



How to Take the Subway in China

A Complete Guide for Foreign Visitors

Buy Ticket → Security Check → Board → Navigate → Exit

Your Subway Journey

From finding the station to reaching your destination

1

Find Station

Look for the subway sign (地铁)

2

Buy Ticket

App, machine, or counter

3

Security Check

Bag scan + body check

4

Enter Gate

Scan QR or tap card

5

Board Train

Check direction & line number

6

Navigate

Use **Amap** to track stops

7

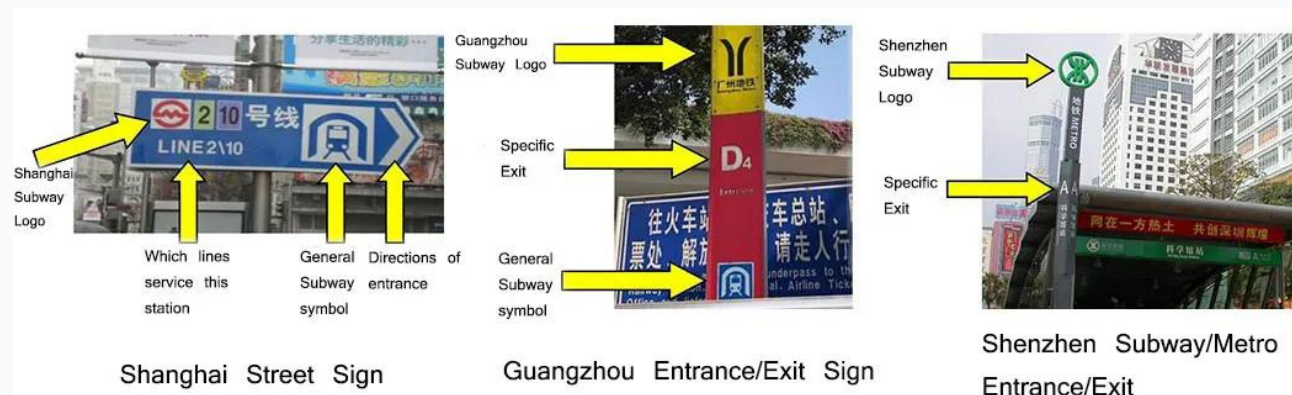
Exit

Follow exit signs (A/B/C/D...)

1

Find the Subway Station

- 1 Look for the subway sign: a blue square with "地铁" (Di Tie) or "Subway"
- 2 Each city has its own logo color (Beijing = blue, Shanghai = red, Shenzhen = green)
- 3 Entrance signs show Line numbers and station names in Chinese + English
- 4 Use Amap (高德地图) to search "subway" or the station name



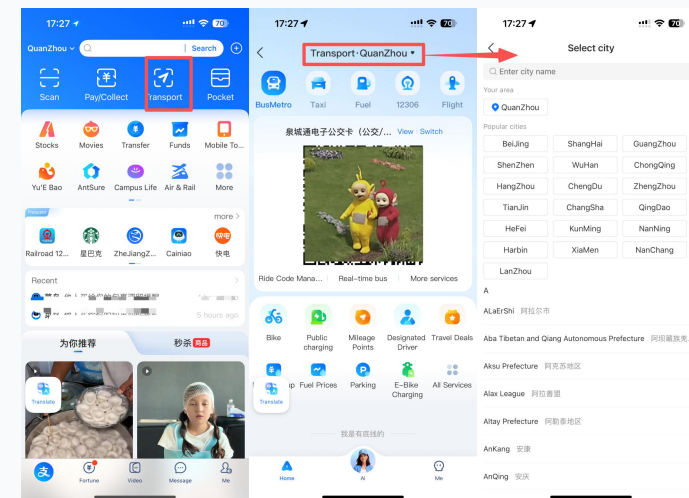
KEY PHRASE

"地铁站在哪里?" (Di Tie Zhan Zai Na Li?) = "Where is the subway station?"

