



U.S. Customs and
Border Protection

Welcome to Japan

Tokyo, Kobe, Nagoya, Yokohama



CBP Attaché Office Japan
January, 2010

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Welcome to Japan!

Congratulations on your upcoming assignment to Japan. All of us at the Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection, Office of International Affairs and Trade Relations (INATR), would like to welcome you to post and offer our assistance as you prepare for your upcoming move. Attached to this letter is a comprehensive deployment packet, designed specifically for you, which will give you a preview of life in Tokyo, Kobe, Nagoya, and Yokohama.

If you or your accompanying family members have any questions about any of the material in this guide, or wish to make recommendations for future updates, please contact INATR's Administration and Program Support Division, International Administrative Services Branch.

You are embarking upon an exciting adventure. We hope you will enjoy your international experience and that you will take advantage of the opportunity to explore the various cultures you will encounter during your tour.

Monica K. Temoney
Director
Administration and Program Support Division
Office of International Affairs and Trade Relations
U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Country Profile



Profile: Japan

Source: www.state.gov and CIA World Factbook at www.cia.gov

Japan is an island country in East Asia. Located in the Pacific Ocean, it lies to the east of China, Korea, and Russia, stretching from the Sea of Okhotsk in the north to the East China Sea in the south. The four main islands, running from north to south, are Hokkaido, Honshu (or the mainland), Shikoku, and Kyushu. Okinawa Island is about 380 miles southwest of Kyushu. About 3,000 smaller islands are included in the archipelago. In total land area, Japan is slightly smaller than California. Japan's capital and largest city is Tokyo.

Full country name: Japan

Area: 377,864 sq. km. (145,894 sq. mi.)

Population: 127.08 million (July 2009 est.)

Capital City: Tokyo

People: Nationality: Noun and adjective--Japanese

Language: Japanese

Religion: Shintoism and Buddhism

Government: Constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary government

GDP: (2008 est.): \$4.34 trillion (official exchange rate); \$4.911 trillion (PPP).

GDP per capita: (2008 est. PPP): \$34,100.

Head of State: Emperor Akihito. Akihito succeeded his father, Hirohito, in 1989. Under the 1947 constitution, Japan's emperors have a purely ceremonial role.

Head of Government: Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama. Yukio Hatoyama succeeded Taro Aso, head of the former ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) as prime minister and head of the ruling Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) in September 2009.

Major Industries: Machinery and equipment, metals and metal products, textiles, autos, chemicals, electrical and electronic equipment.

Main exports: Transport equipment, motor vehicles, semiconductors, electrical machinery, chemicals

Major Trading Partners: US 17.8%, China 16%, South Korea 7.6%, Hong Kong 5.1% (2008)

Monetary unit: Yen

Internet domain: .jp

International dialing code: +81

While retaining its time-honored culture, Japan rapidly absorbed Western technology during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. After its devastating defeat in World War II, Japan recovered to become the second most powerful economy in the world and a staunch ally of the U.S. While the emperor retains his throne as a symbol of national unity, actual power rests in networks of powerful politicians, bureaucrats, and business executives. The economy experienced a major slowdown in the 1990s following three decades of unprecedented growth.

Area, Geography, and Climate

About 73% of the country is mountainous, with a chain running through each of the main islands. Japan's highest mountain is the world famous Mt. Fuji (12,385 feet). Since so little flat area exists, many hills and mountainsides are cultivated all the way to the summits. As Japan is situated in a volcanic zone along the Pacific depth, frequent low intensity earth tremors and occasional volcanic activity are felt throughout the islands. Destructive earthquakes occur several times a century.

Hot springs are numerous and have been developed as resorts. Temperature extremes are less pronounced than in the United States since no part of the interior is more than 100 miles from the coast.

Country Profile



At the same time, because the islands run almost directly north south, the climate varies considerably. Sapporo, on the northernmost main island, has warm summers and long, cold winters with heavy snowfall. Tokyo, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe, in central and western parts of the largest island of Honshu, experience relatively mild winters with little or no snowfall and hot, humid summers. Fukuoka, on the island of Kyushu, has a climate similar to that of Washington, DC, with mild winters and short summers. Okinawa is subtropical.

Winters are cool and sunny in the south, cold and sunny around Tokyo (which occasionally has snow), and very cold around Hokkaido, which is covered in snow for up to four months a year. Summer, between June and September, ranges from warm to very hot, while spring and autumn are generally mild throughout the country. Rain falls throughout the year, with June and early July the rainiest. Hokkaido, however, is much drier than the Tokyo area. Typhoons are possible in September or October, and rarely last more than a day.

Population

Japan's population, currently some 128 million, has experienced a phenomenal growth rate during the past 100 years as a result of scientific, industrial, and sociological changes, but this has recently slowed because of falling birth rates. High sanitary and health standards produce a life expectancy exceeding that of the United States. Japan is an urban society with only about 6% of the labor force engaged in agriculture. Many farmers supplement their income with part-time jobs in nearby towns and cities. About 80 million of the urban population is heavily concentrated on the Pacific shore of Honshu and in northern Kyushu. Major population centers include:

Metropolitan Tokyo with approximately 14 million; Yokohama with 3.3 million; Osaka with 2.6 million; Nagoya with 2.1 million; Kyoto with 1.5 million; Sapporo with 1.6 million; Kobe with 1.4 million; and Kitakyushu, Kawasaki, and Fukuoka with 1.2 million each. Japan faces the same problems that confront urban industrialized societies throughout the world: overcrowded cities, congested highways, air pollution, and rising juvenile delinquency.

People and History

Japanese legend maintains that Japan was founded in 600 BC by the Emperor Jimmu, a direct descendant of the sun goddess and ancestor of the present ruling imperial family. About AD 405, the Japanese court officially adopted the Chinese writing system. Together with the introduction of Buddhism in the sixth century, these two events revolutionized Japanese culture and marked the beginning of a long period of Chinese cultural influence. From the establishment of the first fixed capital at Nara in 710 until 1867, the emperors of the Yamato dynasty were the nominal rulers, but actual power was usually held by powerful court nobles, regents, or "shoguns" (military governors).

Japan's Cultural Contributions

Japan's unique culture includes centuries-old graphic and performing arts. Modern theater forms and modern graphic arts are very popular, and Japanese artists and designers are among the world's best. Institutions like Tokyo's National Theater continue to preserve and encourage traditional art forms. Flower arranging (ikebana), one of the unique cultural heritages, originated in the 1300s with the advent of the tea ceremony; today Japan has 3,000–4,000 ikebana schools with millions of followers. The tea ceremony (chanoyu), perfected in the 16th century, fascinates both participants and spectators by its simplicity and elegance, designed to create peace of mind in both the performer and the partaker. Kabuki, one of the most colorful forms of traditional Japanese entertainment, a bustling, exaggerated drama accompanied by music and song, and Noh, a form of Japanese court dance characterized by use of masks, are performed regularly in cities throughout Japan.

Country Profile



Martial arts which include judo, karate, kendo, aikido, and Japanese long-bow archery draw on Zen philosophy and traditionally have as their objective the achievement of self-discipline and inner peace. Martial arts performances can be seen regularly in the leading cities.

Arts, Science, and Education

Japan's educational system is based on 6 years of elementary and 3 years of middle or junior high school. Schooling is compulsory and free. More than 97% of children finishing middle school go on for 3 years of upper or senior high school.

Japan has over 1,174 universities, colleges, and junior colleges and over 3 million college students, making it second only to the U.S. in the proportion of its college-age population that are students. Nevertheless, the most prestigious Japanese universities can accept only a fraction of the applicants. About half of the Japanese university students study in the Tokyo area. Before senior high school and college, students must take extremely rigorous competitive entrance examinations. The most difficult college entrance examinations are for national universities like Tokyo and Kyoto.

Despite the difficulty of the written language, Japan has one of the world's highest literacy rates. It is a country of readers, ranking second only to the U.S. in book publishing.

Government

Japan is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary government. There is universal adult suffrage with a secret ballot for all elective offices. The executive branch is responsible to the Diet (government), and the judicial branch is independent. Sovereignty, previously embodied in the emperor, is vested in the Japanese people, and the Emperor is defined as the symbol of the state.

Japan's Government is a parliamentary democracy, with a House of Representatives and a House of Councillors. Executive power is vested in a cabinet composed of a prime minister and ministers of state, all of whom must be civilians. The prime minister must be a member of the Diet and is designated by his colleagues. The prime minister has the power to appoint and remove ministers, a majority of whom must be Diet members.

The six major political parties represented in the National Diet are Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ); Social Democratic Party (SDP); People's New Party (PNP); Liberal Democratic Party (LDP); the New Clean Government Party (Komeito); Japan Communist Party (JCP)

Japan's judicial system, modeled after European civil law systems with English-American influence; judicial review of legislative acts in the Supreme Court; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction with reservations

Japan does not have a federal system, and its 47 prefectures are not sovereign entities in the sense that U.S. states are. Most depend on the central government for subsidies. Governors of prefectures, mayors of municipalities, and prefectural and municipal assembly members are popularly elected to 4-year terms.

Country Profile



U.S.-Japan Relations

The U.S.-Japan alliance is the cornerstone of U.S. security interests in Asia and is fundamental to regional stability and prosperity. Despite the changes in the post-Cold War strategic landscape, the U.S.-Japan alliance continues to be based on shared vital interests and values. These include stability in the Asia-Pacific region, the preservation and promotion of political and economic freedoms, support for human rights and democratic institutions, and securing of prosperity for the people of both countries and the international community as a whole.

Japan provides bases and financial and material support to U.S. forward-deployed forces, which are essential for maintaining stability in the region. Under the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, Japan hosts a carrier battle group, the III Marine Expeditionary Force, the 5th Air Force, and the Army's 9th Theater Support Command. The United States currently maintains approximately 53,000 troops in Japan, about half of whom are stationed in Okinawa.

Over the past decade the alliance has been strengthened through revised Defense Guidelines, which expand Japan's noncombatant role in a regional contingency, the renewal of our agreement on Host Nation Support of U.S. forces stationed in Japan, and an ongoing process called the Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI). The DPRI redefines roles, missions, and capabilities of alliance forces and outlines key realignment and transformation initiatives, including reducing the number of troops stationed in Okinawa, enhancing interoperability and communication between our respective commands, and broadening our cooperation in the area of ballistic missile defense. In February 2009 Secretary of State Clinton and then-Foreign Minister Nakasone signed the Guam International Agreement (GIA) in Tokyo. The GIA commits both nations to completing the transfer of approximately 8,000 U.S. Marines from bases in Okinawa to new facilities in Guam built with the assistance of Japan.

Implementation of these agreements will strengthen our capabilities and make our alliance more sustainable. After the tragic events of September 11, 2001, Japan has participated significantly in counterterrorism efforts by providing major logistical support for U.S. and coalition forces in the Indian Ocean. Japan ended its refueling mission in the Indian Ocean on January 15, 2010 with the expiry of the law authorizing it.

Timeline: a chronology of key events in Japan

- 1894** - Japan goes to war with China. Japan's better equipped forces win victory in just nine months.
- 1895** - China cedes Taiwan to Japan and permits Japan to trade in China.
- 1904** - Japan goes to war with Russia. Japanese victory in 1905.
- 1910** - Japan annexes Korea after three years of fighting. Japan is now one of the world's great powers.
- 1914** - Japan joins World War I on the side of Britain and her allies. Japan has limited participation.
- 1919** - Treaty of Versailles gives Japan some territorial gains in the Pacific.
- 1923** - Earthquake in Tokyo region kills more than 100,000 people.
- 1925** - Universal male suffrage is instituted. The electorate increases fivefold.

Continued on next page

Country Profile



Ultra-nationalism and war

Late 1920s - Extreme nationalism begins to take hold in Japan. The emphasis is on a preservation of traditional Japanese values, and a rejection of "Western" influence.

1931 - Japan invades Manchuria, renames it and installs a puppet regime.

1932 - Japanese Prime Minister is assassinated by ultra-nationalist terrorists. The military holds increasing influence in the country.

1936 - Japan signs an anti-communist agreement with Nazi Germany. It concludes a similar agreement with Italy in 1937.

1937 - Japan goes to war with China. By the end of the year, Japan has captured Shanghai, Beijing and Nanjing. Japanese forces commit atrocities, including the "Rape of Nanjing", in which up to 300,000 Chinese civilians are said to have been killed.

1939 - Outbreak of World War II in Europe. With the fall of France to Nazi Germany in 1940, Japan moves to occupy French Indo-China.

Attack on Pearl Harbor

1941 - Japan launches a surprise attack on the U.S. Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Twelve ships are sunk, with a further 9 damaged; nearly 2,500 people are killed. The U.S. and its main allies declare war on Japan the following day.

1942 - Japan occupies a succession of countries, including the Philippines, Dutch East Indies, Burma and Malaya. In June, U.S. aircraft carriers defeat the Japanese at the Battle of Midway. The U.S. begins a strategy of "island-hopping", cutting the Japanese support lines as its forces advance.

1944 - U.S. forces are near enough to Japan to start bombing raids on Japanese cities.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki

1945 - U.S. planes drop two atomic bombs, one on Hiroshima (6 August), the second on Nagasaki (9 August). Emperor Hirohito surrenders and relinquishes his divine status. Japan is placed under U.S. military government. All Japanese military and naval forces are disbanded.

1947 - A new constitution comes into force. It establishes a parliamentary system, with all adults eligible to vote. Japan renounces war and pledges not to maintain land, sea or air forces for that purpose. The emperor is granted ceremonial status.

1951 - Japan signs peace treaty with the U.S. and other nations. To this day, there is no peace treaty with Russia, as the legal successor to the Soviet Union.

Independence

1952 - Japan regains its independence. The U.S. retains several islands for military use, including Okinawa.

1955 - Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) formed. Apart from a brief interlude in the early 1990s, the party governs almost uninterrupted for the rest of the century and beyond.

1956 - Japan joins United Nations.

1964 - Olympic Games held in Tokyo.

1972 - Japanese prime minister visits China and normal diplomatic relations are resumed. Japan subsequently closes its Embassy in Taiwan. Okinawa is returned to Japanese sovereignty, but U.S. retains bases there.

1982 - Japanese car firm Honda opens its first plant in the U.S.

1989 - Emperor Hirohito dies, succeeded by Akihito.

1993 - Elections held against a background of bribery scandals and economic decline see the LDP ousted for the first time since 1955. A seven-party coalition takes power.

1994 - The coalition collapses. An administration supported by the LDP and the Socialists takes over.

Country Profile



Natural and man-made disasters

1995 January - An earthquake hits central Japan, killing thousands and causing widespread damage. The city of Kobe is hardest hit.

1995 March - A religious sect, Aum Shinrikyo, releases the deadly nerve gas on the Tokyo underground railway system. Twelve people are killed and thousands are injured. Three U.S. servicemen based on Okinawa rape a local schoolgirl. There are mass protests demanding the removal of U.S. forces from the island.

1997 - The economy enters a severe recession.

1998 - Keizo Obuchi of the LDP becomes prime minister.

2000 - Obuchi suffers a stroke and is replaced by Yoshiro Mori. Obuchi dies six weeks later.

2000 November - Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori resigns while on a visit to Japan. He later takes up Japanese citizenship and avoids extradition.

2001 February - A U.S. submarine executes an emergency surfacing maneuver off Hawaii and collides with a Japanese training vessel. Nine Japanese are missing after the incident.

2001 March - Mori announces his intention to resign as LDP leader and prime minister.

Koizumi at helm

2001 April - Junichiro Koizumi becomes new LDP leader and Prime Minister.

2001 April - Trade dispute with China after Japan imposes import tariffs on Chinese agricultural products. China retaliates with import taxes on Japanese vehicles and other manufactured goods.

2001 August - Koizumi pays homage at the Yasukuni shrine dedicated to the country's war dead, provoking protests from Japan's neighbors. The memorial also honors war criminals.

2001 October - Koizumi visits Seoul and offers an apology for the suffering South Korea endured under his country's colonial rule.

2001 December - Birth of Japan's new princess - first child of Crown Prince Naruhito and Crown Princess Masako - reignites debate over male-only succession law.

2002 September - Koizumi becomes first the Japanese leader to visit North Korea. North Korean leader Kim Jong-il apologizes for abductions of Japanese citizens in 1970s and 1980s and confirms that eight of them are dead.

2002 October - Five Japanese nationals kidnapped by North Korea return home to emotional family reunions.

2003 December - Government announces decision to install "purely defensive" U.S.-made missile shield.

Iraq deployment

2004 February - Non-combat soldiers arrive in Iraq in first Japanese deployment in combat zone since World War II.

2004 September - Japan, along with Brazil, Germany and India, launches an application for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

2004 October - More than 30 people are killed in powerful earthquakes in the north, the deadliest quakes in almost a decade.

2004 December - Dispute with North Korea over the fate of Japanese citizens kidnapped by North Korea during the Cold War. Pyongyang says any imposition of sanctions by Tokyo will be treated as declaration of war.

2005 April - Relations with Beijing deteriorate amid sometimes-violent anti-Japanese protests in Chinese cities, sparked by a Japanese textbook which China says glosses over Japan's World War II record. More than 100 people are killed when a commuter train crashes near the western city of Amagasaki. It is Japan's worst railway accident in more than 40 years.

2005 September - PM Koizumi wins a landslide victory in early general elections called after the upper house rejects plans to privatize the postal service - the key part of his reform agenda. Parliament approves the legislation in October.

Country Profile



2006 March - Japan, China fail to reach a breakthrough at talks in Beijing over the issue of who controls oil and gas reserves in disputed areas of the East China Sea.

2006 July - The last contingent of Japanese troops leaves Iraq.

2006 September - Shinzo Abe succeeds Junichiro Koizumi as prime minister.

2006 December - Parliament approves the creation of a fully-fledged defense ministry - the first since World War II.

Recent events

2007 April - Wen Jiabao becomes the first Chinese prime minister to address the Japanese parliament. Mr Wen says both sides have succeeded in warming relations.

2007 July - The ruling LDP suffers a crushing defeat in upper house elections.

2007 August - On the 62nd anniversary of Japan's surrender in World War II, almost the entire cabinet stays away from the Yasukuni shrine. Prime Minister Abe says he has no plans to visit the shrine for as long as the issue continues to be a diplomatic problem.

Abe steps down

2007 September - Prime Minister Shinzo Abe resigns, is replaced by Yasuo Fukuda.

2007 November - A Japanese whaling fleet sets sail on a six-month mission Tokyo describes as scientific research. Australia and other nations call the programme a front for commercial whaling.

2008 June - The opposition-controlled upper house passes a censure motion against Mr Fukuda for his handling of domestic issues, but the lower house backs a confidence motion in him.

Japan and China reach a deal for the joint development of a gas field in the East China Sea, resolving a four-year-old dispute.

2008 September - Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda resigns. Former foreign minister Taro Aso appointed as new premier.

2008 November - General Toshio Tamogami, head of Japan's air force, loses his job after writing an essay seeking to justify Japan's role in the Second World War.

2009 February - Economics Minister Kaoru Yosano says Japan is facing worst economic crisis since World War II, after figures show its economy shrank by 3.3% in last quarter.

Finance Minister Shoichi Nakagawa resigns amid claims that he was drunk at a G7 meeting.

2009 July - Prime Minister Taro Aso calls an election for 30 August following his party's emphatic defeat in local elections held in Tokyo. The outlook for Japan's economy remains uncertain as consumer confidence increases but fears remain over output and deflation.

LDP defeated

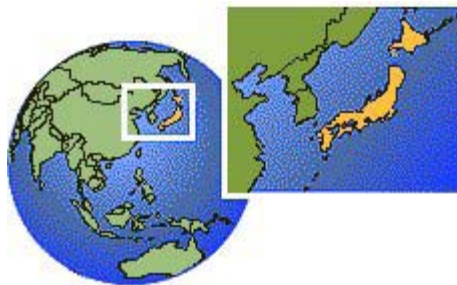
2009 August - Opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) wins general election by a landslide, ending more than 50 years of nearly unbroken rule by the Liberal Democratic Party.

