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IchiwayThe Ultimate Japan Resource Collection

600+ curated resources for moving to and living in Japan. Visas, housing, jobs, healthcare, language, and more.

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[Visa & Immigration](#)

[Visa types](#), [application guides](#), [immigration offices](#), and [personal stories from people who've done it](#).



[Housing](#)

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Regional Guides

[City-by-city guides for Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, Hokkaido, Shikoku, Kyushu, and more.](#)



Finance & Banking

[Major banks, ATMs, taxes, investing, and money transfers for foreigners.](#)



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Getting Started

Welcome! Whether you're moving to Japan for work, study, or a fresh start, you've come to the right place. This site has over 500 resources covering everything from visas and housing to healthcare and daily life. Think of this page as your checklist to make sure nothing falls through the cracks.

Before You Go

- **Research your visa type** - Figure out which visa category fits your situation before anything else. [Visa & Immigration](#)
- **Start learning Japanese basics** - Even a little goes a long way. Greetings, numbers, and basic phrases will make your first weeks much smoother. [Language Resources](#)
- **Research housing options** - Start browsing listings early so you know what to expect in terms of costs and layouts. [Housing](#)
- **Understand the healthcare system** - Japan has universal healthcare, but you'll want to know how enrollment works before you arrive. [Healthcare](#)
- **Budget and banking** - Get a clear picture of living costs and plan how you'll handle money during your first few weeks. [Finance](#)

First Steps After Arrival

- **Register at your local ward/city office** - This is your first priority. You'll receive your residence card (在留カード) and get set up in the local system.
- **Open a bank account** - Japan Post Bank (ゆうちょ銀行) is the most foreigner-friendly option with branches everywhere, including inside post offices.
- **Get a phone/SIM card** - You'll need a phone number for just about everything. [Phone & Internet](#)
- **Enroll in National Health Insurance** - If your employer doesn't cover you, sign up for NHI at your ward office. This is mandatory.
- **Set up utilities** - Gas, electric, water, and internet. Some places come with utilities partially set up, but don't count on it. [Utilities](#)

Helpful Resources

- [Japan Helpline](#) - 24-hour multilingual hotline for any questions or emergencies. Phone: 0120-46-1997
- [GaijinPot](#) - All-in-one platform for foreigners in Japan covering jobs, housing, study, and travel.
- [Japan Guide](#) - Comprehensive guide to living in and visiting Japan.
- **Emergency Numbers:**
 - Fire / Ambulance: **119**
 - Police: **110**

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Planning Your Move

Once you've sorted out your visa and have a rough timeline, it's time to plan the actual move. This page covers shipping, what to bring, airport info, and relocation services that can take a lot of the stress off your plate.

Shipping Your Belongings

- [Nippon Express USA](#) - International moving by sea and air with offices in both countries.
- [Sterling International](#) - International movers with door-to-door service. Phone: 800-989-2198
- [FIDI International Movers](#) - Use this to verify your moving company is FIDI-certified.
- [Moving Scam](#) - Check reviews and avoid scams before hiring anyone.
- [Japan Customs](#) - Official info on what you can and can't bring into Japan.

TIP

Get at least 3 estimates from international moving companies, and verify they are FIDI-certified before signing anything.

What to Bring

- [World Wide Electric Guide](#) - Japan uses Type A plugs and runs on 100V. Eastern Japan is 50Hz and western Japan is 60Hz, so check your devices.
- [Online Conversion](#) - Handy metric to imperial converter for when you need to think in centimeters and kilograms.

Travel & Arrival

- [JNTO](#) - Japan National Tourism Organization with model itineraries and practical travel info.
- [Narita International Airport](#) - Main international airport serving the Tokyo area.
- [Kansai International Airport](#) - Main international airport for the Osaka/Kyoto/Kobe region.
- [JAL ABC](#) - Airport baggage delivery service. Ship your luggage from the airport to your hotel or apartment.
- [Yamato Transport](#) - Another great option for shipping luggage from the airport to your destination.

Relocation Services

- [ReloJapan](#) - Cost of living guides, expat area breakdowns, and international school info.
- [Japan Remotely](#) - Relocation consulting and visa guidance, especially helpful for remote workers.
- [Tokyu Relocation Support](#) - Professional relocation support for individuals and companies.

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Is Moving to Japan Easy?

That depends on what you consider easy. Navigating the visa process, making travel arrangements, translating difficult Japanese. All of these steps depend on your knowledge of laws, immigration, your grasp of Japanese, and your ability to communicate with you're embassy staff.

But that's exactly why this website and community exist: to guide you through each stage of the journey to Japan. While some servers might only focus on the challenges, the reality is that few things worth doing are without their challenges.

But after all that effort, after the hours spent emailing, filling out forms, and reaching out for help, when you finally arrive in Tokyo, exhausted, and you lay on your hotel bed. You'll look out over the city, seeing thousands of people move about, the constant sound of horns, the many skyscrapers shining in the night, and you'll realize...

It was all worth it.

