Korea. There are many websites, and [social media](#) offering job listings for English teachers in South Korea, as well as forums where you can ask questions and get advice from other English teachers. You will most likely contact (or be contacted by) a recruiter. The recruiter will have multiple positions across the country,

and in most cases, you will be able to choose a city and a school. The schools are [private language schools](#), called “hagwons” in Korean. Most of them are franchises, which tend to be more safe jobs in terms of workload, pay, and other conditions. The recruiter will give you all the info you need, and you can ask any questions regarding your work, school, working conditions, etc.

Navigating the Visa and Employment Process for Teaching in South Korea

Once you agree on the school, your recruiter will pass your documents to the school (private academy), and your new employer, and you will be that much closer to coming to teach in South Korea. In some cases, you may need to contact the South Korean consulate or South Korean embassy in your home country to verify your degree(s) and/or your criminal record. The South Korean government is strict on screening teachers’ background info. In most cases, your employer will tell you what documents and procedures are necessary to obtain a visa. You will most likely get an E2 visa to be able to legally teach English in Korea. You need to be a [native English speaker \(or near-native\)](#) from a recognized English-speaking nation (Canada, US, UK, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Ireland), hold a bachelor’s degree in any discipline, be healthy (your visa is subject to a medical examination), and have no criminal record from your home country. [TEFL](#) or [TESL](#) certification or a master’s degree is a plus. After a year or so of working at a private school, you may qualify for a university job.



Advancing Your Qualifications and Career Opportunities While Teaching in South Korea

If you do not have the necessary qualifications for a university position, you may get a [TEFL](#) or [TESOL](#) certification while teaching in Korea. Even your recruiter or the school may give you a free TEFL brochure, and/or recommend you to obtain a TEFL certificate. Some people even get another bachelor's degree, a master's degree, or even a Ph.D. (from an accredited university) while teaching English in Korea. If you are ambitious, after a few years of being an English teacher in Korea, you may acquire skills, experience, and training, that may land you lucrative teaching positions and [English teaching](#) jobs anywhere on the planet, even in countries where English is the primary language like the US or Canada.



The pay is good

One of the great things about teaching English in South Korea is that the teaching salaries are very competitive. You can expect to earn a good salary teaching English in Korea. The hours are also reasonable, so you'll have plenty of time to enjoy your generous holidays. Teaching opportunities are widely available, so if you're thinking about teaching English in South Korea, there's no time like the present to get started.

Salary and Benefits: What to Expect as an English Teacher in South Korea

One of the perks English language schools provide their teachers is free accommodations, a bonus salary at the end of the contract, and free flights (at the beginning and end of the contract). Some schools will even provide you with free snacks or light lunch or dinner. If you have no teaching qualifications and no [teaching experience](#) expect to be paid about KRW 2.1 million. However, your monthly salary may go as high as KRW 2.7 million depending on your English Teaching qualifications and your previous teaching experience. KRW 2.7 million does not seem much,

but when you consider that you do not need to pay rent, KRW 2.7 million is a good salary. In Korea, the cost of accommodations is one of the highest in the world, and your rent paid by your employer can save money every month. English teachers especially [native English teachers](#) are in high demand in Korea, which gives you a great deal of confidence when teaching abroad.



The Shift from Public to Private Schools and Earning Potential

Nowadays, public schools have cut down on hiring Native English teachers, and public school jobs are almost nonexistent. However, there is still a high demand for private schools. Those were Korean ministry-run programs that lost funding years ago. Many schools like to hire experienced teachers (i.e. 1-2 years of teaching experience in Korea), so leaving your old school on good terms is recommended for a good reference letter. However, some schools on the other hand like to hire beginner teachers because they quickly implement the school's methodology, while this may be challenging with more experienced teachers who already have their teaching methodology and do not want

to change.

Exploring Additional Income and Lifestyle Choices in South Korea

Also, you may be able to make some extra money outside your workplace. Now, this is usually not allowed by either public or private schools, and you may lose your visa status or even your job. But if it is done properly (through your employer and/or immigration center), a teaching job outside your workplace can be a great second source of income. The biggest employers of native English speakers are private schools and universities. In Korea, teaching jobs are available year-round so if you have good credentials, you will have no problems finding better and higher-paid jobs.

