



***Korean Cultural Awareness***  
***United States Forces Korea***  
***Theater Specific Required Training***  
***November 2015***



## Location

- Located between China and Japan
- Continuous cultural and geopolitical interactions with China and Japan
- Korean language is considered “language isolate”





## Geographic Information

- Divided into North and South along 38<sup>th</sup> parallel following World War II
- Current border agreed upon in the 1953 Armistice (roughly along 38<sup>th</sup> parallel)
- Capital: Seoul
- 9 Provinces
- 6 Metropolitan Cities: Busan, Daegu, Daejeon, Gwangju, Inch'eon, Ulsan
- 1 special city: Seoul
- 1 special self-governing city: Sejong
- Size: 99,237 Sq Km (Size of Indiana)
- Population: 49,115,196 (Indiana: 6.6M)





# Korea's national symbols

## Flag

The Korean flag is called "Taefeuksi". Its design symbolizes the principles of yin and yang in Oriental philosophy. The circle in the center of the Korean flag is divided into two equal parts. The upper red section represents the proactive cosmic forces of the yang. Conversely, the lower blue section represents the responsive cosmic forces of the yin. The circle is surrounded by four trigrams, one in each corner. Each trigram symbolizes one of the four universal elements: heaven, earth, fire and water



## National flower

Mugunghwa, (Rose of Sharon)







## Japanese Rule

- Japan annexed Korea by force in 1910
- Japan in 1938 outlawed use of Korean language in an attempt to eradicate Korean national identity



Japanese expansion to 1941

- Deep lament and resentment toward invaders prevailed in Korean literature and music, along with attempts to grapple with new, modern forms



## Divided Peninsula

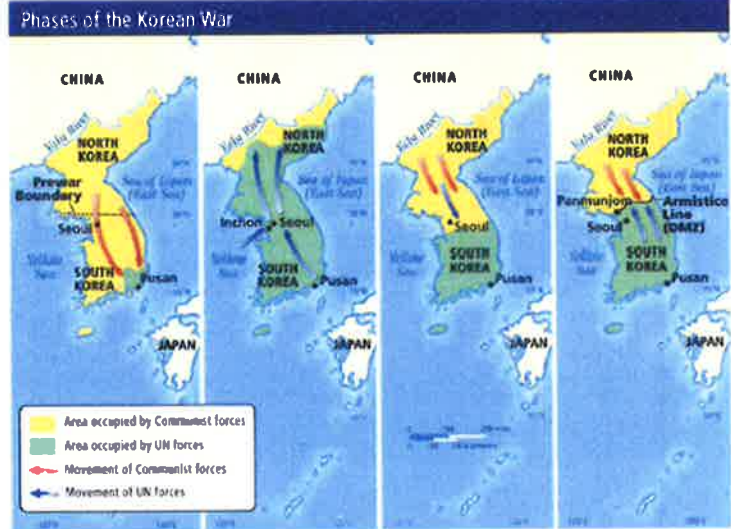
- Korea liberated from Japan after WWII, However;
- In 1945 at Postdam conference US (Truman), USSR (Stalin) and UK (Churchil) decided to divide Korean peninsula at 38<sup>th</sup> parallel without consulting Koreans
- Peninsula was then controlled by U.S and Soviet Trusteeship Committees for about 3 years before the 2 countries were established in 1948





# Korean War

- **North Korea invaded south by launching surprise attack on 6/25/50**
- **United Nations forces (21 nations) led by US defended South**
- **Many Koreans lost or separated from family members in both south and north**
- **1,500,000 U.S Soldier involved / ~37,000 Military personnel killed**
- **Total: 2,450,000 killed / 2,000,000 wounded**







## Modern Korea

- One of the world's fastest growing economies
- **South Korea** has a market **economy** that ranks 11th in the world by nominal GDP and 13th by purchasing power parity (PPP).
- World's 6<sup>th</sup> largest exporter





## Major Korean Traditional Holidays



### “Seollal” - Lunar New Year’s

- 3-day holiday
- “Tteokguk” - Rice-cake Soup
- New Year Greeting and Bow



### “Chusok” - Korean Thanksgiving

- 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 8th month by the lunar calendar
- Ancestor memorial service

