

Guide 06

Your First Day in Almaty

From the airport to the city,
plus SIM cards, transport and money.

18 km airport to the centre	120 ₸ a bus or metro ride	112 for emergencies
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FROM THE AIRPORT TO REPUBLIC SQUARE

Google, by car

2GIS, by bus


From the airport

Show the name in Russian if you need to ask the way.

1

Arrivals hall

IN RUSSIAN **Зал прилёта**

International flights use Terminal 2, opened in 2024. ATMs, exchange desks and SIM card counters are in the arrivals area.



Tip: Airport exchange rates are usually poor. Change only what you need for the first day.

2

Taxi with Yandex Go

Order a car in the app, then walk to the pickup point it shows. The 18 km ride takes 30 to 45 minutes.



Tip: Say no to drivers who offer a ride inside the terminal.

3

Bus 92

IN RUSSIAN **Остановка «Международный аэропорт»**

Bus 92 stops outside the terminals and goes through the city centre. Allow about an hour.



Tip: Buses take no cash, only an Onay card. It is not always sold at the airport.

Stay connected

4

SIM card

IN RUSSIAN **Сим-карта**

Beeline, Kcell, activ, Tele2 and Altel sell SIM cards in shops and kiosks, including at the airport. Kcell and Beeline also sell eSIMs.



Tip: Bring your passport: you need it to buy a SIM card.

5

Phones from abroad

A phone bought abroad works with a Kazakh SIM card for 30 days. Then it must be registered by its IMEI number.



Tip: Staying longer? Ask the operator how to register your phone.

Getting around

6

Onay card

IN RUSSIAN **Карта «Онай»**

One card for buses, trolleybuses and the metro. A ride costs 120 ₸ for any distance.



Tip: Buy it at a metro ticket office or a Karavan kiosk. Top it up with cash at payment terminals.

7

Yandex Go

The main taxi app, with an English interface. You see a fixed price before you book, and pay in cash or by card.



Tip: Signing up needs a number that gets SMS. Some foreign cards fail, so carry cash too.

Money

8

Cards

The currency is the tenge (₸). Visa and Mastercard are widely accepted, usually contactless.

9

Cash and exchange

IN RUSSIAN **Обмен валют**

You need cash at bazaars and small cafés. Exchange offices in town have better rates.



Tip: If an ATM offers to convert the amount, choose tenge.

10

Kaspi

Locals pay with the Kaspi app, by QR code or bank transfer. An account needs a Kazakh ID number (IIN), so most visitors pay by card or cash.



Tip: Since 2025, some Alipay+ wallets can pay at Kaspi QR codes.

Good to know



Metro

One line with 11 stations. Pay at the gates with an Onay card or a contactless bank card.



Apps

2GIS for maps and buses, Yandex Go for taxis.



Going to the mountains?

Charyn Canyon, the Kolsai Lakes and Big Almaty Lake have no ATMs. Take cash from the city.



Walking route 01

Historic Almaty starts at Republic Square.



Emergency

Call 112.

BEYOND THE CITY

Mountains, canyons and lakes, a day from Almaty

Charyn Canyon, Big Almaty Lake, Kolsai and Kaindy lakes and more, with our own guides and 4x4s.

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