



# **A GUIDE TO FILMING IN SINGAPORE**

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## **1. OVERVIEW**

While filming permits are not required for television or film productions, non-Singaporean filmmakers seeking to film in Singapore must obtain relevant documents from the [Singapore Ministry of Manpower](#) and the [Immigration & Checkpoints Authority](#). The MDA's Location and Media Services desk provides information and assistance on such matters.

For location usage, it is usually necessary to seek clearance for most locations from the relevant authorities or property owners. The [Singapore Media Fusion directory](#) provides easy reference for such contacts. Location charges are dependent on the property owner. The Singapore Film & TV directory provides easy reference for such contacts. Location charges are dependent on the property owner. You may also seek assistance through the SRF programme, a collaboration by [the MDA](#) and [Singapore Land Authority](#).

In most cases, hiring a local production manager eases the location shooting process.

Please also inform nearby businesses or neighbours of your filming activities at least 3 working days in advance. Please refer to the sample below:

[REQUEST TO FILM DURING EXTENDED HOURS.doc](#)

## **2. ABOUT THE LOCATION AND MEDIA SERVICES DESK**

The Location and Media Services Desk was set up by the Media Development Authority (MDA) to support local and foreign filmmakers filming in Singapore with the information and contacts they would need to have a successful shoot.

We aim to create a production-friendly environment in Singapore by:

- Serving as a one-stop information centre for local and foreign filmmakers providing recommendation of potential locations, production and post-production facilities and services, skilled technical and creative talents, financial aid schemes and other support functions and services;
- Acting as a liaison between the film and television industries and government agencies or location owners, and between industry professionals themselves, easing the location clearance and filmmaking process; and
- Promoting Singapore as a filming location and post-production hub.

We strive to assist where possible we can by acting as an informed, neutral third party to all parties.

### **For more information:**

Please download the [enquiry form](#) and email your completed form to the Location and Media Services Desk at [mda\\_media\\_services@mda.gov.sg](mailto:mda_media_services@mda.gov.sg), or fax to (65) 6336 1170.

Please note that an MDA officer will contact you regarding your application within 3 working days.

### **3. FILM IN SINGAPORE! SCHEME (FSS)**

There are a number of schemes specially developed for film and TV co-productions to encourage collaborations between Singapore and foreign film and television industries. In addition to the SFC funding programmes, the following schemes are available to meet the needs of the industry:

#### **Film in Singapore! Scheme (FSS)**

##### ***by Singapore Tourism Board***

The Film in Singapore! Scheme (FSS) by Singapore Tourism Board aims to facilitate international filmmakers and broadcasters in the shooting, production and post-production of quality films and television programmes in Singapore. The FSS aims to promote Singapore as an attractive destination for international visitors through the effective medium of movies and television.

Through the scheme, filmmakers or broadcasters may be granted financial support, on a case-by-case basis and/or project facilitation and information provision. Specifically, the scheme subsidises up to 50% of qualifying expenses incurred while filming in Singapore, such as the hiring of professional services and equipment, airfares and accommodation. Each project is evaluated with specific focus on how the film or programme will uniquely showcase Singapore's locations.

Please contact Resheemah Mohd Abdullah (Ms), Manager, Brand Creative Services, Brand Management Division, at Tel: (65) 6831 3710, Fax: (65) 6734 9102 or email to [Resheemah\\_Mohd\\_Abdullah@stb.gov.sg](mailto:Resheemah_Mohd_Abdullah@stb.gov.sg)

To download the brochure and application form, please visit the FSS link [here](#).

#### **4. ENTRY INFORMATION FOR FOREIGN CAST AND CREW**

##### **Visas & Professional Visit Pass**

Foreigners who do not require visas for entry and are visiting Singapore as tourists are given a 14- or 30-day social visit pass upon arrival in Singapore.

Visitors would need to satisfy the following basic requirements before they are able to enter Singapore:

- Passport valid for at least 6 months;
- Confirmed onward/return tickets;
- Sufficient funds for their stay in Singapore;
- Entry facilities, including visas, to their next destination; and
- Visa, if applicable. ([Countries that require visas to enter Singapore](#))

Women who are pregnant at 6 months and above, and intend to enter Singapore for a social visit, should make a prior application through the [nearest Singapore overseas mission](#).

Foreigners who need to undertake short-term professional assignments in Singapore may need to apply for a Professional Visit Pass (PVP) prior to their arrival. However, there are certain categories (including camera crew, film directors, actors, actresses, foreign models and photographers who are on location shooting) where the PVP requirement is waived. For more information on the Professional Visit Pass and the categories of exemption, please read the guidelines [here](#).