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Emergency Info

Keep this page bookmarked. Hopefully you'll never need it, but if you do, everything is right here.

Emergency Numbers

DANGER

- **Fire / Ambulance:** 119
- **Police:** 110
- **Japan Helpline (24hr, multilingual):** 0120-46-1997

Support Services

- [Japan Helpline](#) - 24-hour emergency assistance and practical info in multiple languages.
- [TELL Japan](#) - Free anonymous counseling in English. If you're struggling, reach out. No judgment.
- **Emergency Translation Services** - Phone translation for hospital patients who need language support. Phone: 03-5285-8185
- **Nagano Women's Consultation Center** - Support for domestic safety concerns. Phone: 026-235-5710

Disaster Preparedness

Japan experiences earthquakes, typhoons, and other natural events regularly. Being prepared is part of daily life here, not something to panic about.

- Honjo Life Safety Learning Center - Free earthquake, fire, and flood simulation training in Tokyo. Highly recommended for newcomers.

TIP

Keep an emergency kit at home with water, food, a flashlight, a portable phone charger, and copies of important documents. Your ward office can provide a disaster preparedness guide when you register.

Embassy Contacts

For a full list of embassies and consulates in Japan, see the [Embassies](#) page.

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Visa & Immigration

IMPORTANT

Visa requirements change frequently. Always verify current rules directly with the **Immigration Services Agency** or your nearest **Japanese embassy/consulate** before making plans.

Government Resources

- [Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Justice](#) - The official source for all immigration procedures, application forms, and status of residence information in Japan.
- [MOFA Visas & FAQ](#) - Ministry of Foreign Affairs visa overview with types, requirements, and frequently asked questions.
- [MOFA Living Guide PDF](#) - Downloadable guide covering daily life topics for foreign residents, published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- [Immigration Information Center - MOJ](#) - Multilingual helpline and info center run by the Ministry of Justice for immigration-related inquiries.
- [Naturalization Office](#) - Located at the Ministry of Justice in Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo. This is where you begin the process of applying for Japanese citizenship.

Visa Guides & Articles

- [Tokyo Cheapo Visa Guide](#) - In-depth English guide to every Japan visa category with practical application tips.
- [GaijinPot Visa Guide](#) - Comprehensive visa breakdown with reader Q&A and recent policy updates.
- [Japan Times Visa Coverage](#) - News articles and policy analysis on visa changes.
- [Relocate.me](#) - International relocation platform with detailed visa guides, country comparisons, and job listings that sponsor visas.
- [Relocate.me: Japan Startup Visa](#) - Focused breakdown of Japan's Startup Visa program, including eligibility and participating cities.
- [Benton Homestead: Startup to Business Manager Visa](#) - Personal blog post walking through the real experience of converting a Startup Visa into a Business Manager Visa.
- [TokyoDev: Business Manager Visa Guide](#) - Thorough guide on obtaining and maintaining a Business Manager Visa, written for the tech community.
- [SoraNews24: Language Requirement Article](#) - News coverage of the proposed N2 Japanese language proficiency requirement for certain visa categories.

Immigration Law Firms

- [Japan Visa Support](#) - Immigration law firm offering English-language support for visa applications, renewals, and status changes.
- [Mavericks Immigration](#) - English-speaking immigration lawyer firm in Tokyo specializing in work and business visas.

- [Hoshi Visa Office](#) - Bilingual gyoseishoshi firm handling business manager, HSP, and spouse visas.
- [OneVisa](#) - Tech-forward immigration service with online application support.

Entry Procedures

- [U.S. Department of State Travel Tips](#) - General international travel guidance from the U.S. government, including passport and safety info for Americans heading to Japan.
- **Japan Customs** - Official customs information covering what you can and cannot bring into Japan, duty-free limits, and declaration procedures.

Video Guides

- [How to Get a Japanese Visa](#) - Beginner-friendly overview of the main visa types and how to apply.
- [Start a Company and Get Business Manager Visa](#) - Step-by-step walkthrough of setting up a company in Japan and securing your visa through it.
- [Startup Visa to Business Manager Visa](#) - Covers the transition process from the Startup Visa program to a full Business Manager Visa.
- [Investor/Business Manager Visa](#) - Deep dive into the requirements, capital, and paperwork for the Investor/Business Manager visa category.
- [Self-Sponsoring a Japan Visa](#) - Explains how to sponsor your own visa without relying on a Japanese employer.
- [How to Start a Business in Japan 2025](#) - Up-to-date guide on company formation, registration, and the visa process for entrepreneurs.

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Housing

TIP

Before apartment hunting, learn the terminology! Check our [Housing Terminology](#) page.

Major Property Portals

- [LIFULL HOME'S](#) - Japan's largest real estate search engine with millions of listings across rentals, purchases, and new construction.
- [SUUMO](#) - Major property search platform run by Recruit, hugely popular with Japanese renters and buyers alike.
- [At Home](#) - Another big portal with strong coverage across Japan, good for comparing neighborhoods and prices.
- [Real Estate Japan](#) - English-friendly property portal that aggregates listings and provides guides tailored for foreign residents.

