

How To Get A Job Teaching English As A Second Language In China

Teach and Travel in China

**Teaching ESL In China Gives You A Job As Well As
A Home**

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Who Will Benefit From This Book

This book is for anyone who wants to get out there and see how the other side of the world lives. This book is specific to China. It will give you an invitation into what to do and what to watch out for, if you want to explore the world by teaching English as a Second Language. In most places of the world there are jobs for teachers and China is one of those places.

This book is for people who want to travel and recent graduates, who with a college degree can get a job in most countries in the world. And why not, if you do not do it for the experience, do it to learn the language. Fluency in Chinese will put you on the top rung of the corporate ladder. That is if you ever come home.

How To Use This Book

This book is an introduction into teaching ESL in China. Check out the links and look around. The internet is information, use it. Look at the job sites and see what is available. See which jobs you would like to do, and see what you need to have to be able to apply for the job. Then get on the internet to perfect your craft. You cannot expect to teach a class of kids if you have never taught before.

Also the book goes into depth about living in China and what you are up against. So plan ahead about how you will survive. China is a great country to teach in, but there are traps you have to be aware of. And it is up to you to make sure you do not fall into them. The book is about making your stay in China, an enjoyable experience.

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<http://animalsdinosaursandbugs.com/Teach-In-China-Audio.html>

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China is screaming out for English teachers. Just go to any of the teach English job sites and you will see so many jobs you will be paralyzed. Go to Dave's ESL cafe at <http://www.eslcafe.com/> and see what you can find. There are many job sites like <http://www.tefl.com/>, but here they would like you to study for there ESL teaching certificate, but you don't really need one. No one ever asked to see my certificates.

After you get to China this is the job site to use <http://www.echinacities.com> . This is the job site for getting jobs, once you are in China. If you just want to find out about life in China have a look here.

Also try out this website <http://www.jobteachworld.com> and do the online CV. This way you have your CV online, so you can send a link when you apply for a job. You will also need your CV as a pdf file. Just remember in China a lot of sites you use everyday are blocked. Like youtube and Facebook.

But that is not a problem just take an unblocker on your laptop or on a stick. I use - [ultrasurf](#) - and that worked extremely well. Anyway someone in China will give you an unblocker. At one school one of the other teachers gave me one. That is not a problem. You have to take the unblocker download with you to China, as most unblocker sites are also blocked.

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I put my video CV up online on jobteachworld as it is not blocked, whereas most video sites are blocked. But you can put a video up on the Chinese video site like [youku](#) and [tudou](#). They are possibly the two most popular sites. Just run them through Google Translate to read them.

Introduction To China

Now for an introduction to China all I can say is 'Be amazed'. I don't think anyone outside of Asia, has any idea about what you will expect, and neither do you. I say "Welcome to the next superpower" because that is where China is heading.

The whole place is moving, everywhere you go there are people and lots of them. And they are all enjoying life, spending money, buying things, eating out and whatever.

Get a recent copy of "[Lonely Planet China](#)". And read up about the places you want to get a job in, and the places you want to live in. And just get some general information about getting around and the hostels to live in. You will need to spend some time on a subway map and a bus map. Most bus maps are a disaster, until you start using the buses and work them out yourself. Also subways are fast, and buses spend most of the time in traffic jams. So after you

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get a job, plan on using the subway.

Landing in China is very daunting, you can't read the language and you can't speak it, so follow the book. It is chaos to the max. In your home country you probably have a car. And if you use the bus and trains, at least you can get a seat. In China forget it. Standing room only on the buses and trains, you have to get used to that. Buses have numbers, so as long as you know the bus number, you should be able to find your way around.

The bus I used to take in the mornings, usually ran every 5 to 10 minutes. If it was 5 minutes late I couldn't get on it. So have a back up plan, where you can get another bus or go a different way.

The subway stations are in pinyin - which is Chinese characters written in the English alphabet - so you can read them, and it is pretty idiot proof. And a lot of the subway people speak English, or they will find somebody who does. So it is pretty straight forward.

Where To Start Your China Experience

If you start in Hong Kong the shock will not be so great. Hong Kong is an overcrowded place, that used to be the Pearl of the Orient, but it got left behind as China overtook it. I used to live in Hong Kong, but I never go back there now. China is the place.

In HK most people speak English, so there you can get used to the food and the Asia way of life. If you are going to stay in HK for any length of time, the best place to stay is in [Chungking Mansions](#), near the bottom of Nathan Road. Nearly the whole building is full of guest houses, so there are plenty of places to stay. I usually stay in the [backpackers on the top floor](#).