Foreigners who are exempted from the Professional Visit Pass (PVP) requirement will be issued a Social Visit Pass upon entry.

Foreigners who need a longer stay (i.e. extension of the Social Visit Pass) should apply to the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) upon arrival.

Please download the relevant ICA forms [here](#).

For further information on entry & visa requirements, please read the guidelines [here](#).

##### **Work Permit, 'S' Pass & Employment Pass**

Foreign professionals, managers, executives, specialists or entrepreneurs who wish to work in Singapore should apply for an Employment Pass, including those who wish to work in Singapore for a specific project or assignment for **one month or less**.

Please refer to the [guidelines](#) on the Ministry of Manpower's website for detailed information on eligibility and documents required for application.

##### **Guide for Foreign Media**

Foreign correspondents, cameramen and news organisations planning to report from and/or establish a news bureau in Singapore can refer to the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts' ['Guide for Foreign Media'](#) for further information.

## **5. CUSTOMS CLEARANCE**

### **Film & Video Equipment**

Film & video equipment for on-location filming may be brought into Singapore:

- If you are working with a local company, you can use the [Temporary Import Scheme](#).
- If you are not working with a local company, you can use an [ATA Carnet](#). Please produce your ATA Carnet for endorsement upon entry/exit for endorsement of the documentation.

For more information about using the ATA Carnet and the countries that recognise it, please visit the [International Chamber of Commerce](#) website.

### **Exposed Films & Used Tapes**

If you are bringing in rushes, please write in to the MDA's **Location and Media Services**, which will issue you a letter, so as to facilitate clearance at Customs.

Please have the following details ready:

- Name of Person carrying the footage
- Passport Number
- Flight Number
- Date of Arrival
- Purpose of Film/Tapes
- Number of Reels/Tapes

Please submit your request to the MDA's Location and Media Services Desk via email at [mda\\_media\\_services@mda.gov.sg](mailto:mda_media_services@mda.gov.sg), or fax to (65) 6336 1170.

### **Use of Arms and Explosives for Filming in Singapore**

Options for Import/Export of Deactivated Weapons:

(a) A representative from the production company may go to the Arms and Explosives Branch, Police Cantonment Complex to apply for the import (and export) licence. He/She needs to show us the photographs of the weapons and we will then issue a licence to import (or export) these weapons. With the licence, he/she may show it to the ICA officers at the airport upon the arrival of the weapons, so that these weapons can be cleared.

(b) The production company may engage a forwarding company (DHL, UPS etc) to bring the weapons into Singapore and to the intended destination. The forwarding company will do the necessary inward/outward declaration. The production company will get the weapons at the destination indicated as the forwarding company.

(c) The production company representative brings the weapons in person from overseas. Upon arrival at Changi airport, he/she will have to declare the weapons to the ICA officers. The weapons will be detained and the representative will be issued with a receipt for collection of the weapons at Arms & Explosives Branch. With the receipt, the representative will have to collect the weapons at Arms & Explosives Branch, Police Cantonment Complex after payment of the licence fee.

Dummy Weapons:

(a) Write an official fax to Arms and Explosives Licensing Division at 6223 4704. They will reply you with an approval letter and inform respective departments about the incoming dummy weapons.

The normal processing time for an application for A&E licence is seven working days from the receipt of the application and the necessary supporting documents. Please click [here](#) for details of the Arms and Explosives license.

## **6. ABOUT SINGAPORE**

### **Geography**

The city-state of Singapore is made up of a main island and 63 surrounding islets. Located between Malaysia and Indonesia and lying 136.8km north of the Equator, the main island of Singapore is a little more than 42 km wide. At 682 sq km, it is 3.5 times the size of Washington DC, and roughly the same size as London.

However, its strategic Southeast Asian location and deepwater ports make it a focal point for Southeast Asian sea routes, an advantage that has served Singapore well from its beginnings as an entrepot port in the 1800s to its current status as the world's busiest port, a major value-added manufacturing centre and a services hub for the region.

### **Climate**

Singapore's tropical climate with year-round sunshine (288 days a year), high humidity and abundant rainfall, interspersed with monsoon breezes and gentle inter-monsoon showers, nurtures both a genial environment and lush tropical vegetation.

High outdoor ambient temperatures are mitigated by tropical greenery in all forms, from leafy overhead canopies along highway dividers to tracts of rainforest and mangrove reserves.