2009 September - DPJ leader Yukio Hatoyama elected PM at head of coalition with Social Democratic Party and People's New Party.

Source: BBC NEWS: http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/country_profiles/1261918.stm (Updated: 1/12/10)

Post Information

TOKYO, JAPAN



Embassy: Tokyo, Japan

WCO Membership: Yes

CMAA: June 17, 1999

CAPERS Network: Yes

Activities:

DHS Organizational Entities: Customs & Border Protection, Coast Guard; Immigration and Customs Enforcement; Transportation Security Administration

CSI Seaports: Kobe; Nagoya; Tokyo; Yokohama

IAP Airport: Narita International Airport

Preclearance Stations: None

Country Map:



Post Information



Kobe

This city is located almost in the center in Japan. The average yearly temperature is 16.8 (max. 34.5/min. -3.5 in 2003). Annual rainfall amount is 1,538.0 mm in 2003. It means that it is very comfortable namely, warm in winter and cool in summer relatively in Japan where the four seasons are very distinct. Its population is about 1,520,000, which is the 6th-largest in Japan. Over 44,500 foreigners and over 1,800 students from 117 countries including South Korea, North Korea, China, U.S.A., and Vietnam live here. It has been flourished as a representative trading port of Japan with the internationality.



Nagoya

Nagoya's main industry is the automotive business, as many Japanese automotive companies are based out of Nagoya as U.S. automakers are based out of Detroit. Toyota is headquartered in the nearby city of Toyota. The Japanese confectionery company Marukawa is headquartered in Nagoya, as is the fine ceramics company Noritake. There is also a sizable aerospace and electronics industry in the area.



Post Information



Tokyo

Tokyo is located in the Kanto region on the island of Honshu, but its borders extend to outlying islands in the Pacific Ocean, some as far as 1,000 km south of the mainland. Tokyo is the nation's center of politics, business, finance, education, mass media, and pop culture. Tokyo has Japan's highest concentration of corporate headquarters, financial institutions, universities and colleges, museums, theaters, and shopping and entertainment establishments. Tokyo is widely considered to be one of the world's major "global cities", and a Mega city.



Yokohama

Yokohama is centered on an inlet on the western side of Tokyo Bay, 30 kilometers (18 miles) from Tokyo, to which it is connected by a half-dozen railway lines as well as expressways and surface streets via the city of Kawasaki. A major industrial zone known as the Keihin Industrial Area stretches along the reclaimed coastline to the north of the central area towards Kawasaki and Tokyo beyond.





Tips for Traveling Abroad

If you are traveling abroad here are the top 10 tips you need to make your trip easier:

1. Make sure you have a signed, valid passport and visas, if required. Also, before you go, fill in the emergency information page of your passport!
2. Read the Consular Information Sheets (and Public Announcements or Travel Warnings, if applicable) for the countries you plan to visit. You can find these at the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov>.
3. Familiarize yourself with local laws and customs of the countries to which you are traveling. Remember, the U.S. Constitution does not follow you! While in a foreign country, you are subject to its laws.
4. Make 2 copies of your passport identification page. This will facilitate replacement if your passport is lost or stolen. Leave one copy at home with friends or relatives. Carry the other with you in a separate place from your passport.
5. Leave a copy of your itinerary with family or friends at home so that you can be contacted in case of an emergency.
6. Do not leave your luggage unattended in public areas. Do not accept packages from strangers.
7. Prior to your departure, you should register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the State Department's travel registration website at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs>.

Registration will make your presence and whereabouts known in case it is necessary to contact you in an emergency. *In accordance with the Privacy Act, information on your welfare and whereabouts may not be released without your express authorization. Remember to leave a detailed itinerary and the numbers or copies of your passport or other citizenship documents with a friend or relative in the United States.*

8. To avoid being a target of crime, try not to wear conspicuous clothing and expensive jewelry and do not carry excessive amounts of money or unnecessary credit cards.
9. In order to avoid violating local laws, deal only with authorized agents when you exchange money or purchase art or antiques.
10. If you get into trouble, contact the nearest U.S. Embassy.

Safety & Travel

Security Overview: Japan

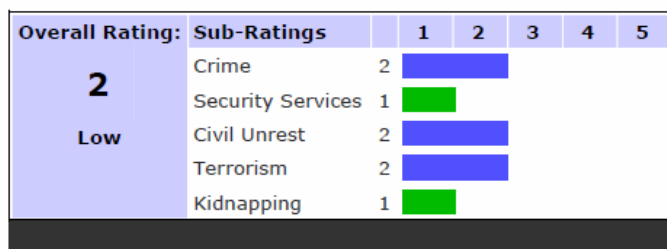
Source: *ijet International, Inc. - Intelligent Risk Systems*

Japan remains one of the safest countries in the world, despite recent figures indicating a countrywide increase in reported crimes. The nation's crime rate has risen approximately 50 percent since 1998. More than 60 percent of crimes have involved theft. The Justice Ministry partially blames the crime jump on the country's economic recession.

The most significant threat to expatriates is petty crime, which typically occurs at airports, bus stations, crowded shopping areas and tourist areas where pickpocket gangs are most active. Other crimes involve vandalism and personal disputes. Violent crime is rare.

Japan is located on the infamous "ring of fire" and experiences several earthquakes every year. In November 2005, a 6.9 earthquake struck off the coast of Japan, triggering a small tsunami. It did not cause casualties or damage to buildings and structures. In 1995, the Great Hanshin Earthquake devastated much of Kobe and killed over 5,000 people. Another significant environmental factor in Japan is the typhoon season, which usually extends from June through September. During this period, expatriates should keep abreast of local weather conditions and avoid coastal areas if a typhoon is approaching.

Overall Security Rating



Rating Values: 1 - Minimal, 2 - Low, 3 - Moderate, 4 - High, 5 - Very High, NR - Not Rated

Security Alerts

Japan has more than 80,000 organized crime groups (yakuza). The largest faction is the Yamaguchi Gumi, with alleged illicit dealings in politics, economics and business transactions. Half of yakuza earnings come from the illicit drug industry and another 25 percent from prostitution.

Yakuza often deal with smaller crime groups that compete for attention in business districts. Local businesses believe yakuza enforcement is quicker and more effective than that of the police.

Avoid establishments that appear shady or illegal; maintain a low profile in business districts and marketplaces.

Travel Security

The events of September 11, 2001, serve as a reminder of the continuing threat from terrorists and extremist groups to Americans and American interests worldwide. There have been no major terrorist incidents in Japan since 1995; however, since terrorists can strike at any time and at any place, U.S. citizens should be aware of the potential risks and take these into consideration when making travel plans. Following the recent London bombings in July 2005, the security situation in Japan remains unchanged, with no new credible threat information.



The Department of State will continue to develop information about potential threats to U.S. citizens overseas, and to share threat information through its consular information program documents, available on the Internet at the Bureau of Consular Affairs home page. The government of Japan is vigilant in tracking terrorist threat indicators and remains at a high state of alert. Local police substations (Koban) and police emergency dispatchers (tel. 110) should be contacted to report suspicious activity.

Personal Security

Japanese crime rates are low compared to international standards, but violent crime is on the rise. In general, Japan is one of the safest countries in the world, and visitors rarely fall victim to violent crime. While crime is low by international standards, violent crime is reportedly on the increase, with 21,760 cases reported to Japanese police in the first eleven months of 2003 compared with 20,354 cases for the same period in 2002. On the other hand, the overall crime rate decreased by 2.3 percent in that same period.

Incidents of pocket picking occur with some frequency in crowded shopping areas of metropolitan Tokyo; always remain alert to belongings. Americans in Japan have reported to the U.S. American Citizens Service in Tokyo that criminals have done the following: stolen valuables and documents; assaulted males; and drugged women's drinks in bar districts (particularly Roppongi and Shibuya in Tokyo). Intoxicated males have also physically harassed women on the street or on public transportation. Other foreigners should also exercise vigilance toward these types of crimes.

Youth crime has been on the increase since the mid-1990s, with a number of recent high-profile incidents of violent crime by teenagers. Serious crimes involving guns have also increased, although the numbers are still extremely low by U.S. standards, as stringent gun laws are strictly enforced.

Foreigners are routinely named as a cause for the increasing crime rates and deteriorating levels of public safety. The Japanese media often blames immigrants and students from China and Southeast Asia for criminal activities in Japan. Cooperation between Japan's Yakuza criminal network and Chinese criminal groups has gained considerable attention in Japanese media and law enforcement circles.

It should be noted that the incidence of reporting of crimes is very high and that crime in Japan remains for the most part nonviolent.

Civil Unrest

There is little threat from civil unrest or terrorism in Japan. Demonstrations and protests occur, but are usually well-planned and controlled by local authorities. For the most part, the few terrorist/extremist groups that exist in the country have little history of targeting foreign companies. Public frustration over Japan's involvement in Iraq has resulted in protests in the past and could trigger future rallies, particularly in major cities such as Tokyo and Osaka. Growing questions about U.S. military presence in Japan might also inspire extremists to carry out anti-U.S. acts, although this seems unlikely to pose a significant threat to foreign-owned businesses.

In March 1995, the Aum Shinrikyo doomsday cult planted a number of toxic gas containers in the Tokyo subway system, resulting in 12 deaths and thousands of injuries. While Aum all but disappeared when most of its leaders were arrested after the subway attack, it has since made a slight comeback. The group now calls itself "Aleph" and is closely monitored by security authorities.



Kidnapping / Hostage Situation Kidnapping remains a very low risk for both visitors and residents. There have been occasional instances in which criminals or criminal gangs have targeted wealthy locals for ransom or in which crime syndicates have abducted individuals to collect debts from illegal business deals or gambling. Such cases are infrequent and, therefore, usually draw widespread media attention. According to police statistics, there were 237 reported kidnapping cases nationwide in 2001, down from 302 the previous year. The arrest rate for kidnapping cases is constantly at or above 90 percent, among the highest for any crime.

Chinese triad gangs, which have become increasingly active in the Tokyo and Osaka areas, have been involved in abducting and holding for ransom illegal immigrants from China that have been smuggled into the country by rival gangs.

Terrorist Targeting

The threat of international terrorist activity in Japan is low, however, there is some recent evidence of possible or previously existing Al-Qaeda presence in the country. Police arrested at least two foreigners during raids May 26 that local media said marked Japan's first investigation into individuals suspected of links to Al-Qaeda. The raids were connected to the recent revelation that Algerian French national Lionel Dumont, considered a senior member of Al-Qaeda, spent at least seven months in Japan. Police believe Dumont attempted to set up a Japanese Al-Qaeda network. During his time in Japan, Dumont apparently contacted the two suspects, who were arrested for alleged immigration violations. In early 2004, Al-Qaeda's number three leader, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, told U.S. security authorities that Al-Qaeda sought to attack Japan during the 2002 World Cup, but that the lack of a network in Japan prevented an attack from taking place.

The Japanese government's policy of support for U.S.-led operations in Iraq has included the dispatch of Japanese troops to Iraq. The move was highly controversial within Japan and earned the country the ire of international terrorist groups, including Al-Qaeda. Security has been increased in Japan in the wake of threats from Al-Qaeda and related groups. Japanese police Feb. 18 searched the offices and residences of members of the Kakurokyo, a group of leftist radicals suspected of Feb. 17 explosions near Japan's Defense Agency. There were no reports of serious damage or injury, however, police found two projectile launchers and a timer 600 yards away from the agency. The Kakurokyo claimed responsibility for a similar attack on the agency in 2003. The group is also suspected of attempted attacks on U.S. military facilities in Japan.

Property Security

Japan's crime rate is among the lowest in the world, but travelers should observe common safeguards. Keep hotel doors and windows locked, lock large personal items in luggage and keep cash, valuables and personal documents in the hotel or room safe.

Do not leave any personal property openly displayed in unattended vehicles. Roll up windows, lock doors and activate the theft deterrent system, if there is one.

Scams, Fraud, Corruption and Extortion

Scams perpetrated against travelers are rare in Tokyo, Japan. There are no serious scam concerns for travelers to Tokyo.



Police

The police force in Japan is well-trained and effective in criminal investigations. An important reason for the low crime rate is the "koban" or police box system, whereby every neighborhood nationwide has one or more police boxes, with one or two officers on duty 24 hours a day. Police throughout the country have enjoyed a reputation for honesty and efficiency, although a series of scandals involving police during 1999 and 2000 tarnished that image somewhat and led to calls for reform and closer public supervision. To help with the growing number of foreigners visiting Japan, the city of Tokyo, for one, has established a multilingual police squad.

Security Contacts & Communication

Useful telephone numbers for services in Japan:

Fire Emergency 119

Police Emergency 110

International Country Code 81

Tourist Board 81-3-3201-3331

Red Cross Society contact information in Japan:

Japanese Red Cross Society

1-1-3 Shiba Daimon, Minato-ku

Tokyo 105-8521 Japan

Phone: 81-3-3438-1311

Fax: 81-3-3435-8509

Telegram: JAPANCROSS TOKYO

Email: kokusai@jrc.or.jp

Web: www.jrc.or.jp/english/index.html

Police contact numbers in Japan.

For non-emergency police service:

Aichi: 81-52-951-1611

Fukuoka: 81-22-251-4141

Hokkaido: 81-11-251-0110

Okinawa: 81-98-862-0110

Osaka: 81-6-943-1234

Tokyo: 81-3-3581-4321

For roadside assistance:

Fukuoka: 81-92-841-5000

Okinawa: 81-98-877-9163

Osaka: 81-6-577-0111

Sapporo: 81-11-857-8139

Tokyo: 81-3-5395-0111

Japan Helpline, a 24-hour English-language emergency service: 0120-461-997 (toll-free).

Tokyo English Life Line, for counseling help: 81-3-3264-4347.



Suspicious Objects, Letter and Package Bombs

Recognizing suspicious objects and the threat of hidden explosives

The best advice on suspicious objects is to avoid them. Never touch or pick up a suspicious object, and leave the area if you see any. Terrorists, organized crime figures and others are skilled in hiding explosives in a variety of objects. Any item that cannot be identified as belonging to a specific person or in a particular place should be treated as suspicious. The age of miniaturization allows terrorists and organized crime groups to hide explosives in an endless array of objects. Some examples of everyday objects used by terrorists as bombs:

- Sealed envelopes
- Packages
- Holiday and anniversary gifts
- Suitcases
- Briefcases
- Purses
- Backpacks
- Sports bags
- Trash
- Lunch bags
- Shopping bags
- Toys
- Books
- Fruits and vegetables
- Bread and pastries
- Bolts of fabric
- Baby carriages
- Motor cycles
- Bicycles
- Scooters
- Cars

Target Locations

The prime locations for terrorist bombs are:

- Public places frequented by targeted individuals.
- Public places that draw crowds, including: public transport hubs; outdoor markets and festivals; shopping centers; nightclubs and bars.
- Forums or gatherings where prominent individuals give speeches. Do not attend such events unless security forces have completed a sweep and have cordoned-off the area.

Warnings

In many nations, signs are posted advising the public to be alert for such suspicious objects. If you are traveling with children, point out warning posters and reinforce the fact that they are in a different environment than back home. Impress upon them that they are not to touch any suspicious objects. Also tell them to:

- Report the object and its location to an adult.
- Pay attention to announcements in public places advising of a suspicious object and follow instructions. Leave the area as soon as possible.



Letter and Package Bombs

One of the favored ways to hide explosives when specific individuals are targeted is a letter or a package. Follow these steps:

- While traveling, do not accept mail or unexpected deliveries unless you are sure of the source.
- Do not accept sealed envelopes or packages to your hotel room.
- If an unexpected package is in your room when you return, leave the room immediately, contact the front desk, and ask that it be removed.

Look for the following danger signs if you receive a sealed letter or package:

- Is it from an unknown (to you) place?
- Is there an excessive amount of postage?
- Do the return address and the postmark differ?
- Is the spelling on the item correct (especially check common words)?
- Is the item marked conspicuously with the receiver's name, such as "Personal for Mr. Smith," or "Confidential for Mr. Smith?"
- Is the item unusually heavy or light for its size?
- Is the item uneven in balance or lopsided?
- If an envelope, is it overly rigid?
- Are there stains on the item?
- Does it smell peculiar, like shoe polish or almonds?
- Are wires or strings protruding from -- or attached to -- the item in an unusual way?
- Does the letter or package contain an inner letter or package addressed to a particular individual?
- Is there an inner letter tied with a string, tape, wire, aluminum foil, rubber band or any other compression item?

If the parcel is at all suspicious, do not touch it. If you are already holding it, place it down gently, leave the room or area, and call the police.



Personal Security While Walking

Travelers overseas are particularly vulnerable to becoming victims of crime while walking. It is very difficult for a foreigner to blend in with the local populace. Many things can give you away as a tourist, including, your physical appearance, habits, clothing, manner of walk or speech, even your smell. In most countries worldwide, tourists are assumed to be wealthier than the average local citizen and not savvy to local threats. This makes them attractive to thieves and other criminals.

Before Venturing on Foot

- Buy a good map. Mark key points on the map, such as embassies and police stations.
- Study the map and make a mental note of alternative routes to your home or other local lodging.
- Learn how to use the local telephone system and keep the proper change, token or telephone card on hand. Carry the emergency telephone numbers you might need, such as police, firefighters, your hotel, a local contact and the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.
- Learn a few key expressions in the local language so that you can signal your need for help and be clearly understood. Alternatively, carry such phrases with you, written by a local person.
- Do not discuss travel plans or other personal matters with strangers. If planning a tour, hire a reputable guide.
- Try not to go out alone. Let someone at your home base know where you are going and when you plan to return.
- Bring along a personal alarm or whistle, but never active protective devices such as weapons, mace or pepper spray. These devices, if not used properly, may further antagonize a criminal and increase your risk of harm.
- Leave the fanny pack or tummy pack behind; those only advertise that you have something of value to protect. Disperse your cash and documents among various pockets.
- Know where you are going before you leave.

While Out Walking

- Be constantly aware of your surroundings and of those around you throughout the day.
- Look up and down the street before exiting a building. At intersections and when preparing to cross a street, use the opportunity to scan your surroundings.
- Avoid bringing unwanted official attention to yourself. Follow all local rules and regulations. Keep as low a profile as possible and avoid loud conversations or arguments.
- Avoid reviewing maps in public places, as it may mark you as a disoriented tourist.
- When walking, try to remain on wide, well-lighted streets and try to walk against the normal flow of vehicular traffic so that you can observe cars, motor cycles, scooters and bicycles approaching you.
- Be especially cautious in or avoid areas where you are more likely to be victimized. These areas include crowded subways, train and bus stations, elevators, tourist sites, market places, packed bars, sports stadiums, festivals and marginal areas of cities.
- Do not use short cuts or walk in narrow alleys or on poorly lit streets. Avoid passing close to shrubbery, dark doorways or through construction sites. Do not walk alone at night and never walk in isolated or deserted area such as lonely beaches or empty parks.
- Avoid public demonstrations and other civil disturbances; leave the area immediately.
- Even if you are lost, act as if you know where you are going. Enter a hotel, public building, bank, or police station to be redirected. Walk confidently and with your eyes off the ground. Know where you are going before you begin the next segment of your walk.
- Stay alert for signs denoting restricted areas and change direction to avoid them.