If you are going to change money go to the Bank of China, as it is a Chinese bank. And you will be going to China. Change money in the banks, not in the change money kiosks as they are very expensive. HK is now nothing compared to China. It used to be the place to be, but it is long past that now. Be careful in HK it is a bit of a rip off center.

Also there have been democracy marches in HK of late. I don't understand why. China is the next superpower, so why not join them instead of going against them. At the moment Hong Kong is just a pimple on the backside of the next superpower. I used to live in Hong Kong, and

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after living in mainland China I will never go back to live in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong has stayed the same, while China just bounded ahead. But you can get acclimatized in Hong Kong, to the chaos when you go across the border. Years ago when you went across the border between HK and China, you used to go back in time. Now you are going to the future.

Welcome To China

Going through the border is very straight forward. Sometimes the lines are quiet long, other times you do not need to wait too long. After you come out of the immigration building, just stroll to the railway station, about 5 to 10 minutes. Your last quiet stroll in China. Once you get to the railway station, welcome to China. The lines to the ticket windows can be anything from 20 people to the back wall. Sometimes less than 20 but not very often.

When you get to the window just say "Guangzhou" and get your ticket. You need your passport to get a ticket so have it handy. Some windows have an English sign meaning they speak English. It is pretty straight forward. The tickets are pretty self explanatory with the train number, your carriage number and the seat number.

Don't lose your ticket you need it to get out the station in Guangzhou. You also need your ticket to get into the waiting room. When you

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get to the gate put your ticket on the reader and the gate will open.

Now you have to go through a security check, same as at an airport, where you put your bag through the x-ray machine. And if they see anything suspicious they will pull you to one side. You now walk through the metal detector. You also might get rubbed down with a hand held metal detector.

This happens at all train stations. You need your passport to buy a ticket, and then you have to go through security to get onto the platform.

The trains leave every 15 minutes, sometimes 10 minutes and sometimes 20 minutes. Usually you have to wait for three trains before your train number appears on the screen. Then you follow the crowd, you won't get lost, everybody is getting on the same train. When you are on the platform find your carriage number, climb in and find your seat. Pretty straight forward. You have about 10 minutes to board the train before it takes off. Then you are barreling along at about 160 kms/hour.

Not bad for your first hour in China. This will be one of many pleasant surprises you will encounter in the next superpower. If you leave Guangzhou on the high speed trains, you will be plowing along at around 350 kms/hour. That is when you will see the power poles going past like the proverbial picket fence. They are just a blur as they fly past the window.

Arriving In Guangzhou Is When The Fun Starts

To stay in GZ I would stay at the [Riverside Youth Hostel](#), mainly because it is in Fangcun which is a quieter part of GZ, not so hectic. And you are right next to the river. And along the river there are walkways, where you can go for a walk, to get away from the hustle and bustle of the city.

I used to walk along the waterways nearly everyday, just to get away from the city. And you can, in places along the river there is no traffic noise. I did the same when I was in Shanghai.

It is quiet safe walking along the river bank. It is all paved with a concrete fence between you and the river. The people are safe, I never had any problems, but I was very cautious about dogs. They roam along the river bank. When people are tired of looking after their dogs, they just leave them along the river. It is quite sad really. The dogs are friendly.

All the people who work on the waterways have beautiful dogs. These are the workers who clean all the rubbish out of the waterways. They go along in boats, and one person has a net and he fishes out all the rubbish. A never ending job.

Sometimes it floods so make sure you can get out. If it floods the walkway is under water so you have to walk along the levee bank. Nothing

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serious really. A change from the mundane.

Fangcun is be a good introduction to China, especially if you want to work here.

Before you go to China check out a subway map, and try and find your way around. The subway is very daunting, and amazingly crowded in stations where two or more lines cross. Other stations are nearly empty. And the subway is changing all the time, as they add new trains.

On the platforms people will help you. Some speak English and others seem to work out where you are trying to go. Just point to the station you want to go to, and someone will show you which train to get. People are very good. At the machines to buy a ticket it is written in English. And if you cant work it out someone will show you. Just stand there looking lost, and in no time someone will come alone and do it for you. Everything to do with the subway is very similar to subways around the world.

The subway exits/entrances are numbered A,B,C,D, etc so work out which exit you need to use, or you will end up on the wrong side of the road. After you have been there a week or two you'll just run through the subway.

A good idea is to download Google Earth and look around on ground view. This way you can see what the place actually looks like. And after you get there you should be able to match up the places. You need to look for bus stations and subway entrances. Check the letter of the subway entrance, so you can see which exit to come out.

Pickpockets

The worst things about China are the noise, mainly traffic, pollution both air and water and the thieves.

Pickpockets are a pain that you have to live with. I used to wear cargo pants and one time someone cut the pocket and took my money. Another time someone undid my backpack, but there was nothing in there.