### **General Weather Conditions**

Singapore lies just north of the Equator near Lat 1.5 deg N and Long 104 deg E. Because of its geographical location and maritime exposure, its climate is characterised by uniform temperature and pressure, high humidity and abundant rainfall.

The climate of Singapore can be divided into two main seasons, the *Northeast Monsoon* and the *Southwest Monsoon* season, separated by two relatively short inter-monsoon periods.

- December to early March: Northeast winds prevail, sometimes reaching 20 km/h. Cloudy conditions in December and January with frequent afternoon showers. Spells of widespread moderate to heavy rain occur lasting from 1 to 3 days at a stretch. Relatively drier in February till early March. Also generally windy with wind speeds sometimes reaching 30 to 40 km/h in the months of January and February.
- Late March to May: Light and variable winds with afternoon and early evening showers often with thunder.
- June to September: Southeast/Southwest Winds. Isolated to scattered late morning and early afternoon showers. Early morning 'Sumatra' line squalls are common. Hazy periods.
- October to November: Light and variable winds. Sea breezes in afternoon. Scattered showers with thunder in the late afternoon and early evening.

### **Temperature**

Diurnal range: Minimum of 23 to 26 deg C and Maximum of 31 to 34 deg C

### **Relative Humidity**

Diurnal range in the high 90's in the early morning to around 60 % in the mid-afternoon. Mean value is 84%, During prolonged heavy rain, relative humidity often reaches 100%.

### **Rainfall**

No distinct wet or dry season. Maximum rainfall occurs in December and April. The drier months are usually February and July.

### **Weather Links**

Please refer to the following links for information on current weather conditions:

- [Current Weather Conditions](#)
- [Sunrise & Sunset Times](#)
- [Moonrise and Moonset Times and Moonphase Information](#)

- [Tide Times](#)
- [Fortnightly Outlook](#)

For further details on Singapore weather and other meteorological services, please visit the [National Environment Agency](#) website.

### **Demographics**

Centuries of regional migration have contributed to a rich cultural diversity in Singapore. Its population of 4.35 million people consists of Chinese (75.6%), Malays (13.6%), Indians (8.7%) and Eurasians and other smaller minority groups (2.1%). (According to 2006 Population Census)

All of the major communities which have come to call Singapore home still honour their unique customs, traditions, religions and festivals. Woven into the fabric of modern Singapore's way of life, these traditions blend with contemporary ideals and standards to create a uniquely Singaporean experience.

### **Language**

English is the official language of business and administration, and is commonly spoken by Singaporeans of all races. Also widely used are the other three official languages – Mandarin, Malay and Tamil, the mother tongues of the three main races in Singapore. A variety of dialects is also widely spoken.

In this multilingual, cosmopolitan society with strong international links, many Singaporeans also speak international languages such as French, German, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Korean and Thai. In addition, interpreter services are easily available through private language service providers and the various international embassies located in Singapore.

### **Religion**

A secular country, Singapore is home to a variety of religions, all of which co-exist here comfortably. These include Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Taoism, Sikhism, Judaism and Hinduism, among others.

### **Currency**

The local currency is the Singapore dollar. The exchange rate varies slightly at around 1.7 Singapore dollars per US dollar and 2 Singapore dollars per Euro at the time of writing this section.

### **Economy**

Singapore is a free market economy, buttressed by an efficient and highly developed infrastructure, a transparent legal system, and an educated workforce. With its focus on cutting-edge technology and value-added services, Singapore's economy is driven increasingly by its growing services sector, as well as its traditional strengths in electronics and manufacturing, oil refining and distribution, and shipbuilding and repair. Some features of its economy are a low inflation rate, stable prices and a high per capita GDP.

### **Infrastructure**

Singapore's status as a leading international financial centre is renowned. Banking and currency exchange services are widely available and major international credit cards are accepted by many business establishments. In addition, world-class medical facilities and high quality healthcare not only serve Singaporeans well, but also regularly draw visitors from other countries.

Furthermore, an extensive road and rail network and an efficient transportation system, including an abundance of economical taxi and bus services and an island-wide mass rapid transit rail system, ensure that travelling within Singapore is always a breeze.

Easy access to and from the country is enabled by Singapore's convenient location within the region, and its state-of-the-art marine and air ports. Singapore's Changi International Airport and PSA port have both received international recognition for their quality services and facilities. These

infrastructural systems are well supported by a first-class communications network which guarantees reliable and consistent ease of communication.