Many teachers prefer to live in, or nearby, the capital city of Seoul. This is great for those who like to socialize, but it may be a drain on personal finances. In smaller towns, teachers tend to save more.

Also, in recent years Korean Immigration has softened the rules for getting an F2-7 visa. This is a point-based visa where with 80 points you may be granted the F2-7 visa. F2-7 visa gives you a lot of flexibility in living and working in Korea. With this visa, you may still work as a teacher and do other jobs outside your primary job. The point is you do not need any employer to sponsor your visa. Your points in this visa application “sponsor” your F2-7 visa. More info [here](#).



The working hours are reasonable

When you teach English in South Korea, you can expect to work about 40 hours per week. This includes your teaching hours and any prep time or office hours you may have. But not all schools are like this. Most schools will ask you to do about 30 hrs per week including your office hrs. Your working hours will most likely be divided between Monday and Friday, with weekends off, which leaves plenty of time for exploring Korea and enjoying your holidays. You usually start teaching around noon until 6-7 pm. That is because your students finish their classes in public schools around noon, and after that, they are bussed to private English schools where you will most likely be teaching.

Understanding Your Teaching Contract and Classroom Dynamics in South Korea

Most English teachers in Korea are contracted to teach 25-30 hrs per week. Now, you need to clarify with your employer if the teaching hour is 60 min or the length of the class (i.e. a class is usually 45-50 min depending on the school). For example, your contract may say “teach 20 hours per week” which in reality may translate to 25 actual teaching hours. You will most likely not be required to teach on weekends and holidays, but you may want to confirm this with your employer before signing the contract. Most schools usually have a minimum of 2 foreign teachers, so you will have someone to share your experiences with.

Also, you are most likely to be alone in the classroom, but some schools like to have a co-teacher (Korean co-teacher) for better [communication](#) with your students. This usually depends on the class level and age. The lower the age and level, the more likely you are to have a Korean co-teacher. The teaching program is usually provided by the school. You will get a textbook and a daily schedule of what to teach. This helps in many cases as it saves time on [lesson planning](#).



The holidays are generous

The holidays are generous. One of the great things about teaching English in South Korea is that you'll enjoy generous holidays. Korean schools typically offer their teachers around 10 days of vacation time, plus all national holidays. You are paid for all national holidays. This means you'll have plenty of time to travel and explore Korea, or even venture further afield to other countries in Asia. Japan and China are 1-2 hrs away depending on where you are going. However, most private schools organize "summer" or "winter" camps for intensive English classes. These are almost always extra paid and teachers may make some extra money during those days. Since most schools have 2 foreign English teachers, the school may decide not to allow both teachers to go on a vacation at the same time.



The food is healthy and delicious

When it comes to food, Korea has a lot to offer. Korea is known for its delicious and healthy food. You'll find plenty of Korean restaurants serving up traditional dishes such as kimchi (fermented cabbage), bibimbap (rice with vegetables), and bulgogi (marinated beef). Some

dishes are spicy and some dishes are very spicy, so it is a good idea to ask first before ordering at a restaurant. Also, many dishes are not spicy and are mildly seasoned. There are also many international restaurants in Korea, so you'll never get bored of the food, especially in Seoul and other bigger cities around the country. You can easily find Indian, Pakistani, Middle-Eastern, Chinese, Japanese, Thai, Vietnamese, and many other ethnic cuisine restaurants. And, if you're looking for a healthy option, you'll be happy to know that Korea has a wide range of healthy food options. You can find everything from vegetarian restaurants to vegan cafes. So, if you're looking for a healthy and delicious place to eat, Korea is the place for you. Most restaurants are open late and you can order food at almost any time of day.