Continued on next page

Safety & Travel



- Avoid scam artists. If a deal seems too good to be true, it probably is. Beware of strangers who approach you offering bargains, to be your guide, or to bring you to special places that most tourists do not have access to.
- Beware of pickpockets. They frequently have an accomplice who will jostle you, ask you for directions or the time, point to something spilled on your clothing, accuse you of inappropriate or illegal behavior or distract you by creating a disturbance.
- Beware of groups of vagrant children who create a distraction or surround you in order to immobilize you and pick your pocket. Try to keep walking or walk through them. If you stop, you will probably be victimized.
- If you are confronted and feel threatened, do not fight back. Give up your valuables one small portion at a time until the thief is satisfied. Often, a little for you is a lot to the thief. Your money, jewelry, valuables and passport can be replaced, but you cannot.
- Use your personal alarm or whistle, especially if the assailant does not exhibit a firearm and you are not in a deserted spot but within earshot of others.
- Wear the shoulder strap of any bag or purse over a shoulder, but never around your neck. Walk with the bag away from the curb to avoid drive-by purse-snatchers.
- When you stop for a meal or drink, keep your purse or bag on your lap, or near you with the strap around your chair leg. Do not place it unsecured on the floor, on another seat or on the back of a chair.
- Avoid using ATMs except for those in banks, hotels or exchange facilities. Never count your money at an ATM or leave with your wallet or cash exposed.

Traveling with Pets

Importing Animals into Japan

The procedure for importing pets (cats, dogs, and ferrets) varies by country. However, in most cases, general guidelines must be followed. Animal quarantine service (AQS) officials advise that the entire process can take up to 6 months to complete, so plan in advance if you intend to take your pet to post.

Pets must have a veterinary certificate issued by the veterinary doctor prior to entry. Once the document is signed by the veterinarian or endorsed by the competent authority, the certificate is valid for anywhere from 10 days to four months, or until the expiration date of the vaccination.

The documents must include the following information:

- Country of dispatch of the animal
- Information about the owner accompanying the animal: Name, address, country, and telephone number
- Description of the animal: Species, breed, sex, date of birth, weight, coat (color and type)
- Identification of the animal: Microchip/tattoo number, location of microchip/tattoo, date of microchipping/tattooing.

(Note: It is required to have either a microchip OR a tattoo on your pet. Pit bull terriers and any pit bull terrier crossbreeds are NOT allowed into many countries. For pets other than cats, dogs, or ferrets, see www.international.FWS.gov to see if your pet is subject to additional requirements.)

- Rabies vaccination: Manufacturer and name of vaccine, batch number, date of vaccination, and expiration date of the vaccine. The first vaccination is valid 21 days after the vaccination protocol has been finished. The vaccination must be repeated either annually or every two years in accordance with the type of vaccine used.

The basic steps for importing accompanied pets are:

- Implant a microchip for identification of the pets.
- Get two rabies shots within the effective interval.
- Get a blood test after the second rabies shot.
- Make advance notification of the pet importation to AQS no later than 40 days prior to arrival. The form for advance notification will be available through the AWS website beginning January 2005.

The pet must stay in the exporting country at least 180 days but no more than 2 years after the date of blood sampling. Upon arrival, submit the following documents to AQS:

- Health Certificate
- Two Rabies Vaccination Certificates.
- Advance Notification Acknowledgement sent from AQS.
- Import Quarantine Application Form.

When importing pets as **unaccompanied cargo**, the steps include:

- Submit the documentation the same as accompanied pets. (Cargo importation required more time and expense.). The owner of the pet is not required to be present in order to apply for quarantine inspection. A proxy can make the application.
- Some quarantine services charge a detention fee depending on the size of the pet, which includes basic boarding, food, and care for the pet.
- Other costs may be incurred for transportation fees, kennel customs clearances, import tax, and a proxy charge depending on the pet and other circumstances.

If you have any further questions, please contact the animal quarantine office at Narita at 81-476-32-6664; fax +81-476-30-3011.

Cultural Adjustment

During the first week or so you will be bombarded with forms, literature, information on culture shock, and check-in lists. All of this at one time may seem overwhelming. And it is. In this guide we have tried to compile essential information you will need at post so that it isn't too much to handle at once. Browse through this guide when you have time or look up information, as you need it. Don't try to absorb it all at once! Do try to remember that it will take some time to get used to everything. Do it little by little and feel your way. On the cautious side, read the security hints carefully so you will be prepared to live and travel in Japan safely. And check out tourism and educational opportunities as well as possibilities for language study (see information in this manual, the general CBP deployment guide, and elsewhere).

Notes on Culture Shock

There is no clear-cut way of dealing with culture shock. Simply recognizing its existence and your accepting vulnerability to it is an important first step. As long as you know in advance that you will probably fall victim to culture shock at a certain level, you can prepare yourself psychologically to accept the temporary discomfort and turn it into an advantage by learning from it. Remember that you are not the only one experiencing occasional frustration, irritability, and depression. Falling victim to culture shock, in other words, does not imply the existence of any psychological or emotional shortcomings on your part. Psychologist Robert Kohls says, "Culture shock is in some degree inevitable... and is the occupational hazard of overseas living through which one has to be willing to go through in order to enjoy the pleasures of experiencing other countries and cultures in depth."

Undergoing culture shock is in itself a learning experience that you should take advantage of. It is a way of sensitizing you to another culture at a level that goes beyond the intellectual and the rational. Just as an athlete cannot get in shape without going through the uncomfortable conditioning stage, so you cannot fully appreciate the cultural differences that exist without first going through the uncomfortable stages of psychological adjustment.

Cultural Adaptation

There are four generally recognized stages of cultural adaptation. The first stage is often known as the "**honeymoon**" stage, where everything is exciting and exotic.

This is followed by the stage where all those things you initially found quaint are suddenly intensely **irritating** and incomprehensible (everything is expensive, the traffic is awful, the tube is always breaking down, nothing works properly, my house has FIVE levels). This is the "why can't they do things *right*, the way we do it" stage. If you don't get out of this stage, you're in major trauma, otherwise known as "**culture shock**".

Hopefully, you do get out of this stage and you're well on the way to **adapting** – starting to accept how things work, and managing day-to-day routines.

The best stage to be in is when you are finally comfortable, you don't have to consciously think about doing everything, you appreciate the way many things are done here, and even occasionally prefer some things to your "home" culture – in fact, you have **adjusted**.

So how do you know if you're going through culture shock, and how do you get past it if you are? First of all, you should know what some of the common symptoms are. Second, you should already have some strategies worked out. It's very difficult when you're negative and/or depressed to cheerfully come up with positive coping strategies!

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If you think about how you typically react to stress, this is likely to be the way you will react to "culture stress", so this will help you know in advance what your *personal* culture shock symptoms might be. Similarly, you have probably developed ways to deal with stress, and if so, these same strategies will probably help you move through the cultural transition process more smoothly, as well.

Some of the most common symptoms of culture shock are: marital stress, too much sleep, boredom, loneliness, stereotyping, exaggerated cleanliness, low work productivity, alcohol/drug/food abuse, avoiding people, constant complaints, and physical illness.

Everyone needs to develop their own personal strategies, but here are a few strategies that most people find helpful: (1) Recognize that it's natural and normal -- everyone goes through it to one degree or another; (2) Become a student again: find out as much as you can about the new culture and new ways of doing things. Venture out, explore, and get lost... (3) Find people who like it here! People who like the culture and country will be happy to share all the positive aspects with you, and this will help you develop an appreciation for the differences much sooner. Conversely, try to avoid those who are eager to share their complaints and horror stories; (4) Find things you like to do -- and DO them; and (5) Take care of your health: eat and sleep properly, exercise regularly.

Don't be reluctant to reach out if you need a sympathetic friend to talk to. The CLO office is always willing to listen, as are many colleagues and neighbors. Admitting that you're feeling down is not a weakness -- if anything, it's a sign of strength and health. Realization that you can't beat the blues alone is the first step in fitting into your new community. Friends -- even brand new ones -- are for leaning on!

Get involved. Choose some activity or interest that appeals to you and get busy. There's so much to do and see in Japan that you'll hardly have time to do it all in one tour. So you'll want to get started.

Cultural Environment

Cultural Differences

Every nationality has its character traits and cultural quirks. The Japanese are no different. Some of the characteristics you observe may be difficult for you as a foreigner to accept at first. Being aware of certain differences and trying to understand them may make them a little easier to cope with. Here are just a few of the most obvious:

- When you visit Japan, keep your shoes shined at all times, since everyone will be looking at them a lot when bowing.
- A slight bow demonstrates that you respect their customs.
- It is considered rude to stare; prolonged direct eye contact is considered impolite and even intimidating. A few shrewd Japanese negotiators have learned that Westerners expect averted eyes, so at the bargaining tables the Japanese do just the opposite; they sit and stare. This is so atypical of the Japanese that it can completely unnerve Westerners.

Communication

Understanding various ways of communication in different countries is important and vital.

Miscommunication of different gestures, etc. can lead to big misunderstandings.

Milton Neshek is an American lawyer and officer of a Japanese-owned company located in the North American Midwest. He once accompanied the governor of his state on a trade mission to Japan where the governor addressed a large and distinguished audience of Japanese officials. At the conclusion of the presentation, the visibly upset governor cornered Neshek and lamented,

“My speech was a disaster! I shouldn’t have delivered it. Why didn’t my staff warn me?” Confused, Neshek asked, “What made you think it was so bad?” The governor complained he had seen many members of the audience asleep, even nodding their heads. Relieved, Neshek quickly explained that among the Japanese a common way to show concentration and attentiveness was to close the eyes in contemplation and nod the head slightly, up and down.

What the governor read as boredom was actually a signal of respect and attention.”

General Protocol

Shoes are removed before entering a Japanese home but can be left on in a Western-style building.

Names and Greeting

The usual form of greeting is a long and low bow, now a handshake. Be prepared to exchange business cards. Never address Japanese by their first name. Only his family and very close friends use the first name. To say “Mister (last name),” simply say the last name and add the word *san*.

Appointments/Punctuality

Punctuality is advisable for both business and social engagements.

Hospitality/Gift Giving

Visitors should be prepared to be invited by their business colleagues to lavish dinner parties, which may last for hours. These parties are almost always held in Japanese restaurants or nightclubs. Entertainment of visitors at private homes is not very common. If you do visit a Japanese home, remove your hat and gloves once inside the entrance to the house and then remove your shoes. It is not customary to take flowers for the hostess, but take a box of cakes or candy. The Japanese enjoy receiving gifts, which should be wrapped in pastel-colored paper, no bows.

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They particularly relish gifts of brandy and frozen steaks. Gifts given in twos are supposed to bring goodluck, so such things as cuff links and pen and pencil sets are especially well received. Never give four of anything, as one Japanese word for four is also the word for death.

Conversation

One topic to be avoided: World War II

Tipping

The Japanese do not expect and will rarely accept tips. It is inappropriate to tip in restaurants. If you do leave a tip, the waiter or manager will likely look for you to return it. You should only tip on American military bases or at the Sanno Hotel.

Do not tip taxi drivers or round fares upward. Give a wrapped gift of JPY 500 to drivers hired for a half day. Give a wrapped gift of JPY 1000 to drivers hired for a full day. Pay porters JPY 200 per bag at the airport and rail stations. A 10-15 percent service charge is added to the bill at hotels and restaurants.

Cultural advice upon greeting

The bow is the traditional Japanese greeting showing respect. Foreigners should bow slightly to show courtesy. The Japanese welcome Western traditions but offer weak handshakes without eye contact. Women may bow and shake hands. If they do not offer their hand, do not press the point.

There are three greetings commonly used in Japanese society, each depending on time of day:

| Time of Day | Japanese | English Equivalent |
|-------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Morning | Ohio Gozaimas | Good morning |
| Afternoon | Konnichiwa | Good afternoon |
| Evening | Kombanwa | Good evening |

Each of these greetings is usually followed by introducing yourself with name and title. The Japanese give their family name first, followed by their given name. When introducing someone, follow the family name with the suffix "san," showing honor. The given name should not be used when addressing an older person. Never use the suffix "san" with your own name.

"Sayonara" means goodbye.

Note: The discussion of these cultural traits is in no way meant to be derogatory; they are only noted as different from our own. As time goes on, these very traits, along with the warmth of the Japanese people, tend to make the culture even more endearing.

Cultural Environment

Cultural Questions & Answers: Bowing, Shaking Hands, and Exchanging Business Cards

Who bows first? And how low?

The operative word is *rank*. The shortcut for this lesson is simply to remember “The higher the rank of the person facing you, the lower you bow.” In Japanese society, it is extremely important, especially in business, to know the rank of people with whom you come in contact. The same applies to the rank of your company. For example, the middle-level manager in a large powerful company outranks a department head from a smaller, less important company. Therefore, who bows first and lowest? Answer: The person of lower rank bows first and lowest.

When do we shake hands?

The answer is complicated by the fact that many Japanese, especially those who travel abroad on business, are quickly adopting Western ways. As a result, our respective learning curves may collide midway. We may bow in respect to their practices, while they may simultaneously stick out their hand. They may even give a firm grip and add direct eye contact because they’ve been told that’s how the Westerners do it.

When do we exchange business cards?

Called *meishi* in Japanese, business cards are very important. The business card is more than a convenience. It represents one’s personal identity, one’s label, shingle, sign, rank, and name tag—all in one. (Incidentally, take care when listing your title on the card; make certain it is clear and accurate, neither overblown nor obscure. Also have all the information printed in Japanese on the reverse side, preferably with the same quality printing on both sides lest you imply their language is second class.) In Japan, greeting and business cards go together like *sake* and rice. When exchanging business cards in Japan, the proper etiquette is:

- Exchange cards at the very first stages of an introduction.
- Present (and receive) the card with both hands. Grasp the card between thumbs and forefingers, with the lettering facing the recipient. Accompany all this with a slight bow.
- Each recipient then takes several seconds to study the name, title, company name, and address before continuing.
- Now... shake hands and bow a few more times.
- Some final words of advice: Treat business cards with respect. The card is, after all, a symbol of that person’s very identity. Avoid writing notes on it, at least in front of the other person. Avoid carrying your cards or putting their card in your hip pocket—you are, obviously, then sitting on the cards. After receiving the other person’s card, place it respectfully on the table in front of you. And, speaking of wrong signals, I’ve seen one bored American businessperson take the Japanese person’s card and absentmindedly *pick his teeth* with it!

Cultural Environment

Japanese Holidays

| DATE | EVENT | COMMENTS |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| January 1 | New Year's Day (Oshogatsu) | National holiday - most businesses closed |
| January 2-3 | Bank holidays | Banks are closed |
| January 11 | Coming of Age Day (Seijin no hi) | National holiday - some businesses closed |
| February 11 | National Day (Kenkoku kinen no hi) | National holiday - most businesses closed |
| March 21-22 | Start of Spring - Vernal Equinox (Shumbun no hi) | National holiday - some businesses closed |
| April 29* | Shōwa Day | National holiday - most businesses closed |
| May 3* | Constitution Day (Kenpo Kinenbi) | National holiday - most businesses closed Demonstration for and against constitution possible. |
| May 4* | Day of Nature or Greenery Day (Midori no hi) | National holiday - most businesses closed |
| May 5* | Children's Day (Kodomo no hi) | National holiday - most businesses closed |
| May 14-16 | Sanja Festival | Asakusa Shrine, Tokyo |
| July 19 | Navy Day or Marine Day(Umi no hi) - 3rd Monday of July | National holiday - some businesses closed |
| August 6 | Hiroshima Memorial Day - Hiroshima only | Hiroshima only - some businesses closed |
| August 9 | Nagasaki Memorial Day - Nagasaki only | Nagasaki only - some businesses closed |
| August 11-15 | Anniversary of end of World War II | Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo. Anti-war rallies possible |
| August 13-15 | Obon Festival | Unofficial holiday - some businesses closed |
| September 20 | Respect for the Aged Day (Keiro no hi) | National holiday - some businesses closed |
| September 23 | Fall Equinox (Shubun no hi) Shinto | National holiday - some businesses closed |
| October 11 | Health-Sports Day (Taiiku no hi) - 2nd Monday of October | National holiday - some businesses closed |
| November 3 | National Culture Day (Bunka-no-hi) | National holiday - some businesses closed |
| November 23 | Labour Thanksgiving Day (Kinro Kansha no hi) | National holiday - some businesses closed |
| December 23 | Emperor's Birthday (Tenno Tanjobi) | National holiday - most businesses closed |
| December 31 | Bank holidays | Banks closed |

* -Part of Golden Week

Note: Holidays falling on Sunday are observed the Monday following. If two holidays are one day apart, that day is also taken as a holiday. Many businesses are closed Dec. 29-Jan. 3.

**The date of some holidays may vary from one year to the next. Please verify actual holiday date for the current year.*

Standards of Social Conduct

It has been the practice in Japan to forgo some of the formality usually found at large posts. Social life tends to be informal and based on individual initiative. Some senior staff members have heavy representational obligations, and Japan's tourist attractions keep many people busy with out-of-town guests, especially during the summer. You will find that there is not as much official entertaining as there is in some small post.

In Japan, where style and grace and courteousness are revered, bowing would surely be noted, appreciated, and probably remembered. Think about the subtle psychology of this and all gestures.

Nature of Functions

The Chief of Mission and senior officers entertain and are entertained by high-ranking Japanese officials, senior officers of the diplomatic missions, leading members of the business community, and American military officers. Cocktail parties, dinners, and other forms of home entertainment are popular. Large receptions are held on national days and other appropriate occasions by the diplomatic missions. On occasion, these events may be for the employees only with spouses not included.

Middle- and junior-level officers generally follow the same pattern of social life but on a reduced scale.

Clothing

Bring clothing suitable for the Carolinas, including warm jackets. Clothes can be purchased at the exchange (akin to Walmart or Sears in selection, but with slightly higher prices), at local shops catering to foreigners (where prices are very high), or through catalog mail orders. Bring special sizes or brand names, or plan to shop by mail. Japanese adult clothing is expensive and comes only in small sizes. Dry-cleaning and laundry service is available on the military bases through Japanese concessions, so prices are the same as at off-base facilities. American officers are invited to several black-tie functions throughout the year, so a tuxedo or formal wear for women is very useful.

Men

Post personnel either wear a suit to work or shirt/tie and keep a jacket in the office. The post exchanges have a selection of ties, blazers, underwear, casual clothing, and shoes. Slacks, good shirts, jackets, and suits are best mail-ordered or brought to post. Dark blue or gray suits are worn to Japanese functions. After work, normal U.S. leisure clothing is fine, bearing in mind that Japanese tend to dress conservatively.

Women

Consulate General employees should dress as professionals would in Washington, D.C. Cotton and other lightweight dresses and accessories are suitable for summer wear. Afternoon and evening wear is similar to that worn in the U.S., though depending on the occasion, more variety and less formality is seen. Scarves, jackets, and wraps are practical during the cool months. Lightweight wool suits and dresses are worn, as well as coats, jackets, and sweaters. The exchanges stock a variety of women's clothes, as do local department stores and shops, although prices are high and sizes limited in the latter. Many American women prefer to order from catalogs.

Children

Children dress as they would in the U.S. As with adults, shopping for children's clothing is usually accomplished through a combination of the military exchange, local stores, and mail order. The supplies available on the island are adequate, but the range of choice in both style and pace is often limited. Kids have the most luck in Japanese department stores, although prices are higher than in the U.S.

Post Morale

Post morale is easy to sense but difficult to define. Its quality is pervasive enough to be detectable from the moment of arrival. It is accepted as an important factor in overseas life and is composed of many complex environmental and personality factors. The quality of leadership, health, security, and housing conditions, the host country attitudes, and work satisfaction are key components of post morale. Equally important, however, is the collective impact of individual attitudes and actions. Morale can change with the arrival or departure of a single person or family. Group morale is influenced by complaining or by enthusiasm. Post morale is most healthy when a strong sense of enthusiasm and dedication to a common goal exists, thus unifying the group to a common mission.