I ended up with money in most pockets, so I wouldn't lose it all at one time. I used to wear shirts with two front pockets with tops that button down, so I could keep most of the money. All pockets had tops with button or Velcro to keep them closed. I never carried a wallet or credit cards. My bus and subway card was in a pouch around my neck. I only had an old cheap phone that was prepaid, so if it was pinched I didn't lose too much.

You are supposed to carry your passport at all times, so if the police stop you, you have identification. I was never stopped and I never carried my passport on me at any time.

The police did check my passport once, at my house and they videoed every page of my passport. There was a terrorist scare on so they were checking all the foreigners.

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To live in China you have to be registered at the police station near where you live. Your school will do that. And also the immigration people usually visit you at your home, to make sure your papers are up to date. Also the street police which are a bunch of old ladies, can check on you if your papers need to be renewed, but they are not allowed in your home. Whereas the police can come in if they want to. Also the immigration can come in too, if they want. The police and the immigration both ask first.

Anyway back to pickpockets, be careful they are everywhere and you do not want your passport taken. So don't carry it. Keep your money and valuables out of sight in closed pockets.

I never carried anything in my bag except books, as that was always getting opened. First I had ties on the zips, so they had to be untied to open the bag. And someone managed to untie the zips and open the bag. So I put on the small clamps, those small imitation rock climbing clamps and that kept most hands out. Also I used to wear my backpack on my front, so it was a front pack, and a lot of people do the same thing.

Pickpockets are part of living in China so expect it and allow for them. The chances of getting attacked and robbed are pretty slim, but getting pickpocketed is not.

Other Things That Happen

One thing that did happen to others, but not me is getting mobbed by street kids. They mob you and start going through your pockets. There are so many hands you can't stop them. All you can do is cover your pockets and run, and hope they don't trip you up.

Another time a male student said he was mobbed by a bunch of teenage school girls, as he left the supermarket. And they took his shopping bags and his groceries. I don't know if that was a one off thing, but I never heard of it happening again.

The worst thing or what I consider the worst is the flower beggar kids. They will grab you on your leg and hang on until you buy a flower. They were so bad the police started moving them on, as they were disrupting the tourist zones. So living in China is quite exciting.

There are beggars in China but not swarms of them like in some countries. An unintended consequence of the One Child Policy. When you leave the bigger churches you have to walk the gauntlet of beggars to get to the street. And sometimes they follow you, but they are not a problem. Sometimes the beggar gangs come to town with the kids and they cause problems, until the police move them on.

Another worst thing is the bad snatchers. If you

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live in a place where there are motorbikes do not, and I mean DO NOT have a shoulder bag. Because someone will ride up behind you and your bag is gone. Simple as that. There are usually two people on the bike, a rider and a passenger, and the passenger grabs your bag.

If you wear a backpack on your front they can't get it, but a bag over your shoulder is easy pickings. Anybody is targeted. Locals and foreigners alike. A local person was riding her bike and the motorcycle thieves knocked her off her bike and took her bag. So keep that in mind. This never happened to me but, other foreigners were caught. And if you do carry a bag other than a front pack, make sure there is nothing valuable in it.

Also you need plastic zip lock bags to put your passport and other valuables in, because it is hot in China and you live in sweat. Some schools have air conditioning others do not. Every time you go outside of the air conditioned malls, and air conditioned buses, and air conditioned subway, you start to sweat. And it doesn't take too long before everything in your pockets are dripping. So anything valuable keep in a sweat proof bag, in a pocket with a button down top or a Velcro strip. Even in the middle of summer at 40 degrees C I still worn white cotton shirts with button down pockets.

Pollution

Another thing you have to get used too is the pollution, both air and the river. I used to walk around the river bank because it was very quiet. And I used to see people fishing, so I never ate fish or anything from the sea, except the salted dried seaweed, that was very tasty.

Another thing you don't eat is honey as it is usually fake, just sugar and colored water.

Anyway along the river bank and in the tidal rivers, the pollution was so bad the rats were dying, and there were dead fish all over the place. Not a very nice place but you have to see it to believe it. After a while I was immune to it and the smell. And I just enjoyed the walk and the quiet atmosphere.

Now if you want to live in China you have to get used to air pollution, because it is thick. I used to start work at 8 o'clock so I would get there about 7.45 in the morning. I had to stand at the school gate and welcome the parents and the children. If you work at a school or a kindergarten you will do that.

Now back to air pollution. In the morning the sun would rise above the pollution cloud, as I was standing at the school gate. In the morning the sun would come up about 6, but you would not actually see the sun till about 8 am. It was that bad. And in the evening the sun sometimes was bright red, as it went down into the pollution cloud.