Foreigner-Friendly Rentals

- [Housing Japan](#) - Premium English-speaking agency specializing in Tokyo rentals and sales for foreign clients.
- [Plaza Homes](#) - Established bilingual real estate firm with one of Tokyo's largest foreigner-friendly listings.
- [Ken Corporation](#) - Long-running luxury real estate firm in Tokyo, popular with executives.
- [GaijinPot Apartments](#) - One of the most well-known apartment search tools for foreigners, with English-speaking agent support.
- [wagaya Japan](#) - Foreigner-focused rental platform with multilingual support and properties that welcome international tenants.
- [Apartment Japan](#) - No guarantor required and a fully online application process, which is a huge plus for newcomers.
- [YOLO HOME](#) - Available in 11 languages, making it one of the most accessible platforms for non-Japanese speakers.
- [Tokyo Apartment Inc.](#) - Bilingual real estate agency specializing in helping English speakers find apartments in Tokyo.
- [Tokyo Apartment Life Support Guide](#) - Helpful guide from Tokyo Apartment Inc. covering utilities setup, ward registration, and settling-in tasks.
- [Bamboo House](#) - Operating since 1984, they offer furnished apartments with English support for short and long stays.
- [E-Housing](#) - Tokyo-based platform with a decent selection of foreigner-friendly properties.
- [Leopalace 21](#) - Popular with international students and business travelers, offering furnished units with flexible lease terms.

Share Houses & Short-Term

- [Sakura House](#) - Long-running provider of shared houses, private apartments, and dormitories across Tokyo with no key money.
- **Tokyo Cozy House** - Furnished shared rooms in Tokyo at budget-friendly prices, great for getting started.
- [Tokyu Stay Residences](#) - Serviced apartments with hotel-like amenities, ideal for medium-term stays while you find permanent housing.
- **Weekly Mansion Osaka** - Short-term furnished apartments in Osaka, available by the week or month.
- **WMT Hotels** - Weekly and monthly furnished apartments in Tokyo, convenient for temporary housing needs.

Buying Property

- **New City Mortgage** - Mortgage loans available to foreign nationals purchasing property in Japan.
- [S-Legal Estate](#) - Legal assistance for foreign buyers navigating Japanese real estate transactions.
- [Kobe Legal Partners](#) - Law firm offering real estate legal services in English, based in the Kansai region.

Akiya & Rural

- [Akiya Banks](#) - Directory of Japan's vacant and abandoned houses (akiya) available for cheap or even free in rural areas.
- [Furusato Kaiki](#) - Government-backed rural relocation support center with info on incentives, jobs, and housing in the countryside.
- [Kyoto Northern Region](#) - Relocation info for 7 municipalities in northern Kyoto Prefecture, including housing subsidies and community support.

Real Estate Agents

- **Plaza Homes / RealEstate-Tokyo** - English-speaking realtors with deep experience helping expats buy and rent in Tokyo.
- [Japan Home Search](#) - Bilingual real estate agency helping foreigners find homes across Japan.
- [Century 21 Sky Realty](#) - The Japan branch of the global franchise, with agents experienced in working with international clients.
- [ReloJapan](#) - Full-service relocation company handling housing, moving logistics, and settling-in support.
- [Tokyo Rent](#) - Curated selection of quality rental properties in central Tokyo with English support.
- **Tokyu Relocation** - Corporate relocation services including property management for expat housing.

Housing Guides & Articles

- [r/movingtojapan Housing Wiki](#) - Community-maintained wiki packed with practical tips on renting, costs, and common pitfalls.
- [GaijinPot Blog: What is a 1K Apartment?](#) - Explains Japanese apartment layout notation like 1K, 1LDK, and 2DK so you know what you're looking at.

- [CLAIR Housing Guide](#) - Multilingual guide to housing in Japan published by the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations.
- **Tokyo Life Guide** - Neighborhood-by-neighborhood breakdown of Tokyo living, including commute times and vibe.
- **Tokyo Price Guide** - Handy reference for typical rent prices across different Tokyo neighborhoods and apartment sizes.
- [Online Conversion](#) - Quick metric-to-imperial converter for when Japanese listings use square meters and you think in square feet.

Classifieds

- [Craigslist Tokyo / Osaka](#) - Sometimes you can find direct-from-owner listings or sublets, though always exercise caution.
- **Metropolis Classifieds** - Classifieds section of Japan's English-language magazine, occasionally has housing listings.
- [Tokyo Classifieds](#) - Japan Today's classifieds board where expats post apartments, furniture, and roommate requests.
- [JCRA](#) - Japan Credit Rating Agency info, useful for understanding the credit and guarantor system.

Video Guides

- [Why Foreigners Don't Want Rural Japan](#) - Honest look at the challenges and realities of living in rural Japan as a foreigner.

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Housing Terminology

Japanese apartment listings use specific terms that can be confusing at first. Here's what they all mean so you can read listings with confidence.