All employees and family members affect mission morale. The conduit between the community and post management is the Community Liaison Office (CLO) Coordinator. The CLO Coordinator is the morale officer at post and concentrates on pre-arrival issues, assimilation at post, and ongoing support programs. The following checklist suggests ways that all in the community may contribute to building and maintaining high post morale:

Prior to Arrival At Post, Have I:

- () Contacted the CLO Coordinator at post to inform her/him of my arrival and to inquire about services CLO offers?
- () Properly notified post of my arrival and of those who are accompanying me? Asked the people to whom I have written if I might run an errand for them before I leave the U.S.?
- () If married, suggested my spouse write ahead? Found the names and addresses of youngsters with whom my children could correspond for answers to their questions?
- () Informed the Administrative Officer or Staff that I am traveling with a pet?
- () Made all personal and financial arrangements prior to leaving the United States?
- () Learned as much about the country and its language as possible? Studied the language, when possible, while in the United States?
- () Planned arrival at a time, if given a choice, that is convenient to those who may meet newcomers?
- () Packed carry-on bags and air freight wisely and with the necessary items, to manage in the event pieces of luggage are lost or the post does not have an arrival kit available?

While At Post, Have I:

- () Expressed appreciation to those who have helped acquaint me with my new office and community?
- () Attended all briefing and post orientation programs? Made arrangements for my spouse and older children also to attend and to obtain the proper Embassy ID cards?
- () Ensured that family members are familiar with local customs and courtesies?
- () Aided new arrivals to the mission? Shared information and contacts?
- () Included colleagues in social functions who might otherwise have limited opportunity to attend such events? Invited those who might be missing family gatherings to attend special holiday events?
- Remembered to invite others' houseguests, relatives, or official visitors?
- () Sent a guest list and, if appropriate, an explanation of purpose to colleagues invited to representational functions? As a guest, shared responsibility for the success of representational functions organized by mission colleagues?

Continued on next page



- () Studied post emergency and security plans and explained them to my family to help them feel secure about what to do in a sudden emergency or evacuation? Prepared all documents needed in the event of an emergency?
- () Been responsive to colleagues during such emergencies as illness, periods of culture shock, or when they have been required to travel and leave children at post?
- () Explained my responsibilities to new arrivals to the post?
- () Shared books, music, video tapes, catalogs, games, sports equipment, and other items that are in scarce supply at post?
- () Developed good communication with the nationals of the mission?
- () Brought home from the office publications and bulletins of interest to my family?
- () Supported my family's activities? Attended school functions, shared chauffeuring, chaperoning, scout work, and other activities?
- () Seen the country, practiced the language, and met new friends?
- () Been an active member of the mission, sharing ideas, and working with others to generate a supporting climate for all elements of the community? Recognized the contributions of others?
- () Given time to the commissary association, school board, American club council, or other organization from which I derive benefit?

Prior to Departure From Post, Have I:

- () Organized records (and office) so my successor will benefit from all I have learned, and the post will not suffer from discontinuity?
- () Written my successor about the post to assist him or her?
- () Made proper farewells to all who helped me throughout the tour?
- () Left with the appropriate officials any suggestions I have for enhancing post morale?

Prior to Arrival At My Next Post, Have I:

- () Acquainted myself with living conditions, costs, and school facilities? Brought home and reviewed Post Reports, library materials, reports of colleagues' experiences or slides of the new area? Shared this information with my family?
- () Consciously prepared myself and family members for the move? Prepared my immediate family for our departure to next assignment?

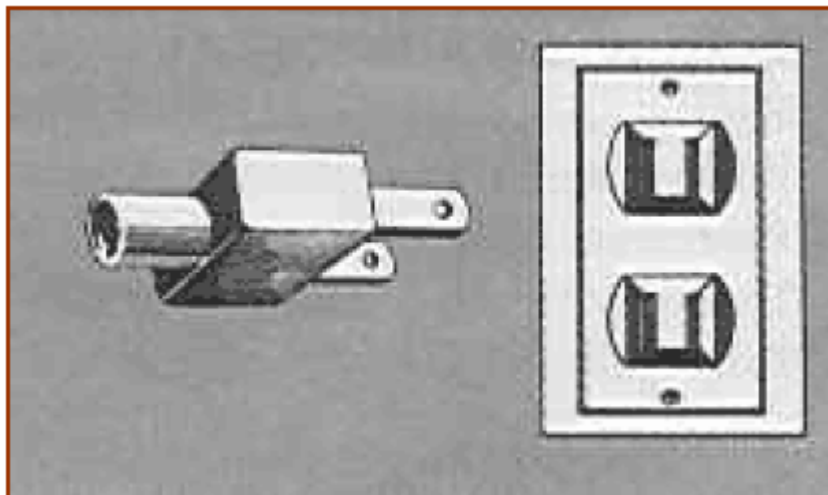
Household Information



Utilities and Equipment

Electricity and plug information for Japan

Electricity in eastern Japan is supplied at 100 volts AC, 50 Hz. This includes the cities of Tokyo, Kawasaki, Sapporo, Yokohama and Sendai. Electricity in western Japan is supplied at 100 volts AC, 60 Hz. This area includes the cities of Osaka, Kyoto, Nagoya and Hiroshima. Japan uses North American two-pronged flat-blade plugs. Converters are not needed to use many appliances that run on 110 AC, 60 Hz. Battery chargers, hair dryers, razors, etc. will run slower than normal if used with electricity supplied at 50 Hz. They may overheat if used for long periods. Appliances rated for 60 Hz that rely on timers or must operate at certain speeds (such as CD players, cassette players, clocks or anything digital) will not work correctly without a converter, which can be found in Japanese department stores. Most laptop computers operate with any voltage from 100 to 240 volts and at any frequency; however, check your computer's requirements first.



Transformers

These useful devices need to be handled with special caution. Make sure the transformer is the proper size for the appliance you intend to use. Also remember that transformer location and installation demand precaution against electrical shock.

- Always isolate transformer location out of the reach of children.
- Transformers get hot! Do not place on combustible surfaces.
- Keep transformers and wiring from any contact with water.
- Unplug transformers when not in use. They pull a lot of electricity.
- Label appliances that need transformers and don't let the un-informed use them.
- Plug transformer in the wall outlet first; then plug in appliance. Don't connect both at the same time.
- DO NOT OVERLOAD TRANSFORMERS!



Housing

Source: e-diplomat; last updated: 1/9/2010

Temporary Quarters

Every effort is made for employees assigned to government-owned quarters to move directly into their assigned unit upon arrival. Some will be required to move into a temporary apartment at the Mitsui Housing Compound while their permanent quarters are made ready. Other employees live in leased apartments on the economy and may stay in temporary quarters for 2 months or longer.

Their temporary quarters may be on the Mitsui Housing Compound (if space is available) or in a hotel.

Permanent Housing

The U.S. Government-owned Ambassador's residence adjacent to the Chancery is a historic and stately building with attractive gardens and a swimming pool. Large representational reception and dining areas are on the ground floor, and the Ambassador's private quarters and ample guest suites are on the second floor. The DCM's home, located about one kilometer from the Chancery, is large, with ample reception and dining areas, patio and garden to accommodate the representational needs of the Deputy Chief of Mission.

The Mitsui Housing Compound, located on a landscaped 11-acre hill within a 15-minute walk from the Chancery, comprises 171 apartment and townhouse units in five separate buildings. These U.S. Government-owned units are: Perry Tower (47 apartments), Harris Tower (42 apartments), Grew Tower (42 apartments), Mitsui Townhouses (14 units), and Temple Townhouses (28 units). The grounds include a large-covered swimming pool that is open year round, a multipurpose building (gymnasium and exercise/weight room), tennis courts, children's playground, gardens and ponds between the tower buildings, a recreation hall (housing a racquetball court, a martial arts practice room, a youth game room, and a large multipurpose room with a fully equipped kitchen) and parking for residents and a limited number of guests in a covered garage. Housing for the Embassy Marine Security Guards, an outdoor basketball court, and a domestics' dormitory building are also on the compound.

All personnel of State, FCS and the Defense Attach, Office are assigned housing on the compound. Employees of other agencies may be offered housing depending upon availability; typically they live on the economy in government-leased quarters.

Post has an active Inter-Agency Housing Board, with representatives of both foreign affairs and non-foreign affairs agencies as members. The Government-Owned (GO), Government-Leased (STL), and privately leased (LQA) housing programs are administered in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Foreign Affairs Manual (6 FAM 700).

Embassy housing on the Mitsui Compound includes both apartments and townhouses, ranging from one-bedroom to four-bedroom units. It must be emphasized that housing assignments are determined by availability, family size, and position/rank.

Storage facilities are extremely limited. Official storage space is also extremely limited and the General Services Office does not remove government furnishings from apartments in order to make space for personal effects. New personnel should avoid shipping any major items of furniture. Even those bringing well under the authorized 7,200 lbs. may find that they cannot fit all of their belongings in their apartment. Especially single employees assigned to positions at grades FS-5 or GS-9 and below and couples with no children may be assigned to quarters considerably smaller than those they have lived in at other posts.

Household Information



All employees are encouraged to check with their sponsor, the General Services Office, or the Community Liaison Office with questions concerning the size of their apartment before shipping their household effects.

The three towers—Perry, Harris, and Grew—are 14 stories tall, each containing 42–47 furnished, centrally heated and air-conditioned apartments. The vast majority of units are two-level, with internal stairs linking separate living-dining and sleeping areas. The towers have 23 one-bedroom units with about 1,000 square feet gross floor space. These units are generally assigned to single personnel working in positions at grades FS-5 or GS-9 and below. The one-bedroom units are comparable to small one-bedroom apartments in the Washington, D.C. area. The 57 twobedroom units have 950 to 1,250 square feet gross. They are assigned to couples and single personnel at the higher grades. The 22 three-bedroom units in the towers are 2,000 to 2,250 square feet. Ranging in size from 3,000 to 4,700 square feet, the 27 four-bedroom units in the towers include penthouse apartments for heads of the foreign affairs agencies.

Perry Tower (47 apartments) has 7 four-bedroom units with floor space ranging from 3,082 to 4,782 sq. ft. gross (286 to 444 sq. meters); 8 three-bedroom units of 2,009 to 2,251 sq. ft. (187 to 209 sq. meters); 19 two-bedroom units of 1,388 to 1,702 sq. ft. (129 to 158 sq. meters); and 13 one-bedroom units of 956 to 1,256 sq. ft. (88 to 117 sq. meters). All units are centrally heated/airconditioned.

Harris Tower and Grew Tower (42 apartments each) each have 10 four-bedroom units, 7 threebedroom units, 19 two-bedroom units, and 6 one-bedroom units with floor spaces similar to those in Perry Tower. All units are centrally heated and air-conditioned. On the ninth floor of each tower building is a common terrace for entertainment purposes.

Mitsui Townhouses (four story, 14 units) have seven four-bedroom units with an average floor space of 2,600 sq. ft. and seven three-bedroom units of 2,400 sq. ft. There is a car port and a small rock garden on the ground level of these units. Each unit is individually heated/airconditioned and hot water is supplied from a hot water heater/storage tank in the machine room of each unit.

Temple Townhouses (three story, 28 units) has 14 four-bedroom units with floor space of 2,800 sq. ft. a patio on the ground level, and a large attic on the top floor; 14 three-bedroom units of 2,150 sq. ft. each with a 450 sq. ft. patio. All units are centrally heated/air-conditioned. Parking is one floor below for all Temple Townhouse dwellers.

All housing units on the compound are equipped with at least one electric oven/range, dishwasher, and refrigerator in the kitchen and an electric clothes washer and dryer in the laundry room. A small storage cage, located on the basement level of the three tower buildings, is allocated for each unit with the exception of the four bedroom units in the three towers, the fourbedroom units in Temple Townhouses, and all Mitsui Townhouse units.

Each of the towers is connected to the parking area under Temple Townhouses by an underground tunnel. The compound control center is staffed by contractors 24 hours daily with an English-speaking attendant to handle emergency calls. During work hours, Monday through Friday and Saturday mornings, a buildings operations contractor manager is on duty. The Embassy provides grounds keeping and custodial services in the compound's public areas.

Mitsui Compound residents who are housed in units that contain domestic employee quarters must house their domestic employees in these quarters. Those living on the compound without domestic employee quarters in their apartments may apply for space for their domestic employee in the dormitory on the compound.

Household Information



Personnel who are not assigned to State, Foreign Agricultural Service, Foreign Commercial Service, and DAO should check with their parent agencies to determine whether housing will be leased by the agency or by the individual employee and what furniture or furnishings will be provided.

Housing available for rent is generally smaller in scale than that found in the U.S. Both apartments and houses normally have central heating and apartments in most cases also have central air-conditioning. Apartments leased for Embassy personnel normally have adequate Western-style major appliances.

Furnishings

The Ambassador's residence and DCM's home are fully furnished with basic furniture; lamps, draperies, carpets or area rugs are provided. Each house has complete kitchen and laundry facilities. These residences are also provided representational china, crystal, silverware and table, bed, and bath linens.

The Mitsui Compound housing units have basic living, dining, and bedroom furniture. A typical apartment will be furnished with a sofa, love seat, occasional chairs, coffee and end tables, lamps, dining room table and chairs, buffet, and queen-sized bed in the master bedroom and twin beds in the other bedrooms. A microwave oven and vacuum cleaner is also provided for each unit. Small electrical appliances, dishes, silverware, kitchen utensils, and the like are not provided.

Do not ship major furniture items or major appliances since the post has very limited storage facilities. No undue influences of climate normally affect furnishings you may wish to bring. However, extreme dryness in winter and high humidity in summer make humidifiers and dehumidifiers useful items for personal comfort.

U.S. Government-leased or Privately leased Quarters. Most rental housing is unfurnished or only partially furnished. If you must ship your own furniture, keep in mind the somewhat smaller scale of local construction, which may preclude the use of large overstuffed furniture or outsize cupboards or chests. Climatic factors do not normally preclude shipment of any particular type of furniture or furnishings. However, for personal comfort a humidifier and dehumidifier are suggested. If you plan to purchase any major appliances, basic furniture pieces, or general household furnishings for use here, the military exchanges in the area generally carry a stock of these items. Prices on the local market are higher than U.S. prices, but those at the exchanges are comparable. The exchanges also carry a limited range of U.S. brand small appliances (toasters, mixers, fans, vacuum cleaners, irons), china, glassware, cutlery, kitchenware, and lamps as well as refrigerators, freezers, washers, dryers, stoves, and dishwashers.

Telephone service is readily available throughout the city. American touch-tone phones will work on the Japanese system.

Ship your airfreight at least 10 work days before you leave to assure that it will be here when you arrive. Pack items you will need until your household affects (HHE) arrive. The Embassy lends Welcome Kits to new arrivals assigned to the Mitsui Housing Compound. Kits contain basic dishes, flatware, kitchen utensils, linens, and blankets. A limited number of infant cribs are also available. Infant food sterilizers, cribs, and high chairs may be shipped under existing regulations in airfreight or unaccompanied baggage (UAB) as part of the overall airfreight weight allowance. Layette items are available at the military bases.

Household Information



Supplies and Services

The following items are available through the military base exchanges at comparable or lower than U.S. prices as well as on the local market but at higher prices: toiletries for men and women, cosmetics, feminine personal supplies, tobacco items, home medicines and drugs; common household items, including minor repair materials; and entertainment supplies such as candles, napkins, invitations, tablecloths, centerpieces, decorations, and cards for all occasions. The EWA commissary also carries some of the above items.

All basic services—laundry, dry-cleaning, barber and beauty shops, shoe, and automobile repair—are available both at the military facilities and on the local market. Barber facilities are in the Chancery. A beauty shop and dry-cleaning facilities are located on the housing compound.

Food

Most food items available in the U.S. can be obtained in Tokyo, either through the Employee's Welfare Association (EWA), military commissaries, or on the local market at higher prices.

The EWA convenience store, located on the Embassy housing compound, carries a variety of grocery items, dairy products, frozen foods, frozen meats, household and cleaning supplies, toiletries, some stationery items, soft drinks, beer, and alcoholic beverages. The stores and other EWA-operated facilities are available for all EWA members. The annual membership dues in 2007 are: \$60 for a single; \$120 for a family of two or single parent; and \$180 for a family of three or more.

Commissaries at the nearby military bases are comparable to U.S. supermarkets. The small commissary at Hardy Barracks resembling a 7-11 store is approximately 10 minutes away from the Housing Compound by car and carries a limited stock of basic grocery items. The New Sanno Hotel also has a small shoppette. Throughout the city one can conveniently locate greengrocers, convenience-type stores, and large modern supermarkets.

All personnel assigned to the Mission are accorded access to military facilities that include, in addition to the outlets mentioned above, commissaries and exchanges at Yokohama, Yokota, Atsugi, Zama, Sagami-hara, and Yokosuka in the Tokyo area. Access to the EWA convenience store and other EWA-operated facilities is granted to all EWA members. The annual membership dues in 2005 are \$40 for a single, \$80 for a family of two or single parent, and \$120 for a family of three or more.

Household Information



Domestic Help

The number and type of domestics varies with the obligations and living pattern of the employee. Some employees utilize full-time live-in domestics, while others (particularly those without child care needs) find that a part-time maid 1 or 2 days a week is sufficient in Tokyo's compact and well-equipped apartments. Most English-speaking domestics who work on the housing compound do so on a part-time basis for several persons each week. The hourly rate for part-time domestics is approximately ¥1,000. Salaries for full-time domestics vary but generally you can expect to pay \$1,000-\$1,500 per month.

There is a dormitory for domestics on the Mitsui Housing Compound that is available on a spaceavailable basis for domestics sponsored by employees living on the compound. To qualify for the dormitory, employees who will be sponsoring domestic employees must employ them for 24 hours or more per week and the domestic must work at least 40 hours per week for Embassy employees or affiliated organizations.

Domestics are covered by Japanese national health insurance but are not covered by unemployment insurance. Many employers assume partial obligation for doctors' bills and for the placement of a domestic in another position when they leave Japan. Those who sponsor non-Japanese domestics are responsible for assuring their departure from Japan if not placed with a qualified sponsor.

Teenage dependents of Embassy employees and part-time maids are available as babysitters when those services are needed on compound for an hourly rate of ¥1,000. Off compound, the cost could be more. Teenagers charge from ¥500 per hour depending on age and experience while part-time maids charge ¥1,000 per hour.

Employees planning to bring domestic help to post must consult with the General Services Office prior to making transportation arrangements, and with the Human Resources Office regarding visa requirements for non-Japanese domestics.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has the authority to issue visas for the third-country nationals. Visas must be obtained outside Japan. The length of the procedures and the restrictions differ case by case. The Ministry of Justice permits the status of residence. The category of their status is the same as their given category of visas

Household Information



Household Employees

The following information is provided by the Department of State's Foreign Service Institute, and includes recommendations for interviewing, hiring and training household employees.

The idea of having domestic staff can be disconcerting for Foreign Service employees and family members. In our theoretically egalitarian society, words such as "servant" or worse, "houseboy" raise specters of bygone eras. There are a few different factors in play overseas:

- Daily tasks may require great effort—even without any language barriers that may exist. Instead of sticking a frozen dinner in the microwave, you may need to ask what to buy and how to cook it, make a trip to the local market, bargain for unfamiliar produce, carefully wash and disinfect it, wait for a power outage to end, and only then begin cooking supper. Having someone reliable to help can make life in a hard place easier.
- Hiring someone can help the local economy by providing another job; it can be an effective way to share your income without promoting dependence.
- Household employees may provide a window into the local culture or a part of society that you may not see as a Foreign Service employee or family member, enriching your experience and broadening your understanding of the country.
- Help at home can free up time for other activities and enable representational events in your residence, opportunities to get to know the country, and meaningful volunteer work.

Determine Your Requirements

Do not feel that you have to hire your predecessor's employees or the first person recommended to you by the CLO Coordinator. Take the time to determine your requirements first, and think about the following factors before asking for recommendations:

- 1) Do you need someone full-time or part-time?
- 2) Do you want someone to cook?
- 3) Local or American foods?
- 4) Will you need help on evenings or weekends?
- 5) Do you need child care? How many hours per week?
- 6) Will the employee need to take care of your pets, take telephone messages, shop for food, manage other employees?
- 7) Does the employee need to speak English? How well?
- 8) Do you want a live-in maid?
- 9) Would you mind employing additional family members?