2A

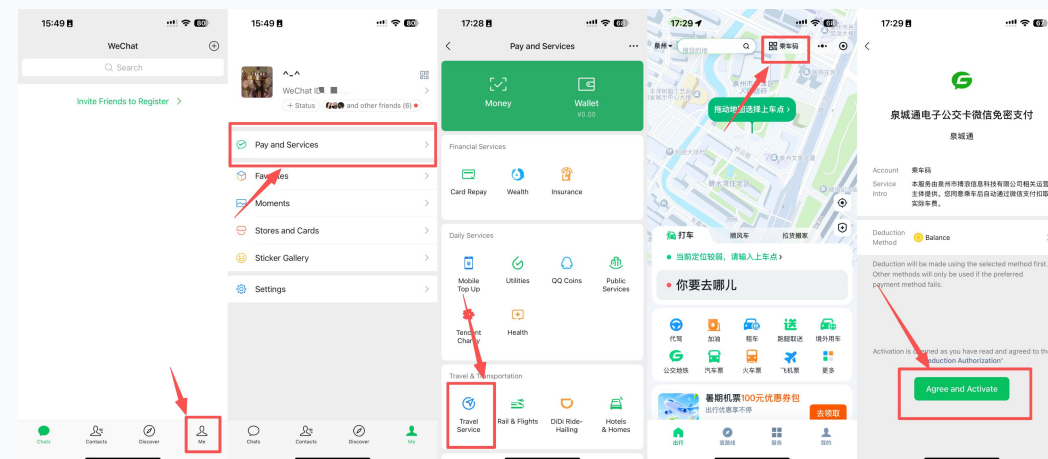
Buy Ticket: Alipay / WeChat QR Code

- 1 Open Alipay → Search "乘车码" (Cheng Che Ma) or "Metro"
- 2 OR open WeChat → Me → Pay an Services → Travel&Transportation → Travel Service → "乘车码" → link your phon number and bank card
- 3 Select your city (e.g., Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou)
- 4 Enable the transit QR code — it generates a blue QR code
- 5 At the gate, scan the QR on the scanner — gate opens!



PRO TIP

No need to buy a physical ticket!
The fare is auto-deducted when you exit.



2B

Buy Ticket: Vending Machine

- 1 Find the Ticket Vending Machine near the entrance
- 2 Tap the screen → Select language (English available on most machines)
- 3 Tap your destination station on the subway map
- 4 Select quantity → Check the price shown
- 5 Pay by cash, Alipay, WeChat, or bank card
- 6 Collect your single-trip card (a green/blue plastic token or card)

NOTE

Keep the card/token — you'll need it to EXIT!