Safety

Korea is a safe place to live and work. The crime rate is low, and you can

feel safe walking around at night. However, it's always important to be aware of your surroundings and take precautions when traveling in unfamiliar areas. Police are always willing to help if you need them. CCTV cameras are everywhere which greatly prevents a lot of crime. Crime happens, but the crime rate is very low, and you'll find that the people are friendly and welcoming. English in South Korea is widely used and many people speak decent English, so if you happen to be in a threatening situation, you may be able to communicate your way out in English. Also, there is a tourist phone information number 1330 (or 02 1330 depending on if you are in Seoul) that you may call in case you need help with almost anything from finding a location to calling a hospital.

FAQ

1. **Q: Is teaching English in South Korea a good idea?**

A: Yes, teaching English in South Korea is a good idea. The country offers competitive salaries, generous holidays, reasonable working hours, and a safe, friendly environment.

2. **Q: How can I find teaching jobs in South Korea?**

A: The best place to start your job search is online. Google "teach English in South Korea" to find a wide range of job listings on websites, social media, and online forums.

3. **Q: What are the requirements for teaching English in South Korea?**

A: The basic requirements are that you need to be a native or near-native English speaker from an English-speaking country, hold a bachelor's degree in any discipline, be healthy, and have a clean criminal record. Additional certifications like TEFL or TESL can boost your chances.

4. **Q: What is the typical salary for an English teacher in South Korea?**

A: Salaries can vary based on qualifications and experience, but you can generally expect to earn between KRW 2.1 million to KRW 2.7 million per month. This often includes benefits like free

accommodations and flights.

5. Q: What are the working hours for an English teacher in South Korea?

A: English teachers in South Korea typically work about 30-40 hours per week, including teaching hours and prep time. Weekends are usually off, providing ample time for leisure and exploration.

6. Q: What holidays do English teachers in South Korea receive?

A: Korean schools typically offer around 10 days of vacation time, plus all national holidays. Some schools also organize “summer” or “winter” camps for intensive English classes, which are usually extra paid.

7. Q: What is the food like in South Korea?

A: There’s a diverse food scene in Korea, offering everything from traditional Korean cuisines like kimchi and bibimbap to international dishes. Several restaurants cater late into the night catering to personal preferences.

8. Q: Is South Korea safe for English teachers?

A: Yes, South Korea is very safe for English teachers. The crime rate is low, CCTV coverage is comprehensive, and assistance is readily available in case of emergencies.

9. Q: Are there any other benefits of teaching in South Korea?

A: Apart from competitive salaries, there are fringe benefits such as possible accommodations and flights provided by schools. There are also many opportunities for [cultural immersion](#) and travel.

10. Q: Can I continue my studies while teaching in South Korea?

A: Yes, some people even choose to pursue another degree while teaching in Korea. This could be a beneficial way to supplement your teaching career and improve your prospects in the future.



Conclusion

A teaching career can be a rewarding one whether you teach English at a public school, private school, or a university. If you're a native speaker of English thinking about teaching English in South Korea, it's a great idea! The pay is good, the working hours are reasonable, and the holidays are generous. You can also enjoy delicious, healthy food and travel around the region. Teaching opportunities are widely available in South Korea. So, what are you waiting for? Get started today!



References

Greenheart Travel. (2021). What I wish I knew before teaching English in South Korea. [link](#)

Kim, H. (2018). [English language teaching](#) in South Korea: A route to success? *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 8(1), 19-26.
doi: [10.17507/tpls.0801.03](https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0801.03)

Taylor, L. (2012). The teaching progression of first-time [ESL](#) teachers in a South Korean private preschool. Doctoral dissertation, University of York. Retrieved from [link](#)

Cite this article

APA: EFL Cafe. (2022, April 26). How to Get Started Teaching English in South Korea. EFLCafe.net. <https://eflcafe.net/how-to-get-started-teaching-english-in-south-korea/>

In-text citation: (EFL Cafe, 2024)

MLA: EFL Cafe "How to Get Started Teaching English in South Korea." EFLCafe.net, 26 Apr. 2022, <https://eflcafe.net/how-to-get-started-teaching-english-in-south-korea/>.

In-text citation: (EFL Cafe)