Together, these systems form a strong and stable structure upon which people and businesses readily flourish.

**Electricity**

Singapore voltage is 220-240 volts AC, 50 cycles per second. UK standard three-pin, square-shaped power plugs are used locally. Appropriate transformers for equipment of a different voltage may be easily obtained from local sundry shops or borrowed from most hotels, upon request.

**Useful Links**

Please click [here](#) for the latest statistical report of Singapore (2006) by Singapore Department of Statistics.

For comprehensive information on Singapore, please visit the [Singapore Infomap](#) website.

## **7. DIRECTORY OF FILMING SERVICES & FACILITIES**

Singapore offers a comprehensive array of services and facilities catering to virtually all filmmaking needs, from pre-production to post-production. These include:

- talent and casting agencies
- props, set design and technical staging teams
- studio rental
- animation, graphics and special effects professionals
- production companies
- post-production service providers
- distributors
- film and video equipment suppliers
- multimedia service providers, and
- support service providers, among others.

For a full listing, please refer to the MDA's [Singapore Media Directory](#) or the [Singapore Media Fusion directory](#).

## **8. SHORT-TERM RENTAL OF STATE PROPERTIES FOR FILMING (SRF) PROGRAMME (AN MDA-SLA Collaboration)**

### **Overview**

Filmmakers may explore the Short-Term Rental of State Properties for Filming (SRF) Programme for suitable state properties such as former police stations, camp sites, hospitals, schools etc. for use as a set and/or a production office. Please click [here](#) for the current list of available properties and some sample pictures.

### **Objective**

The Short-Term Rental of State Properties for Filming (SRF) Programme is a joint effort by the Media Development Authority (MDA) and the Singapore Land Authority (SLA) to help TV and film production companies, as well as independent filmmakers, to rent vacant State Properties on a short-term basis at a preferential rate for use as temporary sets and/or production office(s).

### **Who May Apply**

Both local and foreign TV and film production companies and filmmakers are welcome to apply. In particular, TV and film production companies and filmmakers without a permanent production office and who also wish to utilise the vacant State Properties as temporary sets are encouraged to apply.

### **Types of Properties Available**

The list of vacant state properties includes former police stations & military sites, hospitals, schools and colonial buildings, and is updated from time to time.

### **Assessment Criteria**

In assessing applications, the following factors will be considered:

- a. Purpose & length of rental;
- b. Production budget;
- c. Production schedule;
- d. and Track record and work experience of applicant.

### **Application Procedure**

The Programme is open for applications all year round. Please note that the average processing time for an application is **3-5 weeks**.

Download the SRF programme application form [here](#).

Applications should be sent to:

[Location and Media Services](#)  
[Officer-in-charge](#)  
[MDA-SLA Collaboration](#)  
Media Development Authority  
140 Hill Street  
MICA Building #04-01  
Singapore 179369

You may also email your completed application form and other required documents (scanned copies, where relevant) to the Location and Media Services Desk at [mda\\_media\\_services@mda.gov.sg](mailto:mda_media_services@mda.gov.sg), or fax to (65) 6336 1170. Please be informed that original documents may be requested at a later time.

### **Information Required**

Applicants for the SRF programme are requested to submit the following materials:

- a. Completed application form;
- b. One-page story outline / synopsis of project;
- c. Location breakdown (including number of days per location);
- d. Relevant scene descriptions;

- e. Production budget;
- f. Production schedule (indicating pre-production, production, post production dates);
- g. Brief profiles of production company and/or producer;
- h. Copy of Insurance Policy covering public liability (or quotation); and
- i. Other relevant supporting documents.

**Conditions**

- a. The minimum rental period under the SRF Programme is 6 days, up to a maximum rental period of 3 months, subject to availability of the property.
- b. Upon successful application, the applicant will be issued a Temporary Occupation License (TOL) by the SLA and the applicant/ licensee will be required to pay the following fees to SLA:

A TOL fee of \$500 for 6 days to 1 calendar month, and subsequently at \$500 per month, up to a maximum duration of 3 calendar months (GST and processing fees applicable).