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And you are breathing that stuff in all day. Try and find a job in a smaller city, where the pollution is not so bad. The only time you see blue sky is when you leave China in an airplane.

Noise

Traffic noise is another thing you have to get used to. It is bad. So when you get an apartment make sure it is as far away from the road as you can get. And also don't get one near a market place, because where there are people there is noise.

The traffic noise is the worst, especially for people like us brought up in rather quiet cities. I used to live about a block away from the main road, and I could still hear the traffic.

In some cities blowing the car horn is banned, but in others it is not and there are horns blowing all the time. The traffic noise is something I never quite got accustomed too. All I can say is Do Not live next to a road.

If you live in a building estate, which you most likely will, get an apartment way inside as there is less noise. These building estates are huge. I don't know how many building were in the place I lived in. Most buildings are nine floors high as that size does not need a lift. You also have to pay a management fee, as well as

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the rent. Your school should sort that out.

I think noise is one of the hardest things in China you have to get used too, as it is always around you. That is why I used to walk around the river, just for some quiet. And it was quiet there.

Crowds

One thing you have to get used too is crowds. If you can't handle crowds don't go to China.

Anyway you can get away from the crowds, you just live life differently. We used to go to this Italian Pizza joint, because it had good pizzas and good staff and good everything else. And the big problem was a lot of people thought the same way.

It used to open at 10 o'clock, and we were usually the first customers in the door on Sunday morning. They knew us, so it was a really good time to go there. When we left an hour later, there were about 30 people waiting outside to get into the restaurant. Yet for the first half an hour we had the place practically to ourselves. That is how you live in a crowded city without crowds.

Also at the supermarkets I used to walk past the checkouts, before I went inside the supermarket. If I couldn't get out of the supermarket I would

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not go in. That was the golden rule.

There would be somewhere between 40 and 60 checkouts with 10 people deep at each checkout all trying to get out. If it was like that I would never go in. I would come back another time.

At the supermarket there were lockers that you had to lock your bag in before you went inside the supermarket. Most supermarkets have them. This way you could lock your bag in the locker and walk around the mall. I used to shop in less crowded supermarkets. After a while you get to know where they are.

One more thing there are thieves everywhere. And once they burgled my house. They cut the bars on the window, put a kid in through the hole to open the door. And took what they could. So the moral of the story is be careful. You do not know what is going to happen.

Now For The Good Side Of China

That about sums up the bad side of China, the rest is all good. You will be amazed. Just go there and enjoy yourself. You must get a combined subway/bus card. It is a prepaid card you keep putting money on, and you can ride the subway and buses to your hearts content. If you have one of these the city is yours.

You do not need a subway map as there are maps everywhere in the subway. You just need to know

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the name of the subway stations near your home, and the exit is go out of.

Buses are a different story they take a bit longer to work out. I used to write down the bus numbers where I lived, so I could check which buses I needed to get to go back home.

Restaurants, food, shopping and everyday living is just a breeze. Food is plentiful and cheap and reasonable safe to eat. I never got food poisoning in China, only a very bad bout while in Hong Kong. You soon settle into your favorite restaurants, where you know the staff and they know you.

You soon fit into the way of life. You meet lots of people and the city is yours. You know which supermarkets to shop at, and where all the cheap markets are. There are McDonalds and KFC everywhere. Plus my favorite Pizza joint.

You will find there are security cameras all over the place, even walking along the rivers. So it is quiet safe. Sometimes you are on three cameras at one time, just walking down the road. Buses have cameras, there are cameras all over the subway. In the classroom there are cameras. It is part of life.

One thing I like about living in China is - it is so easy. You do not need to worry about too much. In the easiest of cases, you live at the school and you eat at the school. And the school does everything for you. But you could be stuck on the edge of the city, or way in the countryside in a boarding school.

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The other extreme is you do everything. Your school will help you get an apartment, get it set up then you are on your own. But the school is always there to help you, and your students will also help you. If you need a subway/bus card, just ask because you do need one, and your school or some friends will help you get one. One other problem is getting lost and it is very easy to do. Always carry your address written in Chinese with you at all times, so you can show it to a taxi driver. Keep in mind you have to find your way back home, so make sure you can.

Water And Toilets

The water is a problem. The locals always boil the water, so you should too. And where I lived we had two taps, one was supposedly safe to drink, but I always boiled it. I used to clean my teeth in it and never got sick.

In some places the water tastes terrible. I mean I couldn't drink it unless it had tea or coffee in it. At one school the water was so bad, it was hard water, I just couldn't drink it. Sometimes bottled water is better or you can put in a filter system. If you do this you will see just how bad the water is. The filter will be black in a very short time.

