



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Nationality in China

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Nationality law is complicated. You should ask a lawyer who specialises in Chinese law for advice before making any decisions.

Nationality laws

Chinese and British laws governing citizenship differ. This page sets out some issues for adults who hold or have held Chinese nationality in addition to British citizenship, and for children born in China. This is a complicated area and one where you must seek legal advice.

I have British and Chinese passports – what document should I use to enter China?

Article 3 of *The People's Republic of China Nationality Law* states that China does not recognise dual nationality so if you are British and Chinese you are likely to be regarded by the Chinese authorities as a Chinese citizen, even if you travel to China on a British passport. If you enter China on a Chinese passport we may not be able to help you if you have a problem. Our advice is that you should only travel to China on your British passport, with a Chinese visa in it.

Please note also that if you travel to China or Hong Kong on your Chinese passport, the authorities may also require evidence in the passport that you can enter the UK (via a UK visa or Certificate of Entitlement to Right of Abode). Holding a British passport may not fulfil their requirements.

You must arrive and leave China on the same travel documents.

I have renounced Chinese citizenship – what should I do?

If you have formally renounced Chinese citizenship, we advise you to carry clear evidence that you have done so. If you still hold 'Hukou' (household registration) in China, you may be regarded as a Chinese citizen.

My child was born in China – what should I do?

When neither parent is a Chinese national

According to information provided by Chinese authorities, a child born in China to two foreign national parents is not eligible for Chinese nationality. However, you must do certain things:

- your child must be registered with the local Public Security Bureau (PSB) within one month of his/her birth.
- You should obtain a passport for your child.
- You should obtain a visa/residence permit from the Public Security Bureau Entry-Exit Division for your child. According to Chinese visa regulations, your child cannot exit China until they obtain this visa/residence permit.

When one parent is a Chinese national

Article 4 states that any person born in China where one parent is a Chinese national shall have Chinese nationality so if your child is born in China and you or the other parent is Chinese, under Chinese nationality law:

- your child will automatically assume Chinese citizenship
- your child will be recognised only as a Chinese citizen and not hold any other nationality until you formally renounce the child's Chinese citizenship

The UK government recognise dual nationality and you can apply for a British passport for your child at any time if he/she can claim British citizenship under UK nationality law, but there are some things to consider.

Which nationality should I choose for my child?

We cannot offer advice on this question but there are three options:

- **retain British nationality** (and renounce Chinese nationality)
- **retain Chinese nationality**
- **keep both,**

Note that if you keep both nationalities your child may be unable to travel out of China, as you may be unable to obtain an exit visa from the Public Security Bureau in your child's British Passport. Furthermore, you may not obtain a visa for the UK in a Chinese passport if you also hold a British passport.

I want my child to be British

If you decide to retain British nationality for your child, you will have to apply to the Public Security Bureau to renounce your child's Chinese citizenship. You may have to go to the Public Security Bureau in the Chinese parent's 'Hukou' (household registration district) to do this: this process can take several months. Once the child's Chinese citizenship is officially renounced, the local Public Security Bureau should recognise the child's British nationality and passport, and issue a visa/residence permit for the child. The PSB in Beijing should also be able to issue a visa, regardless of parental 'Hukou'.

I want my child to be Chinese

If you decide to retain Chinese nationality for your child and your child already holds a British passport, you can give it up. This does not mean you are renouncing your child's British nationality.

You can then apply to [UK Visas and Immigration](#) for a [certificate of Entitlement to the Right of Abode](#) for travel to the UK using your child's Chinese passport. There is a charge for this service.

Travelling while your child's nationality application is being processed

If you need to travel out of China before your child's nationality issue is resolved, you can apply to the Public Security Bureau for an Exit and Entry Permit (出入境通行证 - Chu Ru Jing Tong Xing Zheng). We understand that this document is provided by the PSB as an interim option while nationality differences are resolved. It is at the discretion of your local Public Security Bureau whether your child will get a Single Exit Permit; a Single Exit and Entry Permit; or a Multiple Exit and Entry Permit.

For further details on this issue contact your local Public Security Bureau. PSB contact details for Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chongqing are as follows:

- Division of Exit and Entry Administration of Beijing Public Security Bureau

Address: No.2 Andingmen Dongjie, Dongcheng District, Beijing

Tel: (+86) 10 8402 0101 Office hours: Monday to Saturday 8:30am-4:30pm.

- Division of Exit and Entry Administration of Shanghai Public Security Bureau
Address: No.1500 Minshenglu Pudong New District, Shanghai
Tel: (+86) 21 28951900
Office hours: Monday to Saturday 9:00am-5:00pm.
- Division of Exit and Entry Administration of Chongqing Public Security Bureau
Address: No.555 Huangnibang, Yubei District, Chongqing
Tel: (+86) 23 63961944 Office hours: Monday to Saturday 9:00am-11:30am,
1:30pm-5:30pm.
- Division of Exit and Entry Administration of Guangzhou Public Security Bureau
Address: F6 No.155 Jiefang South Road, Guangzhou
Tel: (+86) 20 96110110
Office hours: Monday to Friday 8:30am-12:00am, 2:00pm-5:30pm.

Useful Links

If you need general advice when travelling abroad or want to know how the Embassy can help you if you have difficulties please see [Support for British nationals: A guide](#). We also publish and regularly update [foreign travel advice](#) with key information for 225 countries and territories around the world. The British Embassy/Consulate-Generals provide guides on the following subjects:

Adoption in China

www.gov.uk/adoption-in-china - including details of who to talk to and documents you may need

Bereavement in China

www.gov.uk/government/publications/bereavement-in-china - including information on support available and action needed

Commercial disputes in China

<https://www.gov.uk/commercial-disputes-in-china> - advice for British nationals and UK companies in China doing business in China

Emergency Travel Document

<https://www.gov.uk/emergency-travel-document>

English speaking lawyers, translators and interpreters

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/china-list-of-lawyers> - list of English speaking lawyers and translators/interpreters in China

Foreign travel insurance

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/foreign-travel-insurance>

Giving birth in China

www.gov.uk/government/publications/giving-birth-in-china - advice on nationality for your child

Living in China

www.gov.uk/living-in-china - general information and links for British nationals living in China

List of hospitals in China

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/list-of-hospitals-in-china>