Plan the Position

Although you may have diplomatic immunity, your employees will expect you to abide by local labor practices. Find out in advance what is normal in terms of working hours, holidays, benefits, bonuses, and so on. Getting a sample contract may be helpful. This research will eliminate unpleasant or expensive surprises down the road.

Check with others at post to determine an appropriate salary. Pay will depend on the local pay scale, the size of your house and family, the employee's experience, and the scope of duties.

Household Information



Choosing the cheapest employee may mean sacrificing experience and maturity; it may be worth paying more.

Be clear before you interview anyone what you intend to provide in the way of fringe benefits. What is expected? (In some countries, employers provide personal hygiene products such as soap and shampoo for live-in employees, along with room and board). Which items will the employee be allowed to use? Will you pay for sick days or emergency absences? Will you help the family by providing school uniforms or other extras? What will the limits be? Will you loan money or provide salary advances? These points can be included in a written contract if agreed.

Your employees most likely will face personal problems at some point, and it may be difficult for you to ignore them (for example, if your live-in housekeeper has a baby, can the two both continue to live with you?) It helps if you have thought in advance about how you prefer to handle difficult situations.

Get Recommendations

The best way to find an honest, reliable employee is to get recommendations from previous employers, the CLO Coordinator or Administrative Officer, or other acquaintances at your new post. Even if the employee has excellent recommendations, take the time to follow good hiring practices as indicated below.

Interview Potential Candidates

Prior to interviewing candidates, prepare and photocopy a list of questions that are relevant to your needs. Use it at each interview to help you select the best candidate. Be uniform in seeking information from prospective candidates. (Contact your CLO in advance to obtain copies of any papers it may have regarding the employees you will be interviewing and attach them to each questionnaire.) Factors to determine (either at the interview or in advance) include:

- Past employment: what, where, how long, duties, reasons for leaving
- Education: languages spoken, ability to read and write (which may not be as important as you initially think), skills for any other job requirements
- Specific position-related skills and training.
- Cultural factors if relevant to employment. (For instance, you might not want to hire people from different ethnic groups in a country where this could be a problem. Hire the employee with primary responsibility first, then do the rest of the hiring in such a way as to avoid potential friction.)
- Family situation if this is relevant to employment (for instance, if a live-in housekeeper wants to have five children live with her)
- Health and hygiene habits of potential candidates

Clearly explain the duties that you expect and the salary and benefits you are prepared to offer. Establish a professional tone at the interview. Use the formal verb form if there is one. Pay attention to how comfortable you feel with the person—this is someone you may see every day. If you are favorably impressed with the prospective employee, suggest a paid trial period rather than immediate employment.

Continued on next page

Household Information



Take Care With Childcare

Following are a few topics to discuss when interviewing potential childcare providers:

- Education and training
- Experience
- References
- Caregiving philosophies and goals
- Ideas on meals, snacks and drinks for infants and children
- Preferred treatment for common childhood ailments (to find out if there are local practices with which you are not comfortable)
- Usual activities planned or typical daily schedule
- Use of television/videos if available
- Philosophies on naps or quiet time
- Discipline methods, rules and behavior expectations
- Willingness and experience caring for children with special needs (if relevant)

It may be helpful to interview the potential employee without children present, then schedule a time for the employee to meet the child. A few hours of babysitting while parents are still in the house (for example, unpacking or working on other projects) may give a good idea of how the potential caregiver interacts with your child.

Be sure to check references; stop by unexpectedly at times when your children are under the caregivers' supervision; and listen carefully to what your children say.

Remember that the housekeeper or cook is not necessarily the best person to watch your children. Cooking, cleaning, and caring for children at the same time may not be optimal for safety reasons, and the employee could resent the change in responsibilities, if unexpected.

Protect Your Family

Obtain the potential employee's full name, address, and any identification number (such as Social Security number). Ask the Regional Security Officer to conduct a background investigation if one has not been done recently.

Ask the post medical unit which medical tests are recommended. Arrange for a complete medical examination, chest x-ray, or other recommended procedures for the potential employee; you are responsible for the cost. You may want to take the employee to this examination, both to make it more convenient for your employee and to make sure that he or she does not send someone else instead. Do not just ask for references: check them. Take the time to call previous employers and ask detailed questions. Read letters of reference carefully and attempt to verify what they say with the writers—even if they have since moved to a new post.

Written Documentation

If it is common locally, or even just for yourself, you might want to have all possible scenarios covered in writing to avoid misunderstandings and legal problems. Write down a list of what you may expect from the employee and what the employee may expect from you. Be as specific as possible regarding duties to be accomplished on a daily and monthly basis. Go over this list, reading it aloud to the employee and—once all parties agree—have the employee sign it as a contract addendum.

Household Information



Establish a form that will serve as a monthly receipt of salary payments. Obtain the employee's signature upon each salary payment.

Establish a form regarding leave/vacation to keep track of yearly leave taken/paid. Some countries' laws require a 13th (at times even a 14th) monthly salary, and this form serves as proof that—at year's end—the employer covered all local legal requirements. Have the employee sign this form as proof that s/he received due payment/benefits.

Establish a folder and keep (at a minimum) copies of the employee's identification documents, documentation of health check ups, residence address and telephone numbers, two additional points of contact in case the employee cannot be reached, insurance/social security payment receipts, salary log, and so forth.

Train Employees

The importance of this step cannot be overemphasized. If you need to, spend an entire day or two completing all of the required tasks with the new employee. Do not make assumptions about what employees know, even if they have worked for other American families. Go over the use of each appliance. Point out which ones require a transformer or other special treatment. You may want to put labels in the local language on the machines, clearly and simply noting controls and requirements. Indicate how laundry should be separated, which items should be washed by hand or line-dried, and how often to use products such as bleach or fabric softener.

Show them how to wash special dishes, such as non-stick pans. Point out which cleaners should be used for each task. Make sure that cloths or brushes used for bathrooms and floors never come near dishes or food preparation surfaces. Go over procedures for safe food and water handling with all employees, at least in brief—the last thing you want is for the gardener to helpfully take the initiative and refill your bottle of purified water from the tap.

Make sure that the new nanny knows your rules regarding television time, snacks, naps, and so on. Indicate if there are foods or drinks that you do not want your child to have (in many cultures it is considered fine to give children coffee, tea, or alcoholic beverages, for instance). Arrange for first aid training if possible. At the very least, provide emergency contact information and go over what to do in case of choking, poisoning, and so on.

A very real and unexpected problem for some families is the fact that household help may wait on children hand and foot, allowing them to do whatever they want. Avoid this by reminding both the employee and child that the employee is in charge and should be respected. Continue to assign children household chores and responsibilities, so that they will not be too shocked by a later return to "real life," and maintain a healthy respect for your household help.

Make sure employees know where emergency numbers are located and which device to use in case of emergency (telephone or radio). Instruct employees not to give out information about the family to incoming callers unless they are SURE that the caller is a friend or relative. Employees should know the full names of everyone in the family in case of emergency. Do not allow employees to allow entry onto your compound or in your house of anyone who you have not specifically approved.

Insist that employees accompany any workmen, exterminators or others who want to enter the house, after verifying that they have legitimate work orders. Remind them that exterminators should not spray food preparation surfaces or cupboards containing pots and pans, dishes or food.

Household Information



Be clear about your expectations regarding the use of your possessions and your home. Which food is all right to eat? Can the employee use the telephone, television or radio? When can family or friends stop by, if ever?

If you do not speak the language well, or if the employee does not speak English well, you may want to enlist a friend to interpret or write out instructions in the employee's language. You may be able to physically demonstrate many tasks, but be sure that important points have been understood.

Learn to Live Together

Respect the culture of your employees. For example, do not ask Muslims to cook or serve pork. Do not expect your female housekeeper to give the male gardener orders if this is not the norm. Do not expect people to clean up after pets if this is offensive to them.

Do not leave expensive items or cash lying around; why provide temptation? On the other hand, don't blame the employee for everything that you can't find. (Did you ever lose anything before you had someone working for you?)

Remember that an employee living in your house is neither a friend nor a guest. Americans may try to ease ambivalent feelings about "servants" by trying to treat employees as part of the family. This may be confusing and ultimately unfair to everyone involved. Many Foreign Service families recommend maintaining distance by using the formal verb tense, having different meal times, keeping living areas separate, and so on. This is a work relationship, after all.

Be realistic in your expectations: no one is going to raise your children the same way that you do or iron your shirts exactly the way the dry cleaner did in Bethesda. Express appreciation, compliment work well done, and be generous when it is appropriate. This is much more effective—and easier on your and your help's nerves—than constant complaints or criticisms.

Avoid Problems

If you need to dismiss employees, do not give them notice; ask for the keys, give them the required severance pay, and ask them to leave. Try to avoid firing someone in a moment of anger. Take the time to find out in advance what local regulations are and what the best way to handle the situation in the context of the local culture. "Saving face" may be important in some cultures; in other countries you may need a signed statement from the employee saying that he or she has been paid in full. Regardless of the reason, try to avoid firing someone before a major holiday.

If an employee is terminated for cause (stealing or inappropriate behavior), help prevent problems for future employers by documenting the behavior and sending a brief report to the Regional Security Officer and CLO Coordinator.



Medical Facilities

The standard of medical care in the major urban areas of Japan is high. Personal medical insurance that is valid in Japan is recommended. The Health Unit is located in the Chancery and is staffed by a nurse practitioner, registered nurse, administrative assistant and regional psychiatrist. The psychiatrist and nurse practitioner have regional responsibilities and are absent from post on occasion. Primary care outpatient services are available for employees and eligible family members covered under the Department of State Medical Program.

Medical administrative support for all the Consulates and Consulates General is provided through this office. The regional medical officer is posted to Manila and makes periodic visits to Tokyo and the Consulates and Consulates General in Japan.

Primary care services include, but are not limited to, confidential consultation (diagnosis and treatment), immunizations, urgent/minor emergencies, health promotion, and related health services. There are no laboratory or radiology facilities in the Health Unit.

The Health Unit staff can assist in making referrals to U.S. military facilities and medical facilities in the Tokyo area. For Tokyo residents, the minimum of a 3–4 hour round-trip commute is required to get to a U.S. military facility in the area, namely U.S. Air Force Hospital at Yokota, U.S. Naval Regional Medical Center at Yokosuka, U.S. Naval Regional Medical Center at Yokohama, and the U.S. Army Health Clinic at Camp Zama. The U.S. military facility, in the Fukuoka area is the U.S. Naval Regional Medical Center at Sasebo. The U.S. Naval Regional Medical Center on Okinawa is available to personnel in Naha. All outpatient medical expenses are the responsibility of the employee. Payment is expected at the time service is given.

Obtain appropriate medical/hospitalization insurance prior to your arrival. The Office of Medical Services acts only as a secondary insurance payer. Direct questions concerning eligibility for coverage under the Department of State Medical Program to the Office of Medical Services, Department of State (202) 663-1662.

Many English-speaking Japanese physicians, with U.S. post-graduate training, as well as Western doctors, maintain private practices in Tokyo. An up-to-date listing is available from the Health Unit. Local hospitals and clinics range from older facilities to very modern medical centers. Language continues to be a frustrating barrier in many facilities.

Completing the following "to do" list will make your transition to Japan easier: Make sure you and eligible family members have a current medical clearance. Upon arrival in Tokyo, make an appointment for a Health Unit briefing. Hand carry your medical records to post and bring a copy of your current medical clearance to the briefing. Hand carry all pertinent medical reports and evaluations especially for children with learning disabilities. There are few resources for children with special learning needs. Start the admission process to schools early. Update your immunizations before arriving at post. The Health Unit stocks a limited supply of prescription medications for acute illness. Bring an adequate supply of over-the-counter medications and long-term prescription medications. Do not pack prescription medications in your check-in luggage. Hand carry your prescription medications. The Health Unit stocks fluoride supplements for children. Check with the Health Unit regarding appropriate dosages. Individuals enrolled in a preferred provider organization (PPO) or health maintenance organization (HMO) will find it difficult to use this coverage overseas. Individuals that are members of a PPO or HMO should consider changing insurance policies before arriving to Tokyo.

Medical Information



Bring a hot-steam humidifier(s) for dry winter weather. Bring a dehumidifier(s) for the hot and humid summer weather. Bring flashlights and emergency first-aid kit(s) for your home and car. Enroll in a first aid and CPR course before arriving to post. Visit your dentist for cleaning and dental check-up before arriving to Tokyo. Dental care in Tokyo is expensive. Okinawa. The U.S. Navy Regional Medical Center at Camp Lester is a modern five-story, 500-bed facility. The hospital provides general medicine and specialty clinics to authorized personnel and their eligible family members. Except for children's illnesses and emergency care, it can be difficult to obtain appointments for routine outpatient care. Dental care is available on a space-available basis.

The Adventist Medical Center provides an alternative for dental and medical care at Camp Lester. It is a modern, well-run facility staffed by American or American-trained missionary physicians and dentists from the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Full payment in yen at the time of service is expected.

Medical Clinics that can accommodate international travelers and English speaking patients include (among others):

National Medical Clinic

#202, 5-16-11 Minami-Azabu, Minato-ku
Tokyo 106-0047
Phone: 81-3-3473-2057.
Hours of operation: Monday through Friday
9-5 and Saturday mornings.

Tokyo Medical and Surgical Clinic

No. 32 Mori Bldg. 2F
3-4-30 Shiba Koen, Minato-ku
Tokyo 105-0011
Phone: 81-3-3436-3028
Hours of operation: Monday through Friday
from 9-5, and Saturday mornings.

Hospitals:

Keio University Hospital

35 Shinanomachi
Shinjuku ku
Tokyo
Phone: 81-3-3353-1211
www.keio.ac.jp/hosp.html

Kitazato University Hospital

Sagamihara City
Kitasato Kanagawa 1-15-1
Phone: 81-42-778-8111

St. Luke's International Hospital

9-1 Akashiko
Chuoku
Tokyo
Phone: 81-3-3541-5151
www.luke.or.jp

Osaka University Hospital

2-15 Yamadaoka Suita
Osaka, 565-0871
Phone: 81-6-6879-5111
Outpatient Dept. Hours:
M-F 08:30-15:00
New patients and patients without an appt:
M-F: 08:30-11:30

National Cardiovascular Center

5-7-1 Fujishirodai,
Suita,
Osaka 565-8565
Phone: 81-6-6833-5012

Osaka National Hospital

2-1-14 Hoenzaka
Chuo-ku, Osaka-city
Osaka, 540
Phone: 81-6-6942-1331
Health Facilities

Medical Information

Pharmacies

Most hospitals and clinics have pharmacies that supply international medications. Following are Tokyo pharmacies where English is spoken:

American Pharmacy, Yurakucho

Hibiya Park Bldg. 1F
1-8-1 Yurakucho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, Japan
Phone: 03-3271-4034

Koyasu Drug Store Hotel Okura

Hotel Okura Main building 1F
2-10-4 Toranomon, Minato-ku, Tokyo, Japan
Phone: 03-3583-7958

Ginza Sankyo Pharmacy

2-7-12 Ginza, Chuo-ku, Tokyo, Japan
Phone: 03-3561-2649

Community Health

Traveling to Japan poses minimal health risks and is virtually no different than traveling to North America or Western Europe. The following table lists various diseases and how they are transmitted.

| Disease | How transmitted | Comments |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Traveler's diarrhea | Commonly caused by bacteria. Diarrhea in travelers can also be caused by parasites and, to a lesser extent, viruses. Contaminated food and water pose the greatest risk. | Risk of diarrheal diseases is slight in urban areas. An antibiotic can be prescribed to be used in case diarrhea develops, or in some cases, as prophylaxis against traveler's diarrhea. |
| Japanese encephalitis | Through mosquito bites. | Risk for travelers who live for prolonged periods in rural, endemic areas. Japanese encephalitis occurs sporadically in warm, wet months (April - November) in regions of rural Okinawa. An immunization series of three doses is available and should be considered for anyone who will live in infected areas or who visits rural, farming areas. |
| Leptospirosis | Bacterial infection caused from contact with contaminated animal tissue and urine found in water, damp soil, vegetation and mud. | There is a risk of leptospirosis in the northern areas of Okinawa. Travelers who engage in trekking, camping, adventure activities and especially water sports are at risk. |
| Tuberculosis | Through the air by coughing and sneezing. | Tuberculosis incidence is high throughout the country. Recently, there have been increased reports of drug-resistant TB. Travelers planning an extended stay should have pre-departure PPD skin test. Whenever possible, avoid crowded public spaces and mass transportation. |
| Echinococcus | Ingestion of eggs of the parasitic tapeworm, echinococcus. The eggs are present in the feces of dogs and foxes. The disease is not spread from human to human. | Within Japan, the disease is only present in Hokkaido, notably Rebun Island. Infection with the parasite may go undetected for 10-20 years, but the parasite slowly multiplies forming cysts in the liver and other organs. Cysts must be excised and delayed discovery of infection can be fatal. Recently, there has been confirmation of infection in 1.1 percent of domestic indoor pet dogs. The risk to visitors is minimal, but travelers should wash hands thoroughly after contact with dogs. |

Financial Information



Banking and Currency

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Currency Name/Code | The official currency of Japan is the yen (JPY). There are bills of 10,000, 5,000 and 1,000. Coins are 500, 100, 50, 10, 5 and 1. |
| Currency Convertibility | <p>Exchange traveler's checks at banks with signs in English reading "Authorized Foreign Exchange Bank." They may also be exchanged at major post offices and some of the large hotels and stores.</p> <p>It is illegal in Japan to use any currency other than yen. Any attempts by foreigners to use anything other than yen will be taken as an insult.</p> <p>Banks offer the best exchange. ATM rates are excellent but the transaction fees may be higher abroad than at home. Exchange rates are not favorable in airports, rail and bus stations, hotels, restaurants, or stores. Because of the low crime rate in Japan, the Japanese feel safe carrying large amounts of cash. If you are heading into the less populated areas, take a fair amount of cash, because it will be difficult to find an exchange service outside the major centers.</p> |
| Credit Card Acceptance | Japanese businesses accept most major credit cards, although cash is more popular. The favored cards are American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa. |
| ATM Availability | <p>MasterCard/Cirrus/Maestro, Visa/Plus and Diners Club ATM cards are not widely accepted at ATMs in Japan.</p> <p>International Visa/Plus accepted at Citibank locations. Citibank ATMs are open 24 hours. Shinsei Bank has at least seven locations in Tokyo accepting Visa/Plus.</p> <p>MasterCard/Cirrus/Maestro cards are accepted by Sumitomo Credit Service.</p> <p>Japan's post offices accept most international cards; ATMs are available 0900-1700.</p> |
| Traveler's Checks | Traveler's checks can be exchanged in banks and exchange bureaus across Japan. Take checks in Japanese yen or U.S. dollars for the lowest exchange rates. |
| Wire Services | <p>There are no Money gram offices in Japan (www.moneygram.com).</p> <p>There are three Western Union offices in Tokyo, none in Osaka, four in Fukuoka, and one in Nagoya. Ask your bank for referral to an agent most convenient for you.</p> |
| Sales Tax/VAT | There is an across-the-board, nonrefundable 5 percent consumer tax levied on all sales. A 5 percent federal consumer tax is added to all restaurant bills. Another 3 percent local tax is added to the bill if it exceeds JPY 7,500. A five percent federal consumer tax is added to all hotel bills. Another 3 percent local tax is added to the bill if it exceeds JPY 15,000. |
| Tipping | <p>The Japanese do not expect and will rarely accept tips. To show appreciation, give a monetary gift in an envelope imprinted specifically for this purpose. Enclose paper money only, no coins. A small curio from your home country or from your travels is always appropriate.</p> <p>All gifts should be wrapped, but do not use white or blue paper (which symbolizes death).</p> <p>Do not tip taxi drivers or round fares upward. Give a wrapped gift of JPY 500 to drivers hired for a half day. Give a wrapped gift of JPY 1000 to drivers hired for a full day. Pay porters JPY 200 per bag at the airport and rail stations. A 10-15 percent service charge is added to the bill at hotels and restaurants.</p> |

Financial Information



Currency Denominations

The currency most commonly used in Japan is the Yen (¥). Currency and exchange information for the Yen are provided below.



