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# Company formation in Hong Kong

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## Company formation in Hong Kong



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|---|---|
| **Common form** | Private company limited by shares [1] |
| **Registry** | Companies Registry [1] |
| **Minimum capital** | No minimum (often HK$1) [1] |
| **Directors** | 1 director who is a natural person [1] |
| **Local director** | Not required for directors; a company secretary resident in Hong Kong (or a Hong Kong company) is required [1] |
| **Corporate tax** | 16.5% profits tax (8.25% on the first HK$2 million) [2] |
| **VAT / sales tax** | None [2] |
| **Typical timeline** | Often within 1 day online [1] |
| **Tax treaties** | Domestic rates and treaty list [7] |
| **Currency** | Hong Kong dollar (HKD) |

**In short:** To set up a company in Hong Kong, most founders form a private company limited by shares, registered with the Companies Registry. [1] Minimum capital: no minimum (often HK$1). Corporate tax: 16.5% profits tax (8.25% on the first HK$2 million). Registration: often within 1 day online (as of November 2026).

A **private company limited by shares** in **Hong Kong** can be incorporated online through the **Companies Registry**'s e-Registry, often within a day. Profits tax is territorial: only profit sourced in Hong Kong is taxed, at 8.25% on the first HK$2 million and 16.5% above.

## Business structures

Most founders in Hong Kong form a private company limited by shares, registered with the Companies Registry. [1] Other forms are listed below.

- **Private company limited by shares** – the usual choice
- **Public company** – for larger or listed businesses
- **Sole proprietorship and partnerships** – registered with the Business Registration Office

## Requirements

Minimum share capital in Hong Kong (2026): no minimum (often HK$1). Directors required: 1 director who is a natural person. Local resident director: not required for directors; a company secretary resident in Hong Kong (or a Hong Kong company) is required. [1]

- A company name that is available, checked with the registry.
- Share capital: no minimum (often HK$1).
- Directors: 1 director who is a natural person.
- Local residency: not required for directors; a company secretary resident in Hong Kong (or a Hong Kong company) is required.
- A registered office address in Hong Kong.
- Articles of association; standard templates are often available.
- Beneficial owners reported to the significant controllers register (kept by the company).

## Registration process

Typical time to register a company in Hong Kong (2026): often within 1 day online. [1] The usual steps are:

1. Choose the company form and check that the name is available.

2. Prepare and sign the articles of association.
3. File the registration with the Companies Registry.
4. Receive the company's registration number, and pay in the share capital where required.
5. Register for corporate tax with the Inland Revenue Department (IRD).

## Taxation

**The corporate tax rate in Hong Kong in 2026 is 16.5% profits tax (8.25% on the first HK$2 million). [2] Standard VAT or sales tax: none. [2]**

| Tax | Rate and notes |
|---|---|
| Corporate income tax | 16.5% profits tax (8.25% on the first HK$2 million) |
| VAT / indirect tax | None |
| Withholding tax on dividends to non-resident companies | 0% |

## Ongoing compliance

**Annual compliance in Hong Kong:** Companies file an annual return with the Companies Registry, renew their business registration certificate, and file audited accounts with a profits tax return. [1]

## Double tax treaties

Hong Kong has a network of double tax treaties. A double tax treaty decides which country may tax cross-border income and usually caps the withholding tax the paying country can charge.

### Domestic withholding tax on payments to non-resident companies

| Dividends | Interest | Royalties |
|---|---|---|
| 0% | 0% | 2.475 to 4.95% |

The reduced rate for each partner country is set by the treaty concerned; PwC's withholding tax summary for Hong Kong lists them.

Domestic rates from the PwC Worldwide Tax Summaries withholding tax quick chart (November 2026). Treaty benefits require proof of tax residence and are subject to anti-abuse rules.

## Frequently asked questions

**How long does it take to register a company in Hong Kong?**

Typical registration time in Hong Kong: often within 1 day online (as of November 2026), once all documents are ready. Opening a bank account and tax registrations can take longer.

**What is the minimum share capital for a company in Hong Kong?**

Minimum share capital in Hong Kong: no minimum (often HK$1) (as of November 2026).

**What is the corporate tax rate in Hong Kong in 2026?**

The corporate tax rate in Hong Kong in 2026 is 16.5% profits tax (8.25% on the first HK$2 million). See the Taxation section for reduced rates and other taxes.

**Can a foreigner own 100% of a company in Hong Kong?**

Yes, for most activities, though some sectors restrict foreign ownership or require approval. Local director rule in Hong Kong: not required for directors; a company secretary resident in Hong Kong (or a Hong Kong company) is required.

**What withholding tax applies to dividends paid from Hong Kong?**

Hong Kong charges no withholding tax on dividends paid to non-resident companies under domestic law. See the Double tax treaties section.

## Official registries and resources

- Companies Registry
- Inland Revenue Department (IRD)

Figures as of November 2026. Rates, thresholds and procedures change; confirm with the official registry, the tax authority or a local adviser before filing.

## See also

- Comparison of company formation by country
- Company formation in Singapore
- Company formation in Japan
- Company formation in India
- Company formation in Australia
- All countries

## References

Entries marked **Official** are the registry, government and tax authority sources for this country; footnote numbers in the infobox point to them.


1. Official Companies Registry . Government of the Hong Kong SAR. Accessed November 2026.
2. Official Inland Revenue Department (IRD) . Government of the Hong Kong SAR. Accessed November 2026.
3. Hong Kong: Corporate – Taxes on corporate income (reviewed 22 July 2026) . PwC Worldwide Tax Summaries. Accessed November 2026.
4. Quick charts: Corporate income tax (CIT) rates . PwC Worldwide Tax Summaries. Accessed November 2026.
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