

Before You Fly: Name & Payment Check

10 minutes now — saves you a locked account, a rejected hotel, or a missed train in China.

Most foreigners only discover these problems **after** landing — when the payment fails at the hotel counter or the train ticket won't issue. Walk through this list **before** you fly. Tick each box only if you're 100% sure.

A Name Consistency Check

One mismatch between your passport name and a booking can block check-in, train tickets, or refunds.

☐ Flight ticket name = passport exactly

Letter-for-letter, including middle name and order (surname first vs last name first).

Airlines reject boarding if it differs by one character.

☐ Hotel booking name = passport exactly

Especially for Chinese-platform bookings (Ctrip / Qunar / Meituan).

Front desk can't find your reservation → no room.

☐ 12306 (train) name = passport exactly

If you'll book high-speed rail, the real-name system matches against your passport.

Mismatch = ticket won't issue, even if paid.

☐ Visa / entry form name = passport exactly

Arrival cards and the China visa application must match.

Immigration delays over a typo are real.

B Payment & App Setup Check

Foreign cards often fail silently in China. Set this up **before** you need it.

☐ Alipay installed & real-name verified

Bind a foreign card OR top up **TourCard** (prepaid RMB wallet inside Alipay, ¥10k cap).

60%+ of street vendors & taxis are QR-only. No Alipay = no payment.

☐ VPN fully OFF when opening Alipay / WeChat Pay

Quit the app, not just disconnect. IP-country mismatch silently kills payments.

Causes ~40% of setup failures. Turn it off first.

☐ Bank whitelisted "Alipay / Ant Group" by name

Call your bank and say the specific name — "I'm going to China" whitelists nothing.

Foreign banks auto-block the transaction as fraud.

☐ WeChat Pay tested with a small payment

Bind card, send ¥0.1 to a friend or pay a convenience-store item.

Many foreign cards bind but can't actually pay. Test early.

☐ Carry ¥200–400 cash as backup

Small shops, temples, rural areas still cash-only.

When QR fails, cash is the only fallback.

☐ Know your card's foreign fee & daily cap

Some cards block overseas after ¥1k/day by default.

Raise the cap before you're stranded.

C Day-One Essentials

These take 5 minutes at the airport and prevent the first-day panic.

☐ Local SIM / eSIM with data active

Airport kiosk or eSIM before flight. Maps & Didi need data.

☐ Didi (ride app) installed & payment linked

Chinese Uber. Link Alipay/WeChat Pay inside the app.

☐ First-night hotel address saved in Chinese + map

Show the driver the Chinese address — English won't work with taxi apps.

Stuck on any of these? That's what I do.

I make the calls and fix the setups you can't — in Chinese, before you even land.

WeChat: 13368344745

Or see the full service: **china-backbone.pages.dev**

"A real person in China who makes the calls you can't." — China On-Call, GMT+8.