Exchange Rate

Currency exchange rates fluctuate according to the daily market. Details regarding the current exchange rate can be found at www.xe.com.

Reminders

- Travelers Checks are accepted by leading banks, hotels, and stores in major cities
- International credit cards (American Express, VISA, Diners Club, MasterCard, etc.) are also acceptable at major establishments.
- Credit card transactions may not be convenient outside big cities. It is recommended that you obtain cash before traveling to the countryside.

Taxes, Exchange, and Sale of Property

Restrictions

U.S. Government personnel and dependents are not subject to Japanese income tax on salary or allowances received from the U.S. Government or other income generated outside Japan. Income received from employment within Japan is, however, subject to Japanese income tax. Non-diplomatic personnel, including administrative and technical staff of the Embassy and consular posts, must pay fees for hunting licenses and driver's licenses. U.S. Government personnel in Japan who are not attached to the Embassy or consular posts are subject to road tax, weight tax, and inspection fees for registration and operation of personally owned vehicles as well.

Financial Information



Embassy policy is to limit the importation of personal property to quantities adequate for the personal use of the employee and accompanying dependents. Customs import regulations require that for a minimum of 2 years, any personal effects imported must be retained for the purpose intended.

The Ministry will authorize qualified personnel (i.e., diplomatic and consular staff plus administrative and technical staff) the tax-free importation of HHE, UAB and a POV during their tour of duty in Japan. Such importation must take place within 6 months after arrival at post; however, diplomatic and consular personnel are exempted from this 6-month time limitation. Cars imported by employees can be sold only after they have been registered with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for 2 years. Exceptions are made only when emergency circumstances warrant. Address requests for any additional information concerning these matters to the Administrative Minister-Counselor at the Embassy.



Telephones

- To call Japan from overseas, dial your country's international dialing code, then dial 81 (the country code for Japan), then the city code, and finally the number.
- For long-distance within Japan, include zero with the area code.
- To call overseas from Japan, dial the international access number, overseas country code, then area code and number. Note: When using public telephones in Japan, local calls are possible from any phone but overseas calls can only be made from certain phones.

Wireless Services

Mobile phones with Internet access are widely available in Japan; in fact, mobile phone subscribers in Japan outnumber those using fixed-line phones. The popularity of mobile phones has been driven in part by NTT DoCoMo's i-mode service, which allows users to surf the Internet, send and receive email on their cell phones. The i-mode service has overtaken conventional Japanese Internet service providers (ISPs) such as Fujitsu to become Japan's biggest Internet access platform.

The Japanese mobile network uses PDC (Personal Digital Cellular System) technology, which is not compatible with GSM or other mobile services. Some phone rental companies allow you to reserve a phone and get your phone number before your departure. Rental charges are usually a set rate plus additional rate per minute used.

Internet Service

There are numerous Internet cafes in Tokyo. In addition to the Internet cafes, hotels and business centers offer Internet access. Fees range from JPY 100 for 30 minutes to JPY 10,000 for a year's membership and unlimited usage. Kinko's, M-Stone, Surf Scape Tokyo and Tsukumo Internet House and are among the most widely available internet outlets.

Mail and Pouch

The Japanese postal system is reliable and efficient. Post offices and mailboxes are marked by a large white and red "T." Mailboxes are brilliant orange-red.

Main offices are open Monday-Friday 0900-1900 and Saturday 0900-1500. Smaller offices are open Monday-Friday 0900-1700 and Saturday 0900-1200.

The main post offices in larger cities have English-speaking personnel and will hold mail addressed Poste Restante (General Delivery) for up to 30 days.

Postcards to North America cost JPY 70, aero grams cost JPY 90 and airmail letters cost JPY 110. Most hotels will sell stamps and mail letters with no service charge. Packages can be mailed from post offices.



Broadcast Radio & Television

Radio

Japanese radio offers few English-language programs. Some stations broadcast partially in English. Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) broadcasts its news in English on the Internet (Real Player required). U.S. Armed Forces Radio can be heard in several locations. BBC and Voice of America can be heard on short wave. Following are a few of the primary stations in Japan:

NHK - public, operates news/speech-based Radio 1, cultural/educational network Radio 2, classical music-based network FM Radio, external service Radio Japan

Inter FM - Tokyo commercial music station

J-Wave - Tokyo commercial music station

Tokyo FM - Tokyo-based commercial network

TBS Radio - network operated by Tokyo Broadcasting System

Television

Japanese television offers little programming in English. There is a nightly bi-lingual news update; and some sets are equipped with a device eliminating the Japanese dubbing of English-language shows. The primary television networks are:

NHK - public, operates the General TV, Educational TV channels. NHK also runs satellite channels BS-1 and BS-2 and high-definition TV (HDTV) network Digital Hi-Vision. NHK World is the organization's TV service for Japanese nationals living overseas.

TV Asahi - national commercial network

Fuji TV - national commercial network

Nippon TV (NTV) - national commercial network

Tokyo Broadcasting System (TBS) - national commercial network

Newspapers, Magazines & Technical Journals

There is a wide variety of English-language newspapers and magazines available in Japan, especially in the larger urban centers. The Japan Times is considered to be the best Englishlanguage newspaper. The International Herald Tribune and Financial Times can be found in major cities. Newspapers and magazines can be bought in hotels and at newsstands. There is no delay in newspaper publication and availability. Other press pages include:

Asahi Shimbun - daily, English-language pages

Yomiuri Shimbun - daily, English-language pages

Mainichi Daily News - English-language pages

Sankei Shimbun - daily

Nikkei Net - English-language pages

The Japan Times - English-language

Kyodo - English-language pages



Personal Automobiles

A personally owned vehicle is not absolutely essential in view of the excellent public transportation systems in Tokyo and throughout most of Japan. However, most employees, particularly those with families, do have their own vehicles for the convenience of traveling outside Tokyo on weekends and for shopping trips to military bases. Each residential unit on the housing compound and each U.S. Government-rented residential unit is provided with a parking space for one vehicle. The Embassy does not provide official transport for personal use or home to work commuting; take this into consideration when making a decision about importing a personally owned vehicle.

Do not bring luxury-class cars to post. Tokyo's streets are narrow and parking spaces on the housing compound and elsewhere tend to be small. Campers and vans with high clearance (over 6' 10") will not fit into the covered parking areas at the housing compound. A compact car or minivan with air-conditioning and power steering is recommended. Since advance import clearance is not permitted, do not ship cars to post to arrive before you (see Getting to the Post for detailed shipping instructions).

All vehicles must be registered with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. To obtain registration, you must provide proof of ownership (factory invoice or bill of sale) and a valid insurance policy. Thirdparty insurance is compulsory. Embassy minimum requirements are: ¥20,000,000 (bodily injury or death), and ¥2,000,000 (property damage), plus Japanese compulsory Automobile Liability Insurance (JCI or CALI) and its premium is currently ¥16,950. Premiums for third-party insurance differ by the age of owner and capacity of engine displacement and are currently ¥60,340 for age 26 with 1,500 cc-2,500 cc.

A vehicle imported under diplomatic procedures can be sold (consumption) tax-free if it has been registered with the Ministry for at least 2 years. Exceptions to the 2-year requirement will be considered only if the vehicle has been severely damaged or is sold to another person entitled to free entry. If the owner of a vehicle is transferred or loses official status, and the car has been registered for less than 2 years, it must be exported, sold to another person entitled to free entry, or disposed of on the local market by paying consumption tax. Personally owned cars cannot be sold by proxy.

Many people purchase a used car for use while in Japan since these vehicles are in good supply and available at relatively reasonable prices. Write the Management Section for information, if time permits, before making your final plans.

Currently, automobiles manufactured after March 31, 1976, face stringent import restrictions for all classifications of foreigners, except personnel assigned to Embassies and Consulates in Japan who are reported to the Foreign Office. In practical terms, vehicles manufactured after the March 31, 1976 deadline and imported by Mission personnel will be extremely difficult to sell incountry unless they meet Japanese emission standards. Alterations to such vehicles may exceed the value of the vehicle. In short, it is likely that any imported vehicle manufactured after March 31, 1976, will have to be exported at the conclusion of the importer's tour unless it is sold to someone with the same free-entry privilege.

Traffic moves on the left and most cars are right-hand drive. However, those with left-hand drive report little or no difficulty driving. Most makes of American cars have local distributors who are competent in maintenance and repair. Replacements for the more complicated mechanisms, such as automatic shift or power steering, may have to be ordered from the U.S. Repair facilities for European makes can be found, but spare parts often have to be ordered from abroad, and prices for parts and services are higher than in the U.S.

Transportation

Gasoline costs more than in the U.S. The Japanese Government issues tax-free coupons to all assigned Mission personnel for use at specified tax-free gas stations throughout Japan. Mission personnel are permitted to buy from U.S. military installation stations (one is at Hardy Barracks, not far from the Chancery), which sell unleaded gasoline at higher than stateside prices. Unleaded gasoline is also available from Japanese stations tax free.

Japanese streets and roads are generally congested with cars, trucks, buses, motorbikes, and bicycles. Japanese cars are small by American standards but are advantageous in the narrow streets and limited parking areas. Driving is complicated by the fact that many road signs are written in Japanese kanji, and most Tokyo streets are not numbered or marked at all. Maps are essential for getting around in the city. Rental cars are available, but the charges are exorbitant.

To register a vehicle with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, employees and dependents must apply for a Japanese driver's license issued by the Public Safety Commission. In order to have your U.S. driver's license converted to a Japanese driver's license, you must appear in person at the licensing office and submit official documents to prove that you had been in the U.S. for a minimum of three full months during the time your U.S. driver's license was effective. The Japanese driving licensing office will check the issuance date and expiration date on your U.S. driver's license and also check the issuance date, embarkation/disembarkation stamp dates, date of entry permit on your passport and compare the two. They will accept your application if it reflects that you have been in the U.S. for 3 months anytime your U.S. driver's license was effective.

If your U.S. driver's license was renewed recently, and you were not physically present for 3 months in the U.S. before your initial arrival date to Japan, you will be required to submit an original document issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles of the State where your license was issued that lists your previous driver's license records. The authorities will compare the DMV records with your passport entry/exit stamps and issuance date in an attempt to verify your physical presence in the U.S. for 3 months in total. Post strongly recommends that when renewing your U.S. driver's license that you also request a driver's license history record from the DMV. You should bring an original DMV driver's license history record with you to post. Additionally, you should bring all current and expired diplomatic/official and tourist passports for date requirements.

Consular license plates take about a month to arrive from Tokyo after a car has been purchased. Japanese drivers' licenses are obtained in a day upon presentation of a valid U.S. license. Public buses are a clean, safe and reliable, though expensive option. The Consulate General is not accessible to public transportation without long walks or several changes of bus lines. Taxis are numerous and less expensive than in Tokyo. Only designated taxis are allowed to enter the U.S. bases. Recently, all families at post have had two cars.

New cars are readily available but not recommended. Although Okinawa has a Ford dealer, repairs and spare parts for U.S.-made cars, including American-made Japanese models, are difficult to obtain. Reliable used Japanese cars can be purchased for about \$2,000–\$3,000, but may be expected to require substantial upkeep and repair expenditures during a 3-year tour. Onbase car repair facilities are local concessions, so the cost is at least as high as at off-base shops. The high humidity, heavy with salt from the ocean, and blowing coral dust are hard on metal, and cars rust quickly. The on-base price for gasoline (89 octane and diesel only) is about the same as the average price in the U.S.

Transportation

Consulate General personnel are exempt from the rigorous Government of Japan auto inspection law. Constant care is required to prevent rapid deterioration. Adequate repair service can be obtained from PX and local garages. The current PX self-service price for unleaded gas is a little higher than those in the U.S.; there is no leaded gasoline.

Public Transportation

Japan features a vast array of public transportation, with ferry service being a popular option to go along with bus, rail, and taxi service. In most of Japan's major cities, using some form of public transportation is recommended due to heavy population and traffic density.

The public transportation systems of Japan's major cities are among the most modern in Asia and include excellent trains, extensive subway systems, and buses. All cities have an abundance of taxis. As in all heavily populated areas, transportation facilities are overtaxed, particularly during rush hours. Japan Railway (JR) electric trains link the major parts of Tokyo with outlying towns and cities, and the subway system crisscrossing Tokyo is the most inexpensive transportation in the city. Osaka has a JR loop line, and subway systems are also located in Yokohama, Nagoya, Osaka, Fukuoka, and Sapporo. Bus service links subway and loop train lines in Tokyo and is the system of local transportation in cities and towns throughout Japan. Signs and directions in subway and railway stations in the major cities usually appear in English as well as Japanese, making subway and rail travel relatively simple for the non-Japanese-speaking traveler.

Cruising taxis are plentiful. Taxis are safe and clean, though not inexpensive. Most taxi drivers do not speak English, so have directions to your destination written in Japanese. Most hotels have these instructions at the front desk to assist their guests in returning to the hotel. Taxi doors are operated by the driver, opening and closing automatically. Taxis are metered; the charge in Tokyo is Y710 for the first 2 kilometers plus Y90 for each additional 288 meters. There are additional charges for slow movement in traffic and late-night service. Consumption tax is added to the total fare amount. It is not customary to tip taxi drivers. Use the guidelines below when traveling in Japan.

Train

The railway system in Japan is safe and punctual. Purchase short-distance tickets at ticket machines in any train station. For longer distances, reservations and ticket arrangements must be made with a ticket office. Your ticket will be punched when you board the train. Punched tickets must be returned at your destination. The name of the station appears in the center of the sign (often in both Japanese and English). Adjacent stations are listed below or to either side. The Shinkansen (bullet train) is operated at 15-minute intervals from Tokyo to major cities.

Bus

All major cities have extensive intra-city bus routes. The destination is written in Japanese above the bus windshield, but it often includes a route number to help you find your way. Bus tickets are numbered to indicate the fare zone where you board the bus. The fare schedule is posted on the bus (in columns that correspond with each fare zone). Pay the fare in the cash box beside the driver's seat when leaving the bus. Long-distance buses run between Tokyo and other major cities. Though travel time is often longer, traveling by bus is more economical than by plane or by train.

Transportation

Taxi

When hailing a taxi, a red light in the lower right corner of the windshield indicates that the taxi is available (any other color means the taxi is reserved or occupied). Enter the back door on the left side, which the driver opens and closes automatically. Due to the complicated layout of larger cities, it's preferable to have a map to your destination (an address is sometimes not enough). Pay only the metered fare, as tipping is not practiced.

Subway

The main subway lines are Toei (Metropolitan) and Eidan (Teito Rapid Transit Authority). Subway lines are color-coded. Most stations have a subway map and fare tables in English. Station names are written using the alphabet.

Regional Transportation

Most of the country is served by the JR system. The Shinkansen (popularly known as the bullet train) is a familiar sight speeding across the Japanese countryside connecting Tokyo and many of the larger cities throughout Japan. These and other express and local trains combine to form a vast rail network that is heavily used. Sleeping, dining, and first-class (green) coaches are available on the main lines. Trains maintain strict schedules, and the personnel are polite and efficient. Porters or redcaps are available at all principal stations although they are extremely few in number. Their charges range from Y200 to Y300 per piece of baggage or more if the baggage is extremely heavy.

Most of the major international airlines and a number of steamship companies provide service to Japan. Domestic air travel is quite extensive. Several domestic airlines operate to all the major cities in Japan; airbus service has been instituted between Tokyo and several cities. The airport used for domestic travel is Haneda, 23 kilometers from Tokyo. Rapid monorail or bus service is available from Haneda to downtown Tokyo locations, and taxis are plentiful. The taxi fare is around Y8,000.

The new Tokyo International Airport at Narita, about 77 kilometers from Tokyo, is used for all international flights (except those of China Airlines, the Republic of China national carrier that operates from Haneda). Surface transportation from Narita into the city is commonly via limousine bus directly to the Tokyo City Air Terminal (TCAT) or by taxi. Train service is also available, but its use is not recommended for the newcomer due to the complicated connections. Transit time by bus and taxi can be time consuming, at least 1-1/2 hours, often more, depending on traffic conditions on the heavily congested highways serving the airport from central Tokyo. The airport limousine bus fare is ¥3,000, and taxi fare is approximately ¥27,000, including toll charges.

Many express toll roads are excellent. Almost all roads are paved. The main roads are generally in good condition, the secondary roads are more inclined to be narrow and winding.



Driving Requirements

An International Driving Permit and your national driver's license are required if you wish to drive in Japan. To obtain a Japanese license, bring the following to the Sameze License Office (1-12-5 Higashi Oi, Shinagawa-ku): a valid license from your home country that is at least three months old, passport, alien registration card and one black and white or color three by 2.4 centimeters. A brief written and driving test might be required.

Information about driving in Japan is available from the Japan Automobile Association (JAF) (phone: 81-03-3436-2811; Web: www.jaf.or.jp/e/index_e.htm)

Additionally, check with your respective automobile club or association for reciprocal services with the JAF while traveling in Japan.

Driving Tips

Keep the following tips in mind when driving on in Japan:

Requirements:

- International Driving Permits (IDPs):
- In addition to your U.S. driver's license, **you must obtain an IDP to drive in Japan.**
- IDPs must be obtained prior to arriving in Japan. They are issued in the United States and **cannot be obtained in Japan.**
- The only authorized distributors of IDPs are the American Automobile Association (AAA) or the American Automobile Touring Alliance (AATA). IDPs are not issued by the U.S. Embassy or by its Consulates.
- Seat belts and child seats are mandatory.
- Japanese compulsory insurance is mandatory. Check with your U.S. auto insurance, as it may not provide coverage in Japan.
- If you or any of your family members have renewed your U.S. state driver's license within the past year, make sure that you obtain a certified copy of your U.S. state driving record. Japan officials will want proof that you have been driving for at least one year.

Reminders:

- Drive on the left side of the road.
- Distances are in kilometers (1km = .62 mile; 1 mile = 1.6km)
- All expressways are toll roads.
- Most major roads and all expressways have signs in both Japanese and English.
- If you experience car trouble, the Japan Automobile Federation (JAF) is the equivalent of AAA and may be able to assist you. To contact the Tokyo area offices by telephone, dial 03- 5976-9777.

Transportation

International Road Signs

Road Signs and Meanings

Road signs in Japan follow international standards and their meanings are often easily recognizable. Important (or possibly ambiguous) road signs are defined below. A list of driving tips is also provided.

Sign Shapes:

Diamond signs indicate priority.

Red triangles are warnings.

Red circles are restrictions.

Blue circles are requirements.







Squares and rectangles give guidance.

Sign Colors:

















Red indicates a negative action, such as a warning or prohibition. It means “Don’t” or “No.”

Blue indicates a positive action or feature, such as a bicycle lane. It means “Do” or “Yes.”