Room Layouts

| Term | Meaning |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1R (One Room) | Studio apartment with no separate kitchen |
| 1K | One room with a separate small kitchen |
| 1DK | One room plus a dining/kitchen area |
| 1LDK | One room plus a living/dining/kitchen |
| 2LDK, 3LDK, etc. | Multiple rooms plus a living/dining/kitchen |

The letters stand for: **L** = Living, **D** = Dining, **K** = Kitchen. So a 2LDK has two rooms plus a combined living/dining/kitchen space.

Fees & Costs

- **Shikikin (敷金)** - Security deposit, usually 1-2 months rent. This is refundable when you move out, minus any cleaning or repair costs.
- **Reikin (礼金)** - "Key money" or gift money paid to the landlord. This is non-refundable. Not every place requires it, so look for listings with 礼金なし (no reikin).
- **Chukai tesuryo (仲介手数料)** - Agent/broker fee, usually 1 month's rent.
- **Kanrihi / Kyoekihi (管理費/共益費)** - Monthly building maintenance and management fee. This is on top of your rent.
- **Koshinryo (更新料)** - Renewal fee, typically charged every 2 years when you extend your lease.
- **Hoshonin (保証人)** - Guarantor. Some places accept guarantor companies instead of a personal guarantor.
- **Hoshogaisha (保証会社)** - Guarantor company. A paid alternative to having a personal guarantor, which is helpful since most newcomers don't know anyone who can vouch for them yet.

Building Types

- **Mansion (マンション)** - A concrete apartment building, usually mid-rise or high-rise. This does NOT mean a large house. It's just the Japanese word borrowed from English with a different meaning.
- **Apato (アパート)** - A wood or lightweight steel apartment building, usually 2-3 stories. Generally cheaper than mansions but with thinner walls.

- **Ikkodate (一戸建て)** - A detached house. These are available for rent but more common as purchases.
- **Share House** - Shared living space with private bedrooms and common areas like kitchen and bathroom. A budget-friendly option that's also great for meeting people.

Features & Amenities

- **Auto-lock (オートロック)** - Building entry system with an intercom at the front door.
- **Eki chika (駅近)** - Close to a train station, usually within walking distance. A big plus for your commute.
- **Minami muki (南向き)** - South-facing. Gets the most sunlight throughout the day, which is a sought-after feature.
- **Baruconii (バルコニー)** - Balcony. Used for drying laundry since many people in Japan don't use dryers.
- **UB (Unit Bath / ユニットバス)** - Combined bathroom with toilet, sink, and tub all in one small unit.
- **Separate (セパレート)** - Separate bathroom and toilet rooms. This is generally considered a nicer setup than a unit bath.
- **Flooring (フローリング)** - Western-style hardwood or laminate floors.
- **Tatami (畳)** - Traditional woven mat flooring. Room sizes are often measured by how many tatami mats fit inside.

Measurements

| Term | Size |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1 jo (畳) | About 1.65 m ² (17.7 sq ft). The size of one tatami mat. |
| Tsubo (坪) | About 3.3 m ² (35.5 sq ft). Equal to 2 tatami mats. |
| Heibei (平米 / m²) | Square meters. The standard metric measurement you'll also see in listings. |

TIP

When apartment hunting, focus on the total monthly cost (rent + kanrihi) and check if reikin is required, since that money won't come back.

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Jobs & Employment

TIP

Many jobs in Japan require at least conversational Japanese. Investing in language study before your job search will dramatically expand your options. Check your visa's work restrictions too -- not all residence statuses permit employment.

Job Boards

- [GaijinPot Jobs](#) - The biggest and most well-known job board for foreigners in Japan, with listings across industries and experience levels.
- [CareerCross](#) - Focused on bilingual positions at international and Japanese companies, great for mid-career professionals.
- [TokyoDev](#) - The go-to job board for software developers looking to work in Japan, with a strong community and helpful articles.
- [Daijob](#) - Long-running bilingual job site with positions that value English and other language skills.
- [Wantedly](#) - Popular with Japanese startups, especially for product, design, and engineering roles.
- [LinkedIn Japan](#) - Strong for executive, sales, marketing, and bilingual professional positions.
- [Indeed Japan](#) - Massive aggregator with English filtering for foreigner-friendly roles.
- [Justa](#) - Curated bilingual job board with strong tech and design listings.
- [Hello Work \(English\)](#) - Japan's national employment office. Some offices have foreign-resident desks.
- [Glassdoor Community](#) - Company reviews and salary info to help you evaluate potential employers before applying.
- [Metropolis](#) - Japan's English-language magazine with a classifieds section that sometimes features job postings.
- [Craigslist Tokyo / Osaka](#) - Occasional job listings, especially for part-time, freelance, or informal work. Use caution as always.

Recruitment Agencies

- [Robert Walters Japan](#) - Major international recruiter specializing in mid-to-senior bilingual professionals.
- [Hays Japan](#) - Global recruiter with strong tech, finance, and engineering desks in Tokyo.
- [Michael Page Japan](#) - International specialist recruitment for finance, tech, and supply chain.
- [en world Japan](#) - Bilingual recruiter focused on multinational and Japanese global firms.

Bilingual Jobs

- [Japan Remotely](#) - Relocation consulting service that also connects bilingual professionals with remote-friendly positions in Japan.
- [Japanese Universities Green List](#) - List of Japanese universities known to offer tenure-track positions to foreign faculty. Useful for academics.

Creative & Alternative Work

- **AIR Japan** - Directory of artist-in-residence programs across Japan, perfect for creatives looking for funded stays.
- **WWOOF Japan** - Work on organic farms in exchange for room and board. A unique way to experience rural Japan while learning new skills.

Teaching English

- **JET Programme** - The most famous teaching program in Japan, run by the government. Competitive but offers excellent support and pay.
- **Interac** - One of the largest ALT (Assistant Language Teacher) recruitment companies, placing teachers in public schools nationwide.
- **Dave's ESL Cafe** - Classic teacher job board with Japan-specific listings, forums, and advice for ESL teachers worldwide.
- **JALT** - Japan Association for Language Teaching, offering professional development, conferences, and networking for teachers.
- **ELT News** - Teaching job listings and resources for English language teachers in Japan.
- **Hokkaido Teaching Jobs** - Niche resource for teaching positions specifically in Hokkaido, maintained by a long-time educator there.
- **International Schools Job Board** - List of international schools in Japan, useful for finding teaching positions outside the public ALT system.

Government & Trade

- **JETRO** - Japan External Trade Organization, providing business support, market research, and investment info for foreign companies.
- **METI** - Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. Useful for understanding Japan's business regulations and economic policies.
- **Japanese Law Translation** - Official English translations of Japanese laws. Know your labor rights before signing that contract.
- **AIEJ** - Association of International Education, Japan. Administers the JLPT and provides info on studying and working in Japan.
- **Small Business Promotion Agency** - Tokyo Metropolitan Government's support center for small businesses, including resources for foreign entrepreneurs.

Regional Employment Centers

- **Osaka Employment Service Center for Foreigners** - Osaka's dedicated employment support office for foreign residents, offering job counseling and placement assistance.
- **Inspection Division, Labor Standards, Hokkaido** - Regional labor standards office in Hokkaido for reporting workplace issues or getting advice on labor law.

Staffing Agencies

- **Tempstaff Group** - One of Japan's largest staffing agencies, offering temp, contract, and permanent placement across many industries.

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Teaching English in Japan

Getting Started

The **JET Programme** is the most well-known pathway for teaching English in Japan, offering government-backed placements with solid pay and support. Private companies like **Interac** also place teachers in public schools and can be a great alternative, especially if you missed JET's application window or want more flexibility in choosing your location.

Government Programs

- [JET Programme](#) - One of the most popular ways to come teach English in Japan, with placements across the country. Competitive but well-supported.
- [Interac](#) - Recruits assistant language teachers for Japanese public schools from elementary through high school.

Eikaiwa & Private English Schools

- [ECC Foreign Language Institute](#) - Major eikaiwa chain hiring foreign teachers for adult and kids classes nationwide.
- [AEON](#) - Long-running eikaiwa with one of the best onboarding and visa sponsorship reputations.
- [Berlitz Japan](#) - Premium adult-focused English school, business English specialty.
- [NOVA](#) - One of Japan's largest eikaiwa chains with locations in every major city.
- [Gaba Corporation](#) - One-to-one English instruction with flexible scheduling for instructors.
- [Peppy Kids Club](#) - Children's English school operating across Japan.
- [Shane English School](#) - British-style children and adult English schools.

Job Boards & Listings

- [Dave's ESL Cafe](#) - Long-running job board and community for English teachers worldwide, including lots of Japan postings.
- [ELT News](#) - News, job listings, and resources for English language teachers in Japan.
- [Hokkaido Teaching Jobs](#) - Teaching job listings specifically in Hokkaido, maintained by a long-time educator in the region.
- [International Schools Job Board](#) - Directory and job listings at international schools across Japan.

Professional Development & Networking

- [JALT](#) - Japan Association for Language Teaching. Conferences, publications, and networking for English teachers.
- [JALT Hokkaido](#) - Local chapter of JALT in Hokkaido, with events and resources for teachers in the region.

University Teaching

- [Japanese Universities Green List](#) - List of universities that grant tenure to foreign teachers. Also has a Black List of schools to avoid, which is worth checking before you sign any contracts.

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Business & Entrepreneurship

Government & Trade Organizations

- [JETRO](#) - Japan External Trade Organization. Promotes trade and investment, with extensive resources for foreign businesses entering the Japanese market.
- [JETRO Regional Investment](#) - Regional navigator for business opportunities and incentives across different parts of Japan.
- [METI](#) - Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. Covers economic policy, business regulations, and industry standards.
- [ACCJ](#) - American Chamber of Commerce in Japan. Networking, advocacy, and events for American businesses and professionals.

Starting a Business

- [Freee](#) - Most popular cloud accounting and company-incorporation software in Japan. Has online company setup wizard.
- [MoneyForward Business](#) - Major rival to Freee with similar tools for accounting, payroll, and invoicing.
- [Smart HR](#) - Most popular HR/payroll platform for small Japanese businesses.
- [BeHere Asia: Making It in Japan](#) - Practical 8-step guide to starting a business in Japan as a foreigner.
- [ScaleNL Japan](#) - Dutch embassy initiative helping startups enter the Japanese market.
- [ScaleNL Programs](#) - Startup visa programs available across 17 municipalities in Japan.

Business Consulting & Legal

- [Japan Management Consulting](#) - Guides on Japanese corporate law, company formation, and compliance.
- [Shinshu Services, Inc.](#) - Business consulting services focused on the Nagano/Shinshu region.
- [Japanese Law Translation](#) - Official English translations of Japanese employment and business laws. Very helpful for understanding your legal obligations.

Venture Capital & Investment

- [JAFCO Co., Ltd.](#) - One of Japan's largest venture capital firms, investing in early-stage and growth companies.

Regional Business Support

- [Invest Kobe](#) - Business setup resources, incentives, and support for companies looking to establish in Kobe.
- [Kyoto One-Stop Business Center](#) - 2025 PDF guide for foreign entrepreneurs looking to start a business in Kyoto.

- [Small Business Promotion Agency](#) - Tokyo Metropolitan Small and Medium Enterprise Support Center, offering consulting and resources for small businesses.
- **Kyushu Fixers** - Logistical support for foreign companies with short-term projects in Kyushu.

Workplace Culture

- **Cybozu Mailwise Column** - Japanese business email etiquette and workplace communication tips. In Japanese, but useful for understanding office norms.

Video Guides

- [How to Start a Business in Japan 2025](#) - Video walkthrough covering the basics of company formation, visas, and costs.
- [Start a Company and Get Business Manager Visa](#) - Covers the process of founding a company and obtaining the Business Manager visa.

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Language Learning

About the JLPT

The **JLPT (Japanese Language Proficiency Test)** is the standard proficiency test for non-native speakers of Japanese. It has five levels, from **N5** (easiest, basic understanding) to **N1** (hardest, near-fluent comprehension). Many employers and universities in Japan use JLPT scores as a benchmark, so it is worth working toward at least N3 or N2 if you plan to live and work there.

Study Resources

- [Tofugu](#) - The best English-language blog for Japanese learners. Massive library of grammar, kanji, and culture articles.
- [Tae Kim's Guide to Japanese Grammar](#) - Free, beginner-to-advanced grammar guide that thousands of self-learners swear by.
- [Jisho](#) - The best free online Japanese dictionary. Search by English, romaji, kanji, or radical.
- [NHK Easy News](#) - Real Japanese news rewritten in simple language with furigana, great for daily reading practice.
- [JapanesePod101](#) - Massive audio lesson library across all levels. Free signup, paid for full access.
- [Yomitan](#) - Browser extension that pops up dictionary definitions when you hover Japanese text. Essential for reading practice.
- [italki](#) - Book affordable 1-on-1 lessons with Japanese tutors worldwide.
- [HelloTalk](#) - Language exchange app to chat with native Japanese speakers learning English.
- [Charles Kelly's Online Japanese Study Materials](#) - Free quizzes, exercises, and practice tools for learners at various levels.
- [About.com: Japanese Language](#) - Japanese language learning articles covering grammar, vocabulary, and culture. Content may have moved to ThoughtCo.
- [Yookoso](#) - Portal of curated Japanese language study links and resources.
- [Keiko Schneider's Bookmarks](#) - Carefully curated collection of links for teachers and students of Japanese.
- [AJALT](#) - Association for Japanese-Language Teaching in Tokyo. Offers courses and publishes widely-used textbooks.

Pronunciation & Writing

- [Kotu.io Pitch Accent Trainer](#) - Online tool for practicing Japanese pitch accent through minimal pair listening exercises. Pitch accent is one of the trickiest parts of sounding natural.
- [All About Radicals](#) - Guide to mastering kanji radicals, the building blocks that help you recognize and remember characters.

JLPT (Japanese Language Proficiency Test)

- [JLPT Japan](#) - Official JLPT testing information and registration for test-takers in Japan.
- [JLPT United States](#) - JLPT registration and test site information for candidates in the U.S.

- **AIEJ** - Association of International Education Japan, JLPT Testing Division. Handles test administration and scoring.

Cultural Learning

- [At Home in Japan: What No One Tells You](#) - Cultural tutorial presented through a homestay lens. Covers everyday situations and social norms that textbooks often skip.

YouTube Channels

- [Japanese Ammo with Misa](#) - In-depth grammar lessons from beginner to advanced, taught by a native speaker.
- [Game Gengo](#) - Learn Japanese through video games. Great for anime/manga fans.
- [Dogen](#) - The go-to teacher for Japanese pronunciation and pitch accent.
- [Comprehensible Japanese](#) - Slow narration with visuals, perfect for absolute beginners.
- [Onomappu](#) - Native Japanese videos with bilingual subtitles for intermediate learners.

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JLPT Prep

The JLPT (Japanese Language Proficiency Test) is the standard measure of Japanese ability for non-native speakers. Five levels: **N5** (easiest) to **N1** (hardest). Held twice a year (July and December) in Japan, once or twice a year overseas.

Official Sites

- [JLPT Official \(Japan\)](#) - Official global JLPT site with test info, dates, and sample questions.
- [JEES JLPT \(Japan\)](#) - Japan Educational Exchanges and Services. Handles registration in Japan.
- [JLPT United States](#) - U.S. registration via the American Association of Teachers of Japanese.

Free Online Resources

- [Tofugu JLPT Resources](#) - Long-running blog with the best curated JLPT guides for every level.
- [Tae Kim's Guide to Japanese Grammar](#) - Free, comprehensive Japanese grammar guide. Great foundation for any JLPT level.
- [Bunpro](#) - Grammar SRS tool organized by JLPT level. Free trial, paid subscription.
- [Wanikani](#) - Kanji and vocabulary SRS, covers all JLPT levels. Three free levels then paid.
- [Anki](#) - Flashcard app with shared decks for every JLPT level.
- [Kanji Garden](#) - Free kanji learning with built-in JLPT decks.
- [JLPT Sensei](#) - Free grammar, vocab, and kanji lists by level.
- [Nihongo no Mori \(YouTube\)](#) - Free JLPT lectures in Japanese, recommended for N3 and up.

Practice Tests

- [JLPT Practice Tests \(Official\)](#) - Free official sample questions for all levels.
- [JLPT Bootcamp](#) - Practice tests and prep advice for all levels.
- [Try N4-N1](#) - Popular grammar workbook series by level.

Textbooks (Most Recommended)

- **Genki I & II** - Standard beginner Japanese textbook used by universities worldwide. Roughly N5 to N4.
- **Tobira** - Intermediate textbook, roughly N3.
- **Shin Kanzen Master** - The de facto JLPT prep series, available for every level (grammar, reading, listening, kanji, vocab).
- **Sou Matome** - Lighter and faster JLPT series with daily lessons. Available for every level.
- **Nihongo So-matome** - Same as Sou Matome above.

Apps

- [Renshuu](#) - Free comprehensive Japanese learning app with JLPT decks.
- [Kanji Study \(Android\)](#) - Highly rated kanji app organized by JLPT level.

- [Drops](#) - Vocabulary app with Japanese support.
- [Migji JLPT](#) - Mobile JLPT practice test app.

Pitch Accent & Pronunciation

- Kotu.io - Free pitch accent training tool.
- [Dogen \(YouTube\)](#) - Famous pronunciation and pitch accent teacher.

Level-by-Level Guide

N5

Basic survival Japanese. ~100 kanji, ~800 vocab. Start with Genki I or a beginner app like Renshuu.

N4

Comfortable with basic conversations. ~300 kanji, ~1500 vocab. Finish Genki II.

N3

Intermediate. Can read manga, watch easy anime. ~650 kanji, ~3700 vocab. Tobira or Shin Kanzen N3.

N2

Business-functional. Required for many jobs that aren't strictly bilingual. ~1000 kanji, ~6000 vocab.

N1

Near-fluent. Required for some advanced/professional jobs and Japanese university programs. ~2000 kanji, ~10000 vocab.

TIP

N2 is often the practical career threshold. N1 is impressive but not required for most jobs. Choose your target based on goals, not pride.

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Language Schools

Verify Before You Enroll

Always check that a language school is officially authorized through the **Association for the Promotion of Japanese Language Education** (nisshinkyo.org). Authorized schools meet government standards for curriculum, facilities, and student support.

Directories & Consultancies

- [Association for the Promotion of Japanese Language Education](#) - Official body that authorizes Japanese language schools. Use their search tool to verify a school before enrolling.
- [KOKO Japan](#) - Study abroad consultancy that helps with language school and university program placement.
- **International Exchange Corner (IEC) Nagano** - Community center in Nagano with internet access, a library, and Japanese classes.

Tokyo

- [AJALT](#) - Association for Japanese-Language Teaching in Tokyo. Offers structured courses and teacher training programs.
- [Hiroo Japanese Center](#) - Language school in Hiroo, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo.
- [KAI Japanese Language School](#) - Language school in Okubo, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo.
- [Shinjuku Japanese Language Institute](#) - Language school in Takadanobaba, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo.
- [Tokyo School of the Japanese Language / Naganuma](#) - Well-known language school in Shibuya, Tokyo. One of the longest-running schools in the city.

Hokkaido

- **Language Academy of Sapporo** - Language school based in Sapporo.
- **Japanese Language Institute of Sapporo** - Language school in Chuo-ku, Sapporo.
- [SIL Sapporo Nihongo Gakkou](#) - Language school in Sapporo.

Central Japan

- **Kunoichi College of Business Japanese Course** - Business Japanese program in Matsumoto, Nagano.
- **Nippon Language Academy** - Language school in Maebashi-shi, Gunma.

Kyoto

- **Kyoto Center for Japanese Linguistic Studies** - Language school in Kamigyo-ku, Kyoto.
- **Kyoto Japanese Language School** - Language school in Higashi-hairu, Kyoto.

Osaka

- [Osaka Japanese Language Education Center](#) - JASSO-run language center in Tennoji-ku, Osaka. Government-backed with solid support for international students.

Hiroshima

- [Hiroshima YMCA International Business College](#) - Language and business college in Naka-ku, Hiroshima.

Shikoku

- [Anabuki Business College Japanese Course Takamatsu](#) - Japanese language course in Takamatsu, Kagawa.
- **Ehime Prefectural International Association Japanese Classes** - Japanese classes in Matsuyama, Ehime. Run by the prefectural international association.
- **Japanese Classes at TOPIA Tokushima** - Japanese language classes in Tokushima.

Kyushu

- **Asia Japanese Academy Fukuoka** - Language school in Minami-ku, Fukuoka.

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Universities & Study Abroad

Study Abroad Programs

- **AATJ Study Abroad Database** - Searchable database of study abroad programs in Japan maintained by the American Association of Teachers of Japanese.
- **Study Abroad Programs** - Directory of U.S. university programs offering study abroad in Japan.
- [CIEE](#) - Study abroad at Sophia University in Tokyo through the Council on International Educational Exchange.
- [Earlham College Japan Study](#) - Year-long program at Waseda University through Earlham College.
- **Waseda University-Oregon Abroad** - One-year exchange program at Waseda University through the Oregon system.
- **Kyoto Consortium for Japanese Studies** - Advanced Japanese language and studies program administered through Columbia University.
- [JASSO](#) - Japan Student Services Organization. Scholarships, housing support, and student life resources.
- [Student Guide to Japan](#) - JASSO's essential guide covering visas, costs, housing, and daily life for international students.
- **Study in Japan** - Official government guide for foreign students considering Japan.

Universities by Region

Tokyo

- **Aoyama Gakuin University** - Private university in Shibuya with exchange and degree programs in English.
- **Temple University Japan** - American university campus in Tokyo offering semester and year-long programs.
- [Tokyo University of Foreign Studies](#) - National university focused on foreign languages and international studies.

Hokkaido

- **Hokkaido University Short-Term Exchange** - Short-term exchange opportunities at one of Japan's top national universities in Sapporo.
- **Hokusai Gakuen University** - Private university in Sapporo.
- **Future University Hakodate** - Public university in Hakodate focused on systems information science.
- [Hakodate University](#) - Private university in Hakodate.
- **Hokkaido University of Education Hakodate** - Hakodate campus of Hokkaido University of Education.
- **Hokkaido University of Education Kushiro** - Kushiro campus of Hokkaido University of Education.
- **Kushiro Public University of Economics** - Public university in Kushiro specializing in economics.

- **Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine** - National university in Obihiro focused on agriculture and veterinary science.

Central Japan

- **Nagano University** - Private university in Nagano Prefecture.
- [Shinshu University](#) - National university with campuses across Nagano Prefecture.
- **Takasaki City University of Economics** - Public university in Takasaki, Gunma.
- [Takasaki University of Commerce](#) - Private university in Takasaki, Gunma.
- **Takasaki University of Health and Welfare** - Private university in Takasaki, Gunma focused on health sciences.
- **University of Creation, Music and Social Work** - Creative arts university in Takasaki, Gunma.

Kansai

- **Doshisha University** - Private university in Kyoto with a strong reputation and English-taught programs.
- **Kansai University** - Large private university in Osaka.
- [Kansai Gaidai University](#) - Popular exchange destination in Hirakata, Osaka with a dedicated Asian Studies program.
- [Kyoto University](#) - One of Japan's most prestigious national universities.
- **Kyoto University of Foreign Studies** - Private university in Kyoto focused on languages and international studies.
- [Kyoto Institute of Technology](#) - National university in Kyoto focused on technology and design.
- [Ritsumeikan University](#) - Private university with campuses in Kyoto and Shiga. Offers several English-taught degree programs.
- [Osaka University](#) - Top-tier national university in Osaka.
- **Osaka University of Arts** - Private university in Osaka specializing in fine arts and performing arts.
- [Osaka University of Economics](#) - Private university in Osaka focused on economics and business.
- **Osaka University of Education** - National university in Osaka focused on teacher education.

Hiroshima

- [Hiroshima City University](#) - Public university in Hiroshima with international studies and information sciences programs.
- **Hiroshima University Study Abroad** - Exchange and study abroad programs at one of western Japan's top national universities.

Shikoku

- **University of Kochi** - Public university in Kochi Prefecture.
- [University of Tokushima](#) - National university in Tokushima.
- **Matsuyama University** - Private university in Matsuyama, Ehime.
- [Ehime University](#) - National