

GKS Scholars Orientation: Welcome to Korea

Your essential guide to thriving as a Global Korea Scholarship scholar:
from arrival to academic success.



Before You Arrive: Essential Checklist

1

Visa & Arrival (you must have done that by now)

Secure your visa and confirm your arrival date with your university's GKS coordinator well in advance. Have every document handy and put it in an easy accessible place.

2

Accommodation and Korean Sim

Arrange university dormitory placement or private housing before you land. Also, better to buy a sim online. Services like Chingu mobile could help you in buying a sim from India which can be picked up at the Incheon Intl airport when you land.

3

Finances (Most Important)

Bring either KRW (from private vendors) or USD. USD can easily be converted to KRW at the airport or in any of the Korean banks' branch with a passport. Forex card is another viable option. The amount depends on a person's individual spending capacity, but somewhere near 2,000 to 2,500 USD at max should be fine for basic expenses before receiving your first stipend.



Packing Smart: India to Korea

Optimize your luggage for a smooth transition to Korea, focusing on necessities.

Must-Bring Essentials

- **Personal Food:** If vegetarian, pack specific Indian food items. Also, whatever your parents ask you to pack, just pack it!
- **Adapters:** Universal power adapters (Type F) for Korea. Check compatibility before buying.
- **Documents:** All personal and professional documents (originals & copies). Better safe than sorry!

Consider Leaving Behind

- **Winter Clothes:** Indian winter wear is often insufficient for harsh Korean winters. It's more effective to buy suitable clothing upon arrival.
- **Basic Commodities:** Most daily essentials are affordable at stores like Daiso in Korea. Prioritize unique edible comforts instead.





Korean Language Basics

Greetings

안녕하세요

(Annyeonghaseyo)

= Hello

감사합니다

(Gamsahamnida) =

Thank you

Emergency Phrases

도와주세요 = Help me

네 = yes/no/I don't know :D

Pro Tip

Download **Naver Papago** for translation assistance wherever you go.

Accelerate Your Korean Language Skills



Embrace 'Shadowing' & Patience

Listen and repeat native speakers to improve pronunciation and rhythm. Don't aim for perfection immediately; like a baby learning to speak, consistent small developments lead to fluency.

Volunteer & Connect

Participate in volunteering activities with Korean students. Shared experiences build stronger friendships and facilitate more natural language exchange than formal settings.

Focus on Your Journey

Everyone's language learning path is unique. Avoid comparing your progress to others; remember, "**comparison is the thief of joy**" and everyone's starting point is different.

The Do's



Bow When Greeting

A slight bow shows respect: especially when meeting elders or in formal academic settings.



Use Both Hands

Always give and receive items: money, cards, gifts- with both hands as a sign of courtesy.



Respect Formal Speech

Use **존댓말** (formal speech) with professors and seniors. And NO, t's not optional!

The Don'ts

● No loud talking in public transportation

The public places in Korea are expected to be quieter, and loud talking is frowned upon. Also, never sit on the seats reserved for the elderly and the pregnant ladies.

🕒 Be on Time. ALWAYS!

Punctuality is not a virtue here, it is the norm.

👉 No Single-Finger Pointing

Avoid pointing or beckoning someone with one finger. Use an open hand instead.

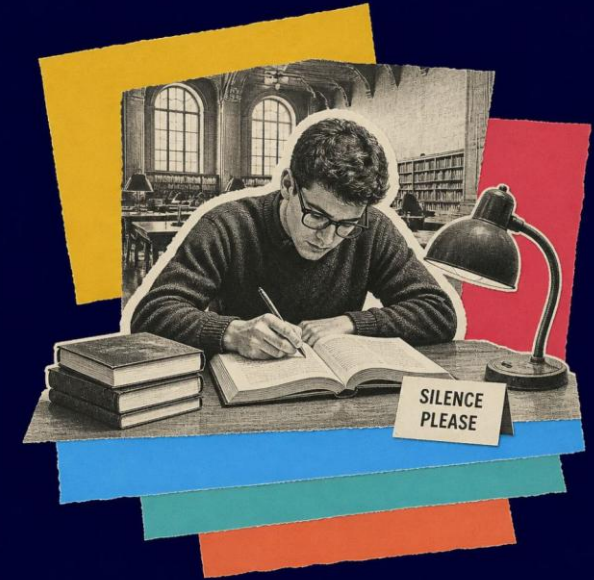
💰 Convert KRW into KRW

It will make your initial hard phase even harder.