Sample Signs—Red:

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Stop | Proceed slowly | Maximum speed: 50 KPH | Minimum speed: 30km/hr | Do not enter | No vehicles |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Beginning/end of restricted zone | In restricted zone | No passing | No parking | No stopping or parking | Road closed |













Sample Signs—Blue:

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Left turn or through traffic (opposite for right turn) | Through traffic only | Proceed on left | One way | Left turn allowed on red light | Parking Area |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Direction designated lanes | Crosswalk ahead | Primary road | Safety zone | Detour | End of restricted zone |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Left Lane: Trolley bus Center Lane: Ordinary vehicles Right Lane: Large size vehicles | National road number | Prefectural road number | Exclusive road for bicyclists | Exclusive bus lane | Sound horn |

Transportation



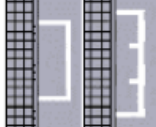



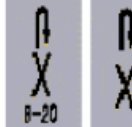
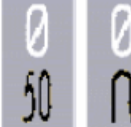


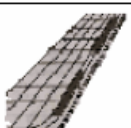



Sample Signs—Yellow:

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Traffic light ahead |  "Cross" intersection |  "T" intersection |  Right turn ahead |  Rotary ahead (traffic circle) |  Bumpy road ahead |
|  School zone |  Railroad crossing |  Lane reduction |  Possible falling stones |  Caution, side wind |  Other hazard |

Sample Signs—Text:

| | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  "DEGUCHI " (off ramp) |  "IRIGUCHI" (on ramp) |  "CHUUI" (caution) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Sample Road Markings:

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Left: Parallel parking (1 vehicle) Right: Parallel parking (2+ vehicles) |  Arrows indicate direction of traffic |  No stopping |  Priority road ahead (give way) |  No U-turn |  End of traffic regulations |
|  No entry zone (white diagonal lines, yellow outside line) |  Approaching safety zone or obstruction |  Dotted yellow line on curb = no parking |  Solid yellow line on curb = no stopping or parking |  Safety zone |  Street car stop |



Schools

Tokyo has a wide selection of excellent schools that provide education comparable to that available in the best schools in the U.S. and elsewhere. The school styles range from open classroom to more structured approaches; sports, music, drama, and other outside activities are provided in varying degrees.

Graduates from the schools in the area have no difficulty being accepted by the best U.S. colleges and universities. To accommodate the requirements of children with special needs, parents should be certain to communicate directly with the schools regarding individual educational needs and programs available. The school year is from September to June. It is essential to communicate with the schools as early as possible since competition for spaces is keen. Most schools begin accepting applications for the upcoming school year in November of the current year. Most of the private schools maintain waiting lists. Upon acceptance, many schools require an early commitment on the part of the family and may require a non-refundable deposit.

Prior to making any commitment, it is important for families to ensure that they are fully aware of their financial responsibilities and obligations by checking with the school and post. The schools in the Tokyo area most frequently used by Embassy personnel are listed below. Each is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Tuition and other fees, books, and transportation are reimbursable up to the current educational allowance for the post. The cost of expensive uniforms, which are required by many of the schools, is not reimbursable.

A physical examination is required by most of the schools. Keep a copy of the results of the physical examination conducted in connection with your transfer to Japan as this usually will suffice.

The American School in Japan

(ASIJ) (1-1, Nomizu 1-chome, Chofu-shi, Tokyo 182-0031, tel: 0422-34-5300, fax: 0422-34-5308; web address: www.asij.ac.jp; e-mail: enroll@asij.ac.jp) is an independent elementary and secondary school accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. It is an overseas member of the National Association of Independent Schools of the United States and is affiliated with the International Schools Service. Of the 1,400 students, 67% are American, 15% are Japanese and the rest third-country nationals. The curriculum is similar to that of the best U.S. college preparatory schools. In addition, Japanese language and area studies are offered in all grades.

The facilities include an indoor swimming pool, two gymnasiums, theater, laboratories, libraries, and cafeteria. The emphasis is on individualized instruction through the modular schedule in the secondary schools and through employment of team teaching as a means of greater flexibility in the elementary school. The number of graduates who enter colleges is about 98%.

The school is at Chofu in Tokyo's western suburbs. The school provides bus service from all areas of Tokyo including a stop at the apartment compound, with commuting time running slightly under an hour each way. Train service to within 10 minutes walking distance from the school is also available.



The American School in Japan Nursery

Kindergarten (3-5 age group) (15-5, Aobadai 2-chome, Meguro-ku, Tokyo 153-0042; e-mail: nk@asij.ac.jp). In addition to the kindergarten on the Chofu campus, ASIJ operates a nursery kindergarten Meguro that is about 20 minutes from the housing compound. It accommodates 115 students of several nationalities. The normal school day includes teacher-directed work and activities (music, library, films), rest periods, snack, and outdoor play. International School of the Sacred Heart (3-1, Hiroo 4-chome, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-0012; fax: (3) 3400-3496; tel: (3) 3400-3951; web address: www.iac.co.jp/~isssh3/; e-mail: isssh@gol.com) is an elementary and secondary institution with a student body of about 588 students directed by the Catholic Sisters of the Society of the Sacred Heart. Accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, it is a school for girls; however, boys are accepted for kindergarten.

Around 50 different nationalities are represented in the student body and about 40–50 graduates are admitted to U.S. and Japanese colleges and universities each year. The school plant includes laboratories, gymnasium, and library; sports facilities also are provided. The school is on the Sacred Heart University campus in central Tokyo.

Nishimachi International School

(14-7, Moto Azabu 2-chome, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0046; tel: (3) 3451-5520; fax: (3) 3456-0197; web address: www.nishimachi.ac.jp; e-mail: info@-nishimahi.ac.jp) offers instruction from kindergarten through grade 9. It is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Enrollment is about 400 with an international student body. The curriculum allows easy progression into the international high schools in the Tokyo area. Centrally located in Tokyo, the school has a gym (but no field), a large library, plus a strong Japanese language and active cultural activities programs. It generally requires early application for admission since there is usually a waiting list, particularly in the lower grades.

Seisen International School for Girls (12-15, Yoga I-chome, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo 158-0097; fax: (3) 3701-1033; tel: (3) 3704-2661; web address: www.seisen.com; e-mail: sisinfo@jap.com) is a girls' elementary and secondary school accredited by the Western Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges and operated by the Catholic order, the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Boys are accepted for kindergarten. Enrollment is around 645, representing 60 nationalities. The emphasis in the secondary school is college preparatory with an extracurricular program of arts, drama, journalism, music, and sports. Some 94% of graduates enter college. The school is in Tokyo, convenient to public buses, subways, and trains.

St. Mary's International School

(6-19, Seta I-chome, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo 158-8668; fax: (3) 3707-1950; tel: (3) 3709-3411; web address: www.smistokyo.com; e-mail: jutra@twics.com) is sponsored by the Catholic order, Brothers of Christian Instruction. It is an elementary and secondary boy's school accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges with an enrollment of 900, representing some 70 nationalities. The school has a preschool (5 years), but there is a waiting list. The secondary school curriculum is college preparatory, and participation in sports and extracurricular activities including music, arts, drama, and journalism is emphasized. The International Baccalaureate program is offered in the high school. The facilities include a gymnasium, indoor pool, laboratories, library, and cafeteria. Almost all graduates enter American colleges. Bus service is provided by the school. In addition, train, subway, and public bus service to the school is excellent.



Tokyo International Learning Community

(6-3-50 Osawa, Mitaka-shi, Tokyo 181-0015, Tel: 0422-31-9611; fax: 0422-31-9648; web address: www.tilc.org; e-mail: tilc@gol.com) Established in 1987, Tokyo International Learning Community was set up by concerned parents and professionals in Tokyo's English-speaking community to support the education of students with special needs. Its staff now consists of four full-time teachers and over 10 other staff members, including an occupational therapist, a physical therapist, a speech pathologist, and a psychologist. Based in a seven-room school building in Mitaka, Tokyo International Learning Community has an Early Childhood program for children from newborn to 5 years old with developmental disabilities or difficulties, and their families, as well as an Upper School Program for elementary, middle- and high-school students.

Family Member Employment

Source: ediplomat.com - Last Updated: 1/15/2010

Several Eligible Family Member (EFM) appointments are available. Spouses and dependents are employed in positions in the Community Liaison Office (CLO) as well as other sections and agencies. Other employment opportunities include temporary secretarial or clerical assistance when needed to cover staff assignment gaps, home leave or periods of long illness. Amid the activities sponsored by EWA (Employee Welfare Association), a variety of part-time jobs may also be available.

Embassy spouses have in the past worked in a wide range of occupations locally, depending upon their expertise and educational background. The CLO periodically receives information from various business and private sector sources about careers and employment in Japan. Family members with special qualifications may wish to contact the CLO for assistance in finding employment. English-language editing and/or teaching are the most frequently available positions on the local economy.

Please note that only spouses of Embassy employees with diplomatic or official status are permitted to work on the local economy without having to obtain a working visa. They must, however, obtain a work permit from the Ministry of Justice through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs before accepting any employment that does not conflict with their diplomatic or official status. An exception to this might be if a spouse is currently employed outside of Japan and intends to continue work with the same company in Japan. In these cases, you are advised to contact the post with particulars.

In addition, spouses must, before accepting employment, obtain from their prospective employers, a written statement or contract that describes the position, the period of employment, number of working hours per week, the proposed salary, a resume (curriculum vitae), and a statement indicating the reasons for wishing to accept a particular job. Upon receiving these documents, once approved by the M/C for Management Affairs, the Embassy Human Resources Office will initiate the process to assist spouses in obtaining a work permit. Please note that the Ministry of Justice through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs handles employment requests on a case-by-case basis. An official response, (approval or disapproval) requires 4–6 weeks.

Note: During the actual working hours that spouses are employed as stipulated by the work permit, they relinquish their immunity from judicial process in matters relating to their employment. Working spouses are subject to payment of Japanese taxes derived from their employment.

Summer employment opportunities may also be available for teens at least 16 yrs of age and college students 18 to 22 yrs of age returning to Japan for vacation under the auspices of the Embassy. For more info on the summer hire program, contact Post CLO.

The Employee Welfare Association (EWA) has also offered some part-time and full-time jobs for Embassy dependents during the summer. These jobs include day-care providers and summer camp counselors.

Family Information

Getting Married

When a foreign national gets married in Japan, the following procedures must be completed. However, as there are more than 200 countries and regions throughout the world, these procedures may not apply to everyone. Confirm this with the representative of your country or region in Japan (Embassy, Consulate) before initiating any procedures.

When a foreign national and a Japanese national get married

Submit a written report of your marriage at your local municipal office. In a marriage report, you need to have the signature/personal seal of two witnesses over the age of 20. The witnesses can be foreign nationals (the documents for a marriage report can be obtained from your local municipal office). Japanese nationals need a copy or extract of their family register. Foreign nationals need a certificate or legal document issued by their home country's Embassy in Japan stating that he or she is eligible to marry. However, depending on the country, the way in which the eligibility for marriage certificate* (normally, in most cases, this is issued by the Embassy of that country in Japan) is handled differ and as there are countries which do not issue such documents, please check what is required with your home country's Embassy.

When two foreign nationals get married

It is not necessary, but you can follow Japanese procedures to register your marriage. In this case, submit a marriage report and the legal documents issued by your home country's Embassy stating that you are eligible for marriage. Two sets of documents, one for each spouse, are necessary.

Eligibility for marriage certificate

This is an official document which proves that the applicant, in accordance with the law in their home country, is eligible for marriage. Because the name of the document differs from country to country, please check with your government's representative in Japan.

Note that a translation of any documents written in a foreign language must be attached with the name of the person who translated it.

How Do I Bring My Fiancé Into The United States?

Background

If your fiancé(e) is not a citizen of the United States and you plan to get married in the United States, then you must file a petition with USCIS on behalf of your fiancé(e). After the petition is approved, your fiancé(e) must obtain a visa issued at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate abroad. The marriage must take place within 90 days of your fiancé(e) entering the United States. If the marriage does not take place within 90 days or your fiancé(e) marries someone other than you (the U.S. citizen filing USCIS Form I-129F - Petition for Alien Fiancé), your fiancé(e) will be required to leave the United States. Until the marriage takes place, your fiancé(e) is considered a nonimmigrant. A nonimmigrant is a foreign national seeking to temporarily enter the United States for a specific purpose. A fiancé(e) may not obtain an extension of the 90-day original nonimmigrant admission.

If your fiancé(e) intends to live and work permanently in the United States, your fiancé(e) should apply to become a permanent resident after your marriage. (If your fiancé(e) does not intend to become a permanent resident after your marriage, your fiancé(e)/new spouse must leave the country within the 90-day original nonimmigrant admission.) For more information, please see

Family Information



How Do I Become a Legal Permanent Resident While in the United States at
<http://www.uscis.gov/graphics/howdoi/legpermres.htm>.

Please note: your fiancé(e) will initially receive *conditional* permanent residence status for two years. Conditional permanent residency is granted when the marriage creating the relationship is less than two years old at the time of adjustment to permanent residence status. Also, your fiancé(e) may enter the United States only one time with a fiancé(e) visa. If your fiancé(e) leaves the country before you are married, your fiancé(e) may not be allowed back into the United States without a new visa.

Who is Eligible?

U.S. citizens who will be getting married to a foreign national in the United States may petition for a fiancé(e) classification (K-1) for their fiancé(e). You and your fiancé(e) must be free to marry. This means that both of you are unmarried, or that any previous marriages have ended through divorce, annulment or death. You must also have met with your fiancé(e) in person within the last two years before filing for the fiancé(e) visa. This requirement can be waived only if meeting your fiancé(e) in person would violate long-established customs, or if meeting your fiancé(e) would create extreme hardship for you. You and your fiancé(e) must marry within 90 days of your fiancé(e) entering the United States.

You may also apply to bring your fiancé(e)'s unmarried children, who are under age 21, to the United States.

How To Apply

To find out how you can apply to bring your fiancé(e) to the United States, please click here to see *Application Procedures*, at <http://www.uscis.gov/graphics/howdoi/fianceapp.htm>, which will help you identify what you need to do.

Family Information

Adoption Guidelines

Source: http://travel.state.gov/family/adoption/country/country_406.html

Availability of Children for Adoption

Both Japanese and foreign children are available for adoption in Japan. Most of the orphans adopted in Japan by foreigners are Japanese. Among the cases of foreign children adopted by foreigners in Japan, many of the children are related to the adoptive U.S. parents and may have lived with the adoptive parents in Japan for more than two years.

Japan Adoption Authorities

The Family Court and the Child Guidance Center (often located in the City or Ward Office) are the government office responsible for adoption in Japan. They have jurisdiction over the placement of children, home studies, and adoptions.

Japan Adoption Procedure

Prospective adoptive parents may find children available for adoption either through the CGC or private parties such as missionaries, social welfare organizations, or adoption agencies. It is important to remember that the CGC will only issue a certificate identifying a "child who requires protection" if the adoption is arranged through them. If the adoption is arranged privately, the adoptive parents must present the appropriate statement of release for emigration and adoption to prove the child is adoptable. Even if the Japanese government certifies a child as requiring protection or considers a child legally adoptable, however, it is possible that the child may still not meet the U.S. definition of an orphan.

Child requirements: Japanese law does not define an orphan. Rather, a "child who requires protection" is defined as:

- A child born out of wedlock;
- An abandoned infant;
- A child whose parent(s) has/have died or disappeared;
- A child whose parents are incapable of providing support; or
- An abused child.

The Child Guidance Center (CGC) is the local government authority responsible for determining whether a child requires protection. The CGC may issue a certificate to a "child who requires protection," but only if the child has been placed under the care of the child welfare authorities. The CGC will not issue a certificate if the child is to be adopted abroad or if the child will benefit from a privately arranged adoption.

Under Japanese law, an adoptable child is any minor who has been irrevocably released for adoption by its sole surviving parent, by a legal guardian, by both parents (if both parents are living and remain married), by the natural mother (in the case of an out-of-wedlock birth), or by the institution that has custody of the child. If the child is not Japanese, the Family Court with jurisdiction over the adoption will consider an adoptable child to be any child who has met the pre-adoption requirements of the child's country of nationality. The surviving parent has the legal capacity to transfer custody of the child to a second party by signing a "statement of release of orphan for emigration and adoption." If the surviving natural parent is a minor (i.e. under 20 years old), then the natural parent's parent or guardian must also sign a similar statement.

Family Information

Once a child has been identified, the adoptive parents may apply to adopt the child through the local Family Court. When an adoption involves at least one foreign citizen - either parent or child - the Family Court applies the home country law of the foreign party. For U.S. citizen adoptive parents, the Court will consider the law governing inter-country adoptions in the parent(s)' state of legal domicile. When the child is non-Japanese, the Family Court decides whether the case meets the pre-adoption requirements of the child's home country. If, for example, the home country adoption law requires a third party or home country government authority to approve or consent to the child's adoption, the Family Court requires this approval.

Under Japanese law, a child can be adopted in one of two ways: regular and special. Regular adoption, with or without the court's consent- if the minor child is a descendant of one of the adoptive parents, the City Office may register a regular adoption without the Family Court's consent. If the child is not a lineal descendant of the adoptive parents, the Family Court must adjudicate the adoption before the City Office will legally register the adoption decree. Unlike a special adoption, this procedure does not necessarily sever the child's ties, rights, and privileges with regard to the birth parent(s) and any prior adoptive parent(s).

When the child and adoptive parents are not blood relatives, the adoptive parents must petition the Family Court with jurisdiction over the child's residence in Japan. After reviewing the documents, the Court informs the adoptive parents of the date of their court hearing. Typically, the Court will schedule the first hearing at the end of a trial six-month period. (Note: Although the six-month trial period normally begins when the parents file the adoption application, the Court will occasionally include any previous periods of cohabitation towards the six-month requirement.) During this trial period, the court-appointed investigator visits the family's home an average of three times, observing the interaction between the parents and the child. On the designated date, the child, the prospective parents, and the court-appointed investigator must attend a hearing in front of the judge. In most cases, the Court requires only one hearing, but the judge may call for additional hearings if necessary. Approximately two to three weeks after the final hearing, the judge will decide whether or not to approve the adoption. If the judge approves the petition, the Court issues a certificate allowing "Permission to adopt" (yoshi to suru koto o kyoka-suru). The adoptive parents must then register the adoption at the City or Ward Office. If the natural parents or any interested parties do not object within two weeks of the registration, the adoption is considered final.

Regular adoptions in Japan do not fully sever ties between the adopted child and the biological parents. For example, Japanese inheritance law recognizes that a child adopted in a regular adoption may still have inheritance rights from the biological parents. In addition, regular adoptions can be easily dissolved. Thus, a regular adoption may not permanently create the distinctly new family relationship envisioned by most American adoptive parents. If the adopted child later obtains U.S. citizenship and abandons Japanese nationality, the legal effect on the child's ties to the biological parents is unclear.

Out & About

Specialty Restaurants

Many restaurants in Japan specialize in just one type of food. The following are various types of food found throughout Japan.

Sushi-ya

Sushi-ya are restaurants which specialize in sushi. In most sushi-ya, customers can sit either at a normal table or at a counter (sushi bar), behind which the sushi chef is working.



Nigiri

Small rice balls with fish, etc. on top. There are countless varieties of nigirizushi, some of the most common ones being tuna, shrimp, eel, squid, octopus and fried egg.



Gunkan

Small cups made of sushi rice and dried seaweed filled with seafood, etc. There are countless varieties of gunkanzushi, some of the most common ones being sea urchin and various kinds of fish eggs.



Norimaki

Sushi rice and seafood, etc. rolled in dried seaweed sheets. There are countless varieties of sushi rolls differing in ingredients and thickness. Sushi rolls prepared "inside out" are very popular outside of Japan, but rarely found in Japan.



Temaki

Temakizushi (literally: hand rolls) are cones made of nori seaweed and filled with sushi rice, seafood and vegetables.



Oshizushi

Oshizushi is pressed sushi, in which the fish is pressed onto the sushi rice in a wooden box. The picture shows trout oshizushi in form of a popular ekiben (train station lunch box).



Inari

Inarizushi is a simple and inexpensive type of sushi, in which sushi rice is filled into aburaage (deep fried tofu) bags.



Chirashi

Chirashizushi is a dish in which seafood, mushroom and vegetables are spread over sushi rice.