2C

Buy Ticket: Service Counter

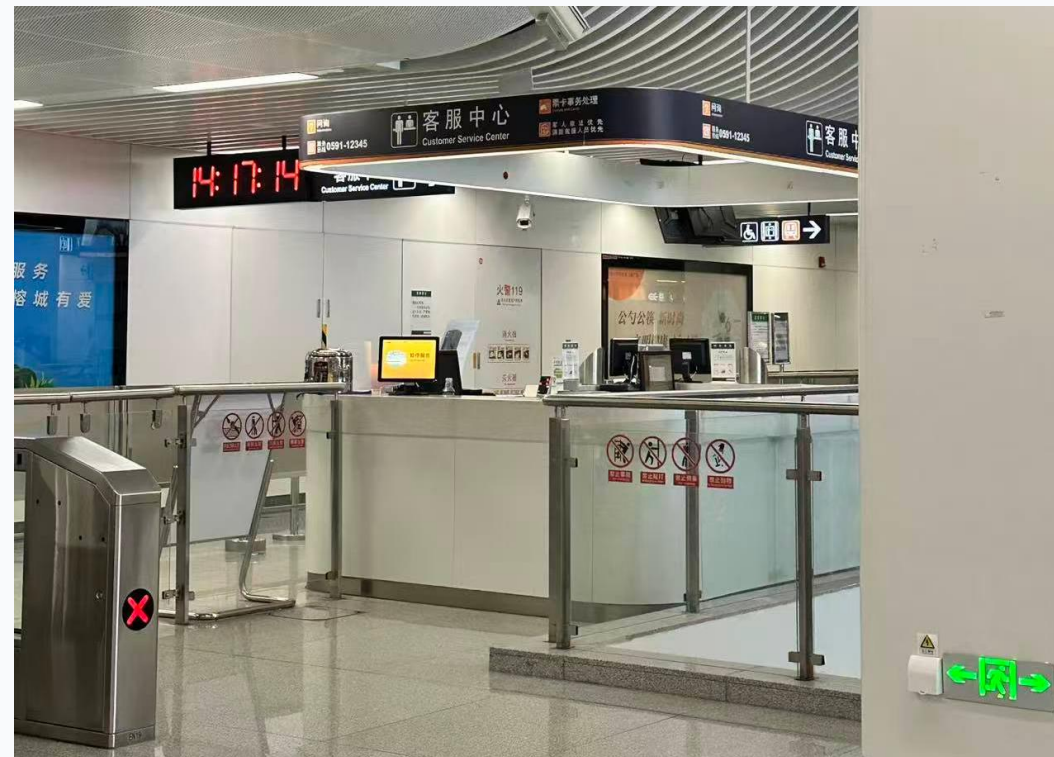
- 1 Find the "客服中心" (Customer Service Center)
- 2 Show the staff your destination on Amap or write it down in translation app
- 3 Say: "去 [station name]" (pinyin: **Qu** [station]) (It means **go** [station])
e.g., "去天安门" (Qu Tian An Men)
- 4 Pay by cash, Alipay, WeChat or bank card
- 5 Get your ticket card + receipt

USEFUL PHRASES AT COUNTER

"一张去 [station] 的票" (Yi Zhang Qu [station] De Piao) = "One ticket to [station]"

"多少钱?" (Duo Shao Qian?) = "How much?"

"可以支付宝吗?" (Ke Yi Zhi Fu Bao Ma?) = "Can I use Alipay?"



3

Security Check

- 1 Put your bag on the conveyor belt (X-ray scanner)
- 2 Walk through the metal detector gate
- 3 If the alarm beeps, staff may wave a handheld scanner over you
- 4 Collect your bag from the other side
- 5 Liquids may need to be tested — just hand them to staff if asked

WHAT TO EXPECT

Security is normal at EVERY subway station in China. Be chill
Be ready to open your bag if asked.



4

Enter the Gate

- 1 Find the turnstile with a green light / arrow
- 2 If using QR code: hold your phone 5cm above the scanner
- 3 If using card/token: tap it on the circular sensor
- 4 Wait for the beep + green light → the gate opens
- 5 Walk through quickly — gates close fast!

DON'T FORGET

If using a single-trip card, you'll need it to EXIT too!
QR code users: just scan again at exit.



5

Board the Train

- 1 Check the overhead sign: confirm line number & direction
- 2 Look for the terminal station name to confirm direction
- 3 Stand behind the yellow line — let passengers exit first
- 4 When the train arrives, board quickly (doors close in ~15 seconds)
- 5 Find a seat or hold the handrail — trains can be crowded

DIRECTION SIGNS

"往 [terminal station]" (Wang [station]) = "Toward [terminal station]"
 e.g., "往虹桥火车站" = Toward Hongqiao Railway Station