Most Chinese people just drink boiled water. It seems to be the drink of choice. And when you are teaching you do need a drink every now and then to cool your throat.

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The soap and shampoo is made for hard water so it is OK. If you use imported soap you might find it is no good because it is made for soft water, like we have in the west.

I used Chinese soap as it is made for the conditions you live in, and it was alright.

Sometimes you will find there is no water, but they will get it back on again. One advantage of having the two different types of water was we always had water, even if the main supply was cut off.

In the summer because of the heat you should carry a water bottle with you at all time, but you can buy water anywhere. On intercity trains and buses they give you a bottle of water free, so you always have water.

Now onto toilets. In Asia you have the Western toilet and the squatter, and after a while you get used to using one of these. In the big cities toilets are very clean, and they are everywhere. The hotels and shopping malls have very clean toilets. Out of the big cities and the modern areas it is a different story. If you are into modernization stay in the cities. If you want adventure you will find out what they are like. And if you end up in some very backward places you will be amazed.

Now Onto Teaching

That was living in China, now onto teaching. With teaching you can teach everything from kindergarten to adults and everything in between. If you don't know who you want to teach to, try them all. I did and I settled on kindergarten and primary school.

If you teach in a private English school, your classes are evening and weekends at about 1 and a half hours to 2 hours each time. In a school setting, classes are usually 40 minutes. And there are one to one classes usually in a coffee shop like Starbucks. Or you can become a family tutor and teach in people's homes. What you do is usually up to what is available.

When you are starting out it is better to teach adults. This way you always have somebody to help you. If you need help with anything, just ask and somebody in your class will help you. At the other extreme I worked in a kindergarten where nobody spoke English. If they wanted to tell me something they rang the agent and we sorted in out.

To find jobs just check out the job sites mentioned before. Sometimes you can go through an agent. I had one really good agent,

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teachingd.com, but the other agents always paid less. Register as an English teacher and they will send you emails, when jobs come up. You usually do not need an agent but they are very good. Just apply for the jobs and see what happens.

I used to hire teachers for some of the schools, and I used echinacities.com all the time. But the biggest problem was - the teachers applying for the jobs did not send in all the details. You must send in a photo and the subway station or bus station near where you live. This way they can work out if you can get to the school or not.

Also you are applying for a teaching job so don't put everything on your CV, just the teaching stuff.

If you have a Phd in dentistry, don't put that on your CV. The schools just want to know if you can teach, and that is all. Anyway a lot of schools would be afraid to hire someone that qualified, but universities would love you. You could end up the poster person with your picture all over the place. And you don't get royalties.

When I was in a situation like that, where they wanted to put me up on a poster, I would say I would ask my agent, because I did do some film work. Being an extra in a movie is another job you can do, as long as you have free days. They usually want you for the day. Take a book to read.

I think when you send in your CV tailor it to

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the job you are applying for and see what happens. A lot of times to get a job just ask around, other teachers know if there are any jobs available.

When I was hiring teachers, all I wanted to know was "Where do you live?" and "Can you teach?" and that was about it.

How To Teach

Now with teaching you are in charge of the class so you have to control it. So make sure you watch a few [youtube videos](#) on how to teach. And you have a practice class in front of a mirror, or video it so you know what you look like, when you are teaching.

Watch a few [Tony Robbins](#) videos as he is full of life, and to be an in demand teacher you need to be active. Practice writing on a blackboard to see if your writing is readable.

Do [mind mapping](#) as that looks really good on a blackboard. Practice it first so you know where to start, and where everything goes.

Have a few classes up your sleeve, so you can run off a demo class with ease. If you are teaching [kindergarten learn some songs](#), chants and action movements, the kids love these.

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For adults do dialogues as well as role playing and let them do the talking. The best advice is watch other teachers, and youtube is the best place to start.

If you teach university I don't recommend doing a lecture, ask lots of questions get the students talking. Put them in groups if you have to, just get them involved. The more they do, they more they will like you. Try not to lecture. Get them involved.

Don't go into a classroom with nothing planned. You have to keep the class active and involved for 40 minutes so do it.

For schoolkids learn to draw on the blackboard, they love to see what you can draw. The bigger the better. For universities use mind mapping. When watching lectures on youtube, try to find some that have lecturer involvement in the class.

In an English class you cannot lecture, you must get involved with the students. You need interaction in the classroom. I don't recommend teaching high level classes, unless your English is excellent, or you will find the students know more English than you.

Chinese students English level is excellent. The older they are the better there English is. Even in high school there are students who have never left China, and they speak perfect English. Be amazed.

It might be an idea if you want to teach

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kindergarten and or primary school, to volunteer at your local school or kindergarten, if you can. Here you will get into the feel of things.