Out & About

Kaiten-zushi

Kaiten-zushi are sushi restaurants, where the sushi dishes are presented to the customers on a conveyor belt. Customers can then freely pick the dishes that they like or order dishes which are not available on the belt. In the end, the number of plates is counted to determine the cost. There are usually a few kinds of plates (differing in color or pattern), each being associated with a certain price. Kaiten-zushi tend to be less expensive than usual sushi-ya.

Ramen-ya



Ramen-ya specializes in ramen dishes, Chinese style noodles served in a soup with various toppings. Every ramen-ya has developed its own soup, the most crucial ingredient for a restaurant's success.

Tonkatsu-ya



Tonkatsu-ya serve tonkatsu, deep fried breaded pork cutlets. Korroke and other deep fried dishes are also available at many tonkatsu-ya.

Okonomiyaki-ya



Okonomiyaki-ya specialize in okonomiyaki and sometimes monjayaki. Customers are usually preparing their okonomiyaki by themselves on a hot plate which is built into the table.

Yakitori-ya



Yakitori-ya specialize in yakitori grilled chicken skewers. They are particularly popular among salarymen after work.

Sukiyaki-ya

Sukiyaki-ya specialize in sukiyaki and shabu-shabu. They tend to be expensive and are not very numerous.



Traditional tonkatsu restaurant



Table at an okonomiyaki restaurant

Out & About

General Restaurants

The following are some restaurant types that offer a broader range of dishes than specialized stores.

Izakaya

Izakaya are drinking places that offer a variety of small dishes, such as robata (grilled food), salads and finger food. It is probably the most popular restaurant type among the Japanese people. Izakaya tend to be informal, and the people at one table usually share all dishes, rather than ordering and eating individually.

Family Restaurant and Shokudo

Family restaurants (famiresu) offer a variety of Western, Chinese and Japanese dishes in order to please all family members. Shokudo also offer a variety of dishes, however, the term is not commonly used anymore, and the difference to family restaurants is small.

Teishoku-ya

Teishoku-ya are restaurants that sell teishoku (set menus). A set menu usually consists of a main dish such as a fried fish, a bowl of cooked rice and small side dishes. Teishoku-ya are especially numerous in business areas and popular during lunch time.



Out & About

Foreign Cuisine

Many restaurants in Japan specialize in a foreign cuisine. Especially Korean, Chinese and Italian cooking, as well as American style fast food enjoys a great popularity among the Japanese.

Chinese Restaurants

There are very many Chinese restaurants in Japan. Many of them serve slightly Japanized Chinese dishes, while others offer authentic Chinese food.

Italian Restaurants

The Italian cuisine is very popular across Japan. Many Italian restaurants have Japanese flavored pasta dishes on their menus besides conventional dishes.

Hamburger Fast Food

There are many hamburger fast food restaurants across Japan. They include major American chain stores such as McDonald's, but also various Japanese chain stores such as Mos Burger and Lotteria.

Ethnic Cuisine

In Japan, ethnic cuisine means South East Asian food, such as Thai, Indonesian and Vietnamese food.



Entertainment

Tokyo is one of the entertainment capitals of the world. It offers an infinite variety of nightlife from the most deluxe and expensive clubs and spectacular music hall revues to jazz coffeehouses and working-class restaurants. Restaurants are everywhere. Hardly a street in the city does not have at least one Japanese restaurant specializing in tempura (shrimp, fish, and various vegetables deep fried in oil), sushi (raw fish or shrimp in a small rice mold wrapped in a special kind of seaweed), and sukiyaki, perhaps the best-known Japanese food among foreigners. Many nice restaurants feature international cuisine or regional specialties (Chinese, French, American, Russian, Italian, Korean, or Spanish). Tokyo also has a variety of fast-food chains, both Japanese and such American favorites as McDonald's, Wendy's, Burger King, Shakey's, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and Pizza Hut. Recent casual restaurant additions include Outback Steakhouse and TGI Friday's. Prices in the restaurants range from moderate to extremely expensive. One of the best ways to sample the restaurants in Tokyo is at lunchtime when a meal costs half as much when served in the evening.

Out & About

Tokyo is the center of the Kabuki and Noh theaters. Two major theaters in Tokyo present Kabuki, and usually at least two productions are playing at any one time. Several productions of Noh and the classical Japanese comedy, Kyogen, are shown every week. The famous Bunraku Puppet Theater of Osaka visits Tokyo regularly.

Tokyo has nine symphony orchestras that perform year round, several ballet and opera companies, and many chamber groups and individual artists. With these choices, and with the constant stream of visiting foreign orchestras, ballet and opera companies, and individual artists, it has become one of the world's music centers. However, ticket prices are expensive.

Tokyo Weekender and Tokyo Classified, periodic publications especially for foreign residents or tourists in the city, present useful information on what is happening in music and the theater in Tokyo and describes various events going on throughout Japan. Copies are available at the Embassy, at the compound commissary, and at the New Sanno Hotel.

Tokyo is also the center of Japan's contemporary art life. Several museums have fine collections of Japanese and Western arts, and innumerable small galleries present showings of Japanese and foreign artists. The major department stores often sponsor art exhibitions. The Tokyo Museum of Modern Art each year has several large foreign exhibitions of international significance.

The Western Theater in Tokyo attracts much interest and activity. Most foreign plays are translated and presented in Japanese. The Tokyo International Players, an international Englishlanguage amateur group, produces several plays and readings during their October–May season. American and other foreign movies, shown with Japanese subtitles, are quite popular in Tokyo. They are, however, expensive. The English-language press carries detailed schedules. American movies are shown on Sunday afternoons and evenings at the New Sanno Hotel.

Photography is a popular hobby for both still and video enthusiasts. The Japanese are avid picture takers, and most foreigners follow suit. Excellent Japanese cameras and accessories are sold at the exchanges at reasonable prices. American film is sold locally and at the exchanges, although Japanese film is also of high quality. The military facilities do an excellent job of developing and printing for black and white film and color negatives, as do outlets on the local economy.

Additional Information



Emergency Services

Contact Information

Contact information for all U.S. Citizen Services offices in Italy is available on the "Contact Information" web page at <http://japan.usembassy.gov/e/acs/tacs-7123.html>

Replacement of a Lost or Stolen Passport

Information on how to replace your lost or stolen passport is available on the "Lost or Stolen" web page at <http://japan.usembassy.gov/e/acs/tacs-7130e.html>

Arrest of a U.S. Citizen

Information on the arrest of a U.S. citizen abroad is available on the "Assistance to U.S. Citizens Arrested Abroad" web page on the "travel.state.gov" website. <http://japan.usembassy.gov/acs>

Death of a U.S. Citizen in Japan

Information and guidance is available on the "Death of a U.S. Citizen" web page at <http://japan.usembassy.gov/acs>

Official Translators

Alpha Corporation, 2-5-7 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0093. Tel: 81-3-3230-0090
Fax: 81-3-3234-5336.

American Deposition Services Group, Thomas Consultants International Co., Ltd., 2-1-3-101 Kitamachi, Fujiwara-dai, Kita-ku, Kobe 651-1301, Tel. 81-78-987-0752, FAX 81-78-987-0754,
Email: gathomas@mb.infoweb.ne.jp

Convex, Ichijoji Bldg., 2-3-22 Azabudai, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0041. Tel: 81-3-3589-3355.
Fax: 81-3-3589-3974.

High-Tech Interpreting Services (Hisao Uema), 369-20 Nakawakura, Matsudo-shi, Chiba 270-0025. Tel & Fax: 81-47-348-8446

Inter Language Service System (ISS), Nihon Seimei Ichibancho Bldg., 7F, 23-3, Ichibancho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0082. Tel: 81-3-3230-4731. Fax: 81-3-3230-4733

KYR Communications (Seth A. Reames), 1-31-18-406 Okayama, Meguro-ku, Tokyo 152-0033, Tel and FAX 81-3-3725-7467. Email: kyr@zap.att.ne.jp

New-Tech, Ltd., William Lise, President. Suite 405, 1-403-4 Kosugimachi, Nakahara-ku, Kawasaki 211-0063, Tel: 044-739-3026. Web address: www.lise.jp

Additional Information



Internet Resources

Following are links to help with your overseas transition. These sites should provide the most up-to-date information on travel, safety and other detailed information about the country where you will be deployed.

CBP Japan webpage in the U.S. Embassy website - <http://japan.usembassy.gov/e/info/tinfo-cbp.html>

U.S. Customs & Border Protection, Japan

- CBP Useful Links - Customs and Border Protection Website, U.S. Customs and Border Protection Help, Know Before You Go, Carrier Information Guide, Clearing CBP, CBP Officer Search Authority, U.S. Citizens/Lawful Permanent Residents, For International Visitors, Electronic System of Travel Authorization (ESTA), CBP Travel, and Customer Service.
- CBP's Layered Border Strategy - The Immigration Advisory Program (IAP), Carrier Liaison Program (CLP), Trusted Traveler Programs - Global Entry Program, Container Security Initiative (CSI), Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT), and Secure Freight Initiative (SFI)
- Other Links - Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and U.S. VISIT – Biometric procedures for international travelers to the U.S.

Country Reports on Terrorism – <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/>

U.S. Department of State, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism

Country Reports submitted annually to Congress by the Department of State on countries where terrorist acts have occurred, the status of cooperation against terrorism between the United States and selected countries, a report on state sponsorship of terrorism, and assessments of terrorist groups.

Country Commercial Guides - <http://www.export.gov/mrktresearch/index.asp>

U.S. Department of State

Country Commercial Guides (CCG's) are prepared annually by U.S. embassies with the assistance of several U.S. government agencies. These reports present a comprehensive look at countries' commercial environments, using economic, political and market analysis. The CCG's were established by recommendation of the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee, a multi-agency task force, to consolidate various reporting documents prepared for the U.S. business community.

State Magazine - <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/statemag/>

U.S. Department of State

State Magazine is published monthly, except bimonthly in July and August, by the U.S. Department of State, 2201 C St., N.W., Washington, DC 20520. State Magazine is published to facilitate communication between management and employees at home and abroad and to acquaint employees with developments that may affect operations or personnel. The magazine is also available to persons interested in working for the Department of State and to the general public.

Narcotics Control Strategy Report - <http://www.state.gov/p/inl/rls/nrcrpt/>

U.S. Department of State

Annual report submitted to the Congress by the Department of State, in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act, which describes the efforts of countries, including those that received U.S. assistance, in the fight against drugs, and on Presidential narcotics certification determinations on drug producing and transit countries.

Continued on next page

Additional Information



Key Officers of Foreign Service Posts - <http://foia.state.gov/MMS/KOH/keyoffcity.asp>

U.S. Department of State

This directory lists key officers and their telephone and fax numbers from the Departments of business representatives around the world.

Background Notes - <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/>

U.S. Department of State

These handy guides provide information on a country's leaders, politics, economy, and relations with the U.S. Note: Background Notes appear on the Department's web site before they are sent to press for GPO subscribers.

Travel Warnings - http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html

U.S. Department of State

Travel Warnings are issued when the State Department decides, based on all relevant information, to recommend that Americans avoid travel to a certain country. Countries where avoidance of travel is recommended will have Travel Warnings as well as Consular Information Sheets.

Consular Information Sheets - http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html

U.S. Department of State

Consular Information Sheets are available for every country of the world. They include such information as location of the U.S. embassy or consulate in the subject country, unusual immigration practices, health conditions, minor political disturbances, unusual currency and entry regulations, crime and security information, and drug penalties. If an unstable condition exists in a country that is not severe enough to warrant a Travel Warning, a description of the condition(s) may be included under an optional section entitled "Safety/Security." Consular Information Sheets generally do not include advice, but present information in a factual manner so the traveler can make his or her own decisions concerning travel to a particular country.

Additional Information



Personal Post Insights

The comments below do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. government; they are the comments and personal opinions of individuals who are either currently serving or has recently returned from the named post. The primary source of these comments is responses collected by the Department of State's Foreign Service Institute from questionnaires and internet surveys. Some comments were also drawn from postings on the Real Post Reports internet site at www.talesmag.com

Nagoya

Travel time to post from Europe or the U.S.: 18-24 hours, depending on your route and final destination. You can fly to Detroit directly from Nagoya on Northwest (about 13 hours flying time) and then from there to most other cities in the U.S. If you take Delta through Portland it generally adds another stop to your schedule (Portland-hub-destination) and thus more travel time.

Average Daily Commute: 30-45 minutes door-to-door on the clean, efficient subway.

Pollution Index: Good

Apartments or Houses: Apartments (large, nice). Houses possible but NO YARDS

International Schools: One (Pre-K to 12)

Preschool Available: Yes (choice of two with all-English language programs)

Daycare Available: Not with an English-speaking staff

Price of a Big Mac: About \$2.44 at current exchange rate

American Fast Food Available: Yes (McDonalds, KFC, Dominos, Mr. Donut). Large cheese pizza from Dominos is about \$20.

Food and Groceries: Large modern Japanese supermarkets have just about everything but are expensive. (Hamburger is about \$8 per lb.) Shopping at military bases is authorized, so we make a major trip a few times a year--the closest one is about 5 hours drive. You can place orders from the Embassy Tokyo commissary for a 10% handling charge and you pay shipping (about \$10/box).

Domestic Help Available: Available but not especially affordable. Cleaning services cost about \$25/hour. Babysitting services are \$10-15/hour. Unlike Tokyo there is not a ready supply of "black-market" workers.

English-Language Newspaper/TV: Plenty

Cable TV Available: Yes

Internet Access Available: Yes, but the phone company charges you additionally for the amount of time you are connected.

Entertaining Expected: Yes, and no. Yes, the officer is expected to entertain but events very, very seldom include spouses, and spouses are often expected to be hardly seen and not heard even in events at home.

Additional Information



Medical Officer At Post: No, but local medical care is good; the FSNP in Tokyo is great for telephone consultations; and the military bases are an option for major tests if necessary.

Morale at Post: Fine.

Weather Patterns: Very similar to DC except for a 1-2 week "rainy season" in June.

Can You Save Money at Post: Yes. (Surprise!) If you don't buy things locally and don't go out to eat (or to the movies), the COLA and language differential can really add to your savings. If you never eat at home, expect to spend every penny you make.

Knowing What You Now Know, Would You Still Go There: Yes. It's a really great city for kids, with lots of wonderful things to do. Since I wanted to be home with them anyway, not being able to work was no hardship. It just depends on what you're looking for.

Tokyo

(The following is from a contributor who is affiliated with a foreign government and has lived in Tokyo for four years.)

Travel time and best routes to this city from Europe or the U.S.: There are direct flights to both the West Coast (9-11 hours) and the East Coast (13-14 hours). Also plenty of direct flights to Europe lasting between 9 and 12 hours, depending on the destination.

Pollution index? Good. Tokyo is surprisingly clean for a city of its size, thanks to a good auto park and relatively little electricity produced with coal.

Security concerns? Absolutely none. People always like to joke about the fact that you can leave your handbag on your chair to save your seat in a restaurant when going to the toilet.

International schools: There are plenty available: American, British, German (although this one is far away in Yokohama), French, Korean, etc. Prices are extremely high. Our kids went to the French Lycee, and we consider it to be a good school.

Preschool/daycare available: There are very few English-language preschools, and those all have limited hours which do not allow both parents to work. Japanese public daycare is available and affordable (based on your income), but you'll have to cope with the Japanese system. It is not always easy to understand all of their rules, even if you speak the language, and there might be limited availability.

What accommodations do schools at post make for special-needs kids? There is one very small school for kids with special needs. It accepts kids with all kind of handicaps, both physical and mental. We found that international private schools were reluctant to make adaptations for kids with special needs, even for something that would be easy to do, such as giving additional support to kids studying in a new language. The Japanese school system is not a very good option because of the language barrier.

Is this a good city for families/singles/couples? Excellent for families with young children; there are lots of activities, family restaurants, etc. Pre-teenagers might find it limited in terms of sports activities, but there are plenty of movie theatres, shopping malls, amusement parks, etc. It is great for singles: every single foreign guy I know who went to Japan came back with a Japanese wife. It might be more difficult for foreign women. I think Tokyo is best for couples without kids. There is something to do every night; the city is very cosmopolitan.

Additional Information



Are there problems with racial, religious or gender prejudices? Some Japanese people can sometimes be intolerant of foreigners, especially those coming from other Asian countries. In general, though, people manage to live together without too much trouble.

What difficulties would someone with physical disabilities have living in this city? Except for the most recent lines that were opened only a few years ago, Tokyo's subway system has no escalators or elevators. The trains are essential for moving around the city, as traffic can be heavy, tolls are VERY expensive, and there is limited parking space.

Interesting/fun things to do: Too much to say in these few lines. Restaurants are great, night life is also very good: from Roppongi expat bars, if you need a fix of ABBA, to Japanese pubs and drinking holes, to all-night dancing in warehouses in the suburbs and international DJs coming from all over the world. My favorites, I must admit, are the Karaoke bars.

What fast food and decent restaurants are available? There are 100,000 restaurants in Tokyo, so everything is available including, of course, Japanese food (and that means more than just sushi) and other Asian food, especially Indian and Chinese. McDonald's offers the same thing as in the U.S. but with better service and more options made out of fish. The Big Mac index is at about 300 yen (\$2.75 U.S.). *(The following is from a contributor who is a student who has lived in Tokyo off and on for seven years.)*

What is the best way to make phone calls back home? Skype, Internet is the best for international phone calls, no doubt!

Do you have any recommendations regarding cell phones? Buy a mobile phone that costs ZERO-yen for the phone and pay only for the monthly fee.

Items you would ship if you could do it again? Bring job-hunting materials in case you're interested in staying after your tour w/the U.S. Embassy has finished.

Availability and cost of domestic help: 1000 JPY/hour for domestic help.

How much of the local language do you need to know for daily living? You'd better know as much Japanese as possible to survive! Memorize all of the kana letters and 100-200 kanji (minimum) before arriving at post.

English-language religious services available? Denominations? English-language religious services are available.

English-language newspapers and TV available? Cost? English-language TV exists, but I always download video clips from the FOX News website.

Internet access cost and quality: Excellent broadband Internet is available for about \$40/month.

Size of expat community: The expat community is HUGE! (Too huge!) That's why it's hard to learn Japanese.

Morale among expats: Morale among expats is great; however, some guys are pretty arrogant. I recommend sticking to the Japanese crowd if possible.

Additional Information



Are there decent job opportunities for expats on the local economy? Teaching opportunities are available for non-Japanese speakers and almost anything else for anyone who is 80%+ fluent in both spoken & written Japanese (i.e., minimum: JLPT 1 proficiency).

Entertaining/social life: I recommend having a Japanese colleague introduce you to his or her NAKAMA (group of friends) and enjoying a night out with drinks, etc.

Dress code at work and in public: Show your AMERICAN SPIRIT! Wear the loudest clothes you can find!

Any health concerns? What is the quality of medical care available? HIV and other STDs are prevalent. I spoke with three Japanese women who have admitted that they contracted STDs in the past, most likely from foreign men.

Quality pet care available? Pet care is as good as it gets.

But don't forget your: extra-strength umbrellas, as typhoon winds can be devastating, and it's easy to forget your umbrella on the train.

Weather patterns? Very cold, but with almost no snow at all in the winter. Summers are very sweaty!

Can you save money? Cook food at night instead of eating out on a regular basis, in order to save money.

What unique local items can you spend it on? Spend your money on train tickets, plane tickets, toll roads, gasoline, hotels, and delicious restaurants!

Knowing what you now know, would you still go there? Japan is my home away from home.

Recommended fiction related to this city: *Memoirs of a Geisha* by Arthur Golden. Very interesting. You can read between the lines to understand present-day women in Japan.

Recommended nonfiction related to this city: James Steward's *The Japanese*.

Recommended movies/videos related to this city: *Last Samurai*. When Japanese guys complain about the lack of attention they get from American women, tell them they should dress up like Watanabe Ken!

Any other comments: Japan is the best-kept secret in the world. I recommend learning the language as early as possible and keeping your experience with this country alive forever.