- The following table provides an illustration of the TOL fee charges:

| Length of Rental  | TOL Fee (before GST) |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 6 days to 1 month | \$500                |
| Up to 2 months    | \$1,000              |
| Up to 3 months    | \$1,500              |

- Additional rental of State Property beyond 3 months will be subject to availability of State Property and approval from SLA and other relevant authorities. If approved, the rate of \$500 per month will apply to each subsequent month.
- c. Successful applicants (i.e. the licensee) are to note that for insurance that has not been purchased at the point of application, it must be purchased and a copy of the policy must be submitted before the TOL can be issued.
- d. The licensee is also required to pay the standard activation and usage fees for utilities and telecommunications.
- e. The licensee will be required to abide by the following in respect of the licensed State Property:
  - The licensee's activities shall not have a devaluing effect on the licensed state property.
  - The licensee shall purchase property insurance for the property.
  - The licensee shall comply with all requirements set by the SLA and other relevant authorities for filming purposes.
  - The licensee shall be responsible for the security of the properties during the rental period and shall safeguard the properties against trespassing, theft, vandalism and dumping.
  - The licensee shall allow the SLA and/or its agents and authorised parties to monitor the use of the licensed State Properties, and to conduct site visits/ inspections/ investigations when required, subject to advance notice of at least a day.
  - The licensee shall allow the SLA to engage contractors to carry out grass-cutting and vectors-control works at site of the licensed State Properties.
  - The SLA and the MDA reserve the right to be given acknowledgement via a credit mention at the end of any production which uses State Property under the SRF Programme.

**Qualification**

The MDA reserves the right not to disclose/ discuss its reasons for approving or disapproving any application. The MDA may also review, withdraw or suspend the Grant in full or in part if any of the rules and conditions are not met. The MDA's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

**For further information, please contact:**

Location and Media Services

Tel: (65) 6837 9958

Fax: (65) 6336-1170

Email: [mda\\_Media\\_Services@mda.gov.sg](mailto:mda_Media_Services@mda.gov.sg)**Available properties and some sample pictures**

- Camp Sites / Police
- Community Centres
- Hospitals/Clinics
- Misc
- Schools

Note: This list will be updated from time to time, and usage is subject to availability of State Property.

| <b>Vacant State Buildings</b>                   | <b>Address</b>                               |
|---|--|
|   |  |
| <b>Camp Sites / Police:</b>                     |  |
| Former Police HQ Building                       | Pearl's Hill Terrace (Parcel 2)              |
| Former SCDF Nee Soon Camp                       | 69 Bath Road                                 |
| Former Seletar Camp                             | Blks 308 – 313 at Baker Road                 |
| Former Ulu Pandan Camp-Sch of Military Medicine | 100 Ulu Pandan Road                          |
| Former Keat Hong Camp 1                         | Choa Chu Kang Ave 1                          |
| SCDF Maintenance Base                           | 1370 Serangoon Road                          |
|   |  |
| <b>Community Centres:</b>                       |  |
| Former Siglap-Changi Community Centre           | 696 Upper Changi Road                        |
|   |  |
| <b>Hospitals/Clinics:</b>                       |  |
| Former Tan Tock Seng Hospital                   | Blk 106 along Jalan Tan Tock Seng            |
| Former Tan Tock Seng Hospital (Parcel 7)        | 70 Martaban Road                             |
|   |  |
| <b>Misc:</b>                                    |  |
| Former Cochrane Crescent Workers' Quarters      | Blk 466 - 475 Cochrane Crescent              |
| Former Childcare Centre                         | 851 Sembawang Road                           |
| Former Turf Club Labourer's Quarters            | Blks 1 & 9 to 28 (excluding 22) Turf Club Rd |
| Former Turf Club Stables                        | 103 to 127 & 148 to 151 Turf Club Road       |
|   |  |
| <b>Schools:</b>                                 |  |
| Former Gan Eng Seng Secondary School            | 10 Raeburn Park Road                         |
| Former ITE Pasir Panjang                        | 991 Alexandra Road                           |
| Former Min Xin Pri School                       | 58 Bedok North St. 3                         |
| Former Nan Chiau High School                    | 46 Kim Yam Road                              |
| Former Poi Ching School                         | 1, Lor 6 Toa Payoh                           |
| Former Swiss Cottage Primary School             | 62 Dunearn Road                              |
| Former Upper Aljunied Secondary School          | 102 Upper Aljunied Road                      |
| Former East Coast Primary School                | 12 Chai Chee Lane                            |
| Former Tanjong Katong Girls' School             | 371 Tanjong Katong Road                      |

|                                    |                   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Former River Valley Primary School | River Valley Road |
| Former NAFA Selegie Campus         | 1A Short Street   |

*Note: Usage is subject to availability of the property.*

**Former Childcare Centre**