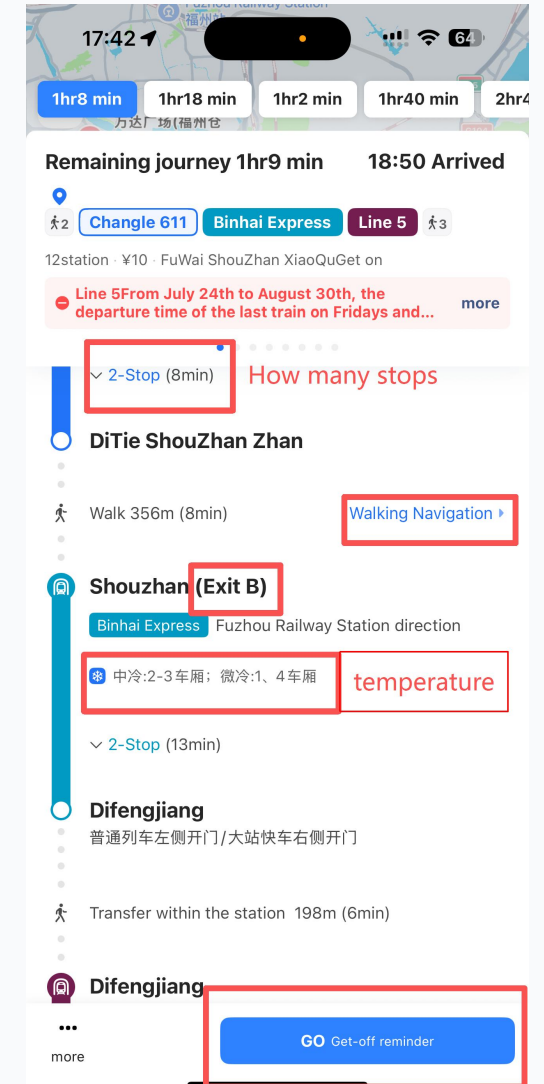
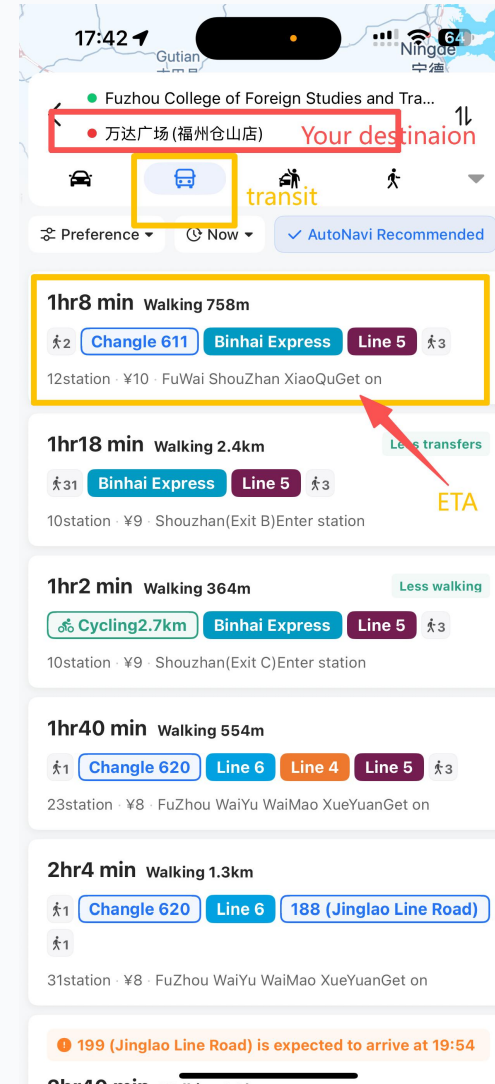
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Navigate with Amap (高德地图)

- 1 Download Amap (高德地图) — the Google Maps of China
- 2 Search your destination → tap "Transit" (公交地铁)
- 3 Amap shows: which line, which direction, how many stops
- 4 On the train: Amap vibrates when your stop is approaching
- 5 Amap also shows which EXIT (A/B/C/D) is closest to your destination

WHY AMAP?