**Many Koreans travel to their hometowns during these holidays,  
creating significant traffic on most roads**



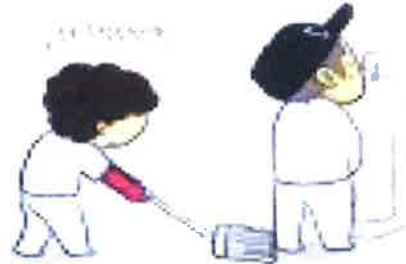
# Public Restrooms



- **Most are western style**
- **Toilet paper dispenser may not be in the stall (take it with you)**
- **You may find female janitors in the men's room**



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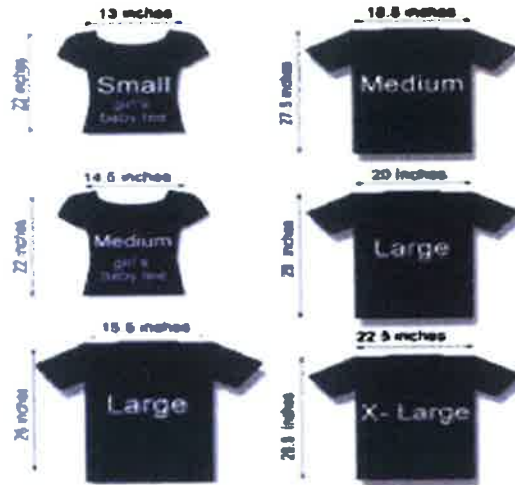




# Shopping



In Korea, bargaining over merchandise is acceptable and expected, **but not all stores** practice this, especially department stores.



## SIZE DIFFERENCES



# Korean Currency (Won 원)

\$1 = 1,100 won (roughly)





# Rank Structure

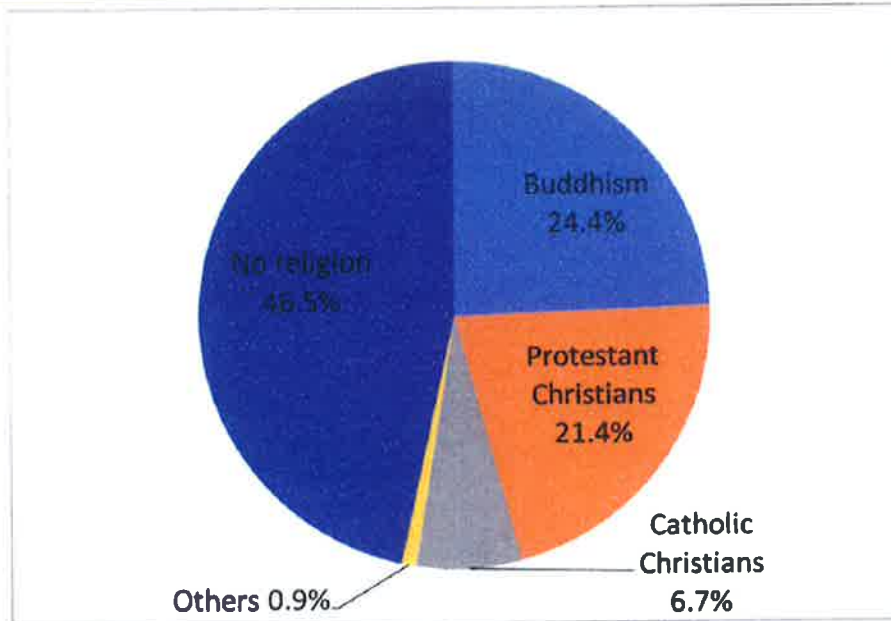
- Koreans often address each other by rank or title rather than first names





# Religions of Korean People

(based on 2004 census report)





## Hangul (Korean Alphabet)

- Purely phonetic alphabet
- 14 consonants  
- ㄱ ㅋ ㆁ ㄷ ㅌ ㄹ ㄴ ㄷㄹ ㄴㄹ ㄷㅌ ㄴㅌ ㄷㄴ ㄴㄷ ㄷㄴ ㄴㄷ ㄷㄴ ㄴㄷ
- 10 vowels  
- 아 야 어 여 오 요 우 유 으 이
- Hangul is a scientific system, invented following the shapes of vocal organs as they make sounds.

*From <http://library.thinkquest.org/20746/non/info/index.html>*