If you see something you like on youtube, do it, master it so you can reproduce the same in a classroom. Learn a number of little things, it all adds up, and you never know when you will need them.

One thing I like to do in classrooms is crosswords. There are [free crossword makers](#) on the internet. Find one you like and throw a few crosswords together, with the words you are teaching your students. Don't overdo it, students get bored easier, so keep bringing in new things.

Also doing anything on the blackboard, you must do everything fast. So you must be able to put a crossword up in less than minute. Most of [my drawings took about 10 - 15](#) seconds. You don't need to be perfect, just fast.

Primary schoolkids love to draw so let them. I would get a student to yell out the word, and the students had to draw the object on the blackboard. I tried to get 10 kids all drawing on the blackboard at once. They love it. Little things make the difference. Don't lecture, let the kids get involved.

You will most likely have to fill out a detailed lesson plan, that nobody looks at, but you still have to do it. At one school I used to religiously fill out the lesson plans, but nobody ever looked at them, so I stopped doing

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it, and nothing was said.

Now to get a job teaching you need to know a bit about the craft. You have to do demo classes, and you have to make sure the students do most of the talking. There is a fair bit of competition for jobs, so you have to be a bit better than the other teachers applying for the job.

Now if you are going for kindergarten, you need to get the kids up, and that means dancing and singing and doing chants and action songs. Also try to get an animated voice, so when you are reading you do not put the kids to sleep.

You can pick up lots of props at the toy markets, like animal masks, puppets, plastic animals and whatever you can use in class.

There is some amazing stuff in the toy markets, and it is cheap especially if you are buying bulk. Little stickers you give the kids for being good, go down well with the kids and the staff. Also pick up some flashcards at the book market, they come in handy.

Primary school is very similar to kindergarten. except for the last two grades where the students just don't want to do anything. But you have to try.

Middle school and High school is like a continuation of the last two grades at primary school. Except the class is dominated by the best students who want to do everything, and the rest of the students who want to do nothing.

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University is older kids who want to pass, so they want to learn, therefore the pressure is on you to teach them. So your English skills must be good. Don't teach university unless you are an English major, or your English grammar is excellent.

When teaching adults there are usually two types of student, exam preparation and immigration, and people who want to learn English to better themselves.

This is the best place to start. A private school that teaches adults. Here you will have lots of friends and they will always help you. You will never be alone. They usually have a set textbook, and you work your way through the book. Here you do role plays, dialogues and a lot of group work where the students talk in English. You must ask lots of questions and always encourage the students.

The school system in China will leave the Western World in the dust. You will be amazed at the students. It won't take you long to understand why the top ten students in any country come from Asia. It is one of the reasons China is the next superpower.

There Are Some Things They Don't Like

China is still a changing society, some things they have embraced like technology, but other things we have in the west they don't like.

Pierced ears are OK but they don't like metal in other places. In some job advertisements they will say no strange piercing or metal.

Also they don't like purple or green or any other color hair except natural colors.

Another thing is overly visible tattoos. You will be told to keep them out of sight. One female teacher had full body tattoos, I think she might have been a nite club dancer. She kept them covered and nothing was said.

Sometimes as part of your teaching contract or on a separate piece of paper, is an agreement between you and the government. This basically states that you will not preach religion. You can go to church and do your religious things, but don't talk about it in class, The other thing you have to be careful about is - you will not deviate from the Chinese Government position on sensitive issues.

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That means you have to take the government side on sensitive issues. In other words you cannot talk about Tibet and Taiwan, and if you do you must have the same opinion as the government. I suppose the latest marches in Hong Kong will come under that agreement.

I didn't worry about it and I always took the government side. That is a minor issue. I went to church every Sunday, no problem, I just didn't talk about it in class.

There were stories going round, that one foreigner teacher at a university was preaching in class. He was repeatedly told not to do that, and he showed the agreement he had signed. Anyway he kept preaching and then one weekend he went to Hong Kong. And when he got to the border coming back into China, his visa had been revoked and he couldn't come back into China. Moral of the story, don't preach, just go to church.

Most people in China accept that foreigners drink, and they think we are all piss heads, so expect them to think that way, even if you don't drink. Sometimes it is quite difficult to tell someone you do not drink.

Another thing, you might hear something along these lines. You are not allowed to put 'State Secrets' on the internet. So "What is a State Secret?" No one seems to know. So be careful about what you put up on your blog. Most people who live in China, like the place, and they will not say anything really bad about China. You do

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overlook a lot of things. And if something happens to you, like you get pickpocketed, the standard reply is 'Welcome to China' or 'This is China.' You usually don't go running off to the police unless your passport is stolen.