Works offline for maps, shows real-time train arrivals, and calculates exact exit for your destination.



7

Exit the Station

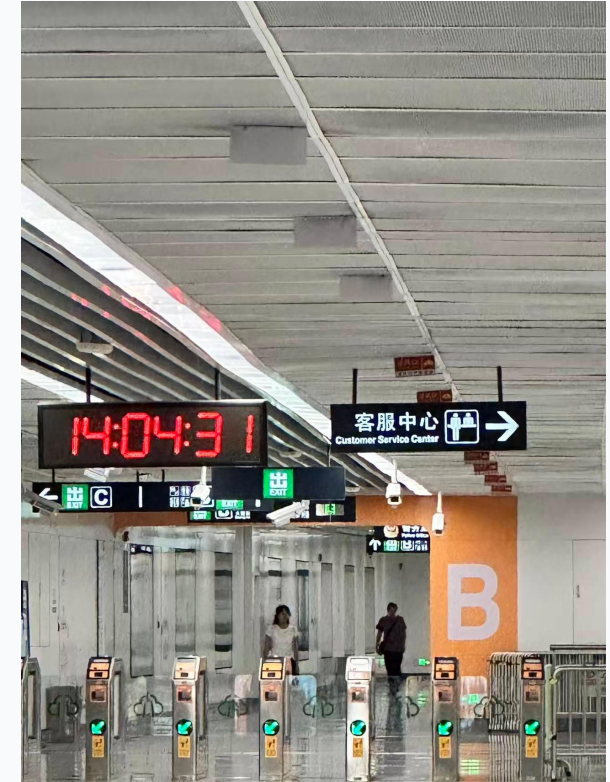
- 1 Get off at your stop — follow "Exit" (出口) signs
- 2 At the turnstile: scan QR again OR insert your single-trip card
- 3 Follow exit signs A/B/C/D... — check Amap for the best exit
- 4 Look for landmarks on the exit map (usually near the stairs)
- 5 You're out! Check Amap for final walking directions

EXIT SIGNS

"出口A" (Chu Kou A) = Exit A

"出口B" (Chu Kou B) = Exit B

Each exit leads to different streets — pick the right one!



Subway Chinese Phrases

Essential phrases for your subway journey

地铁站在哪里？

Dì Tiě Zhàn Zài Nǎ Lǐ?

Where is the subway station?

一张票

Yī Zhāng Piào

One ticket

往哪个方向？

Wǎng Nǎ Ge Fāng Xiāng?

Which direction?

我要下车

Wǒ Yào Xià Chē

I want to get off

请问

Qǐng Wèn

Excuse me

去 [站名] 多少钱？

Qù [station] Duō Shǎo Qián?

How much to [station]?

可以支付宝吗？

Kě Yǐ Zhī Fù Bǎo Ma?

Can I use Alipay?

下一站是哪里？

Xià Yī Zhàn Shì Nǎ Lǐ?

What is the next stop?

出口在哪里？

Chū Kǒu Zài Nǎ Lǐ?

Where is the exit?

谢谢

Xiè Xiè

Thank you

Quick Reference Card

Payment Methods

- Alipay QR: Search 乘车码 → Scan at gate
- WeChat QR: Me → Services → Transportation → Metro
- Machine: Touch screen → Select destination → Pay
- Counter: Say destination → Pay → Get card

Key Tips

- ✓ Security check is mandatory at every station
- ✓ Keep single-trip cards for exit
- ✓ Amap vibrates before your stop
- ✓ Rush hour: 7-9am, 5-7pm (very crowded!)
- ✓ Stand right, walk left on escalators
- ✓ No eating/drinking on the train

REMEMBER

Always have your passport or ID ready. Some stations require ID checks during major events.



You're Ready to Ride!

China's subway system is fast, clean, and affordable.
With Alipay/WeChat + Amap, you'll navigate like a local.



Subway



Bus



Bike



Taxi