⚠️ Don't have unreal expectations as they show in Korean Dramas.

Academic Expectations

Korean universities hold GKS scholars to a high standard. Your scholarship status is directly linked to your academic performance and attendance record.



1 Attend Every Class

Absences can affect your visa status: treat your attendance record as seriously as your grades. Foger Mass-bunk, even an individual bunk without any reason is frowned upon.

2 Participate Actively

Engage in discussions and group projects. Passive presence is not enough.

3 Meet Deadlines

Late submissions may not be accepted. Plan your workload from the very first week.

University Life Essentials

Course Registration

Register for all courses during orientation week — popular classes fill up fast.



Student ID Card

Get your student ID immediately. You'll need it for the library, cafeteria, and student discounts.



Clubs & Societies

Join student clubs to build community, make friends, and practice Korean in real-world settings.



Counseling Services

University counseling services are free and confidential — use them if you need support.



Getting Around & Daily Life

Transportation

T-money Card

Rechargeable card for subway, bus, and taxis. Buy and top up at any convenience store.

Subway

Efficient and affordable – English signage available in all major cities. Your daily go-to.

Kakao Taxi App

Use Kakao Taxi for metered rides. Safer than flagging taxis on the street and easy to track.

Food & Dining

Convenience Stores

GS25, CU, and Emart24 offer filling meals for under ₩5,000 – your best budget option.

University Cafeteria

The cheapest on-campus dining with meal plan options. A great place to meet fellow students.

Limited Vegetarian/Vegan Options

Vegan/Vege options, oftentimes, are more expensive than the meat ones. Make arrangements accordingly.

Health & Safety in Korea



Register with Your Embassy

Upon arrival, register with your home country's embassy in Seoul. This is essential in case of emergencies.



Health Insurance- NHIS

Health coverage is **required for your visa**. Use the university health center for routine and basic care since it would be cheaper than other private hospitals.



Stay Safe

Korea is one of the world's safest countries – but stay alert in crowded areas.



Emergency Numbers

112 – Police

119 – Ambulance & Fire

Save these in your phone today.



Save 112 and 119 in your phone before you leave the airport. These two numbers can save your life.

Your Questions Answered: GKS Scholars FAQ

Academics

What are the expectations for my Master's studies?

Careers

What are the job/internship opportunities and career support available?

Networking

How can I build professional and social networks in Korea?

Korean Language

How should I approach the language year and TOPIK preparation?

Immigration

What visa, ARC, and immigration procedures should I know?

Finances

How should I manage my GKS stipend and daily expenses?

Housing

What housing options and rental precautions should I know?

Food

How can I manage food affordably, especially with dietary needs?

Packing

What documents and essential items should I bring from India?

First Setup

What should I arrange for SIM, banking, transport, and apps?

First Month

What should I expect and complete during my first month?

Adjustment

What cultural differences and challenges should I prepare for?

Your Korean Journey Starts Now

You earned the GKS scholarship through hard work and dedication. Korea is ready to offer you world-class education, a rich culture, and experiences that will define your future.

Study Hard

Attend every class, meet every deadline, and engage deeply with your academic community.

Connect Broadly

Build friendships across cultures – your international network is one of your greatest assets.

** Embrace Korea

Learn the language, explore the country, and immerse yourself fully in Korean culture.

어서 오세요 – Welcome. You belong here.



Let's Connect!

I'm excited for your upcoming journey to Korea. Feel free to reach out with any further questions or just to connect!



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Looking forward to seeing your success in Korea!