Dealing With The Police

If you have any problems that require the police, they will help you and some policemen speak perfect English. The dealings I had with the police were all good. Once I had to call the police, and they got an English speaker to talk to me over the phone. And the police car was there in less than five minutes. But don't call them out for stupid things. Minor stuff you can walk away from, just walk, but if you are not allowed to walk away, then call the police.

At one time in KFC someone tried to pinch my friend's laptop. This guy was so far off his tree, it was one of these, tell him to bugger off moments. But my friend wanted to call the police. I didn't, I told him to forget it, but he wanted to go ahead. So the police came and we had to go to the police station and make statements and all that stuff. But before that the police checked his laptop to see if had been stolen. It wasn't. We wasted an afternoon.

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Don't call the police for silly things.

If you get pickpocketed and only money is missing forget it, but if they get your passport you have to get a statement from the police, so you can get a new passport and visa. If you stay in China to get your new passport you need to get a new visa. And that is where you need the statement from the police.

You will find out that the local people respect the police. If you can, when the school takes your documents to the local police station, go with them so you can see the police in action. You don't need to go, but you can see how efficient the police are.

At one kindergarten the police were there checking how safe the place was, and they never checked my documents. I pulled out my papers, and they just waved them away without looking at them. And there was about 10 of them walking around.

When my apartment was broken into I didn't want to call the police, but the landlord did. They came around and had a look then asked me if I wanted to make a statement. I didn't and they left. They did check my passport and visa. My computer and some money was taken and that was it.

New Technology

With this technology thing, not everybody has it, so you don't need the latest gadgets. And that means you can't use it in the classroom. PowerPoint is OK.

A number of schools will not allow the kids to have phones at school, mainly because they get pinched. That goes for tablets, laptops and other small tech devices.

If you teach in an expensive international school, in most cases the kids will be loaded with the latest tech.

China for some reason nearly gets all the new tech, but there are a lot of fakes, so if the price is too cheap it is usually a fake. Where you buy things will determine, if it is a fake or not. But be careful, there was a complete fake Apple Store that was shut down by Apple. If you shop in the electronic markets, you might end up being sold a fake. I was lucky as one of my students introduced me to a computer shop and I usually got a good deal. And he spoke a bit of

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English.

Also being a foreigner you will get sold rejects and returns. Get used to it. If you are a regular customer they will look after you.

As a teacher stick to chalk and flashcards. If you want to put your name on your electronic stuff, use one of those invisible pens that show up under green iridescent light. Very common in China.

If you buy an expensive phone it will most likely get pinched, so don't buy the top of the range. I use a little flip top phone, that is not exactly the most sort after phone by the pickpockets. Just one thing make sure your phone can be used outside of China. Or it will be useless when you leave China.

Also when going to China don't take very much, buy it when you get there. Most things are cheaper except with tech there is not much difference.

Unusual Things You Might Have To Do

One is give speeches so make sure you can do that. You might have to give a speech to the whole school, I had to, 2,500 people. That only happened a few times.

One teacher was ex military and he used to do morning exercises. He was good, just like they do in the army. This was at a boarding school and the kids loved him. But that was unusual.

Most schools have a multimedia classroom, that seats about 500 students. At one stage I had to teach all kids from one grade, about 500 at one time. They all sat in their classes with their form teacher keeping them under control. That was a new experience to say the least. At the end of the year I was pretty good at it.

The normal stuff is demo classes with the parents watching. Demo classes to get a job. And classes in front of the whole school and parents. When the school has an open day you will be required to do something. And sometimes you will do a class in a park, and everybody is watching you. Very embarrassing but do your best. Most Christmases you are Santa so enjoy it. Have fun, it is very easy to have fun, don't get all tied up in knots over little things.

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The best Christmas party I went to was at a kindergarten. I was walking round dressed as Santa and I had to do the photo session. Santa and the kids and parents. Best party of my time in China. And that was the only time I went to that kindergarten.

Now The Other Side Of Teaching In China

You hear some horror stories about some schools, and there is a bit of truth in most of it. But you are in there country, contracts don't cover everything. So you might be required to do something that is not on the contract, like a parents day or a demo class somewhere.

Or and this is a big one, the local government education people want to see you in action. Usually you are told to keep out of sight, when the government people visit the school. Once I had to have a talk to the Government people, as well as do a class.

Things like that are not on your contract, so do it and keep everybody happy. I do what is asked, whether it is on the contract or not. In a number of cases there is no contract, or more likely it has expired and no one has bothered to

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renew it.

Nothing serious has every happened to me, and I have always been paid. If you come to school late, your pay is usually deducted. That is normal. One private weekend school used to deduct the 10 minutes break between class, so I only stayed for one term.

If you put your back up you will have problems, because you are up against the 'Lose Face' cultural identity of the Chinese. So I just forget about it, and start looking for a new school. If they want to do things like that, they lose as word gets around.

It is not really a big thing, you will probably never have any problems. Just get to school on time, do what you are supposed to do, and enjoy yourself.

Visa Time

Now for some reason getting a visa is usually not a problem. To get a work visa you normally need a college degree, and your school will do it for you. Some schools don't, but don't panic. Just ask around amongst all your foreigner friends, and someone will know a friend who has a relative in business or something, and they will get you a visa for a price.

There are companies who will get you a visa,

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they advertise on echinacities. Just ask around first, getting a visa never used to be a problem, so don't worry about it.

Now don't overstay your visa, I don't know what will happen if you do, but I assume it is not good if you want to keep coming back to China.

You can always shoot over to Hong Kong/Macau, Vietnam, or Russia, or just leave China for a couple of days, get a visa and come back.

Actually getting a job, a visa, a place to stay are the least of your worries. I don't even know what your greatest worry will be. I know a good number of foreigners wake up 10 years later, and they are still in China. So it can't be all that bad.

The best place to get a visa changes all the time, there is always some method that is in vogue. Then when another way comes along we all try that.

Getting A Bank Account Is Not Problem

There are not too many problems in the next superpower.

But there is a serious problem you need to be very aware of and that is: you need the original passport you opened the account with. And if you get a new passport make sure you update your passport anywhere you have used it.

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We bought a house and you have to use your passport as identification. Now when we wanted to sell the house, we had to come up with the original passport, or as the woman at the office said, we would not be able to sell it. So make sure you keep all your passports, even old ones that have expired.

It is not so bad in a bank, as you have to use your passport anytime you take money out in the bank. Any dealings with the bank you have to have your passport. I would only get an account at a Chinese bank, not a Hong Kong bank or any branch of a foreign bank.

After the democracy marches in Hong Kong I would have very little to do with anything Hong Kong. I don't think the Chinese government would stand behind any Hong Kong bank now, so stick to Chinese banks. Chinese banks are looked after by the Chinese government, and as far as I know they will let nothing happen to them. I don't know what would happen to a foreign bank if it got into strife.

Most banks have an English window and even then most people in the bank speak English. Even the security guard on the safety deposit boxes spoke English. This was in a big city, I don't know about small cities. I prefer the Postal Saving Bank of China, they have branches everywhere.

You Should Learn Mandarin

Now Mandarin is the language of the future, so learn it. You are living there, surrounded by the language and life is a lot easier if you are confident in the language.

Now in some places the main language spoken is not Mandarin. In Guangdong they speak Cantonese, the same as in Hong Kong, so make sure you learn the right language. In Shanghai they speak Shanghahua. And in a lot of other places they speak the local dialect, so find a Mandarin speaking city and immerse yourself in the language.

Before you go to China start watching Chinese movies that speak Mandarin with subtitles. And see how much you can pick up. Also, if you like historical movies you could find they speak old Mandarin, which is different from the modern language. But they are beautiful movies.

Try and pick up some words and phrases, even though you will probably not understand anything when you first arrive here. It takes time and effort to learn a language, so put in the time

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and effort and your life here will be a lot richer. It seems the golden rule for learning a language is - if you want to learn to speak the language, speak it, and that is about it.

Actually learning a language is a lot easier now with mp3 and mobile phones. You can listen anywhere, except on the buses and subway as it is too noisy.

Summary Time

You will either love it or hate it. You will either be seduced by the next superpower, and think China is the greatest place on the planet. Or you will think it is the most corrupt, over crowded, polluted and thieving place on the planet, and you wont last 6 months. Mind you I didn't meet many people like that.

All I can say is have a good time, don't worry about too much and don't get your back up. The people who have problems usually cause them. Just be careful and don't keep all your money in one pocket. If you want to know anything just ask. Someone will know the answer and help you.

If you want to have a really exceptional cultural experience get out of the big cities. Smaller cities are the places to go. After

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saying that, pollution is less, and traffic is more chaotic. And you have more chance of learning Mandarin, as you have to use it. As long as you are in a city that speaks it.

Once you get over the initial shock of arriving in an Asia city, and have listened to the warnings about living in China, you will be alright. You never know you might wake up 10 years later and still be there. I did.

Here is the download link for the pdf where you have the live links.

<http://animalsdinosaursandbugs.com/teachinchina.pdf>

Email me plegrove@gmail.com for your experience in China. And add a Customer Review on the book page on amazon.com.

Thank you and all the best on you teaching expedition to China. I hope you have a wonderful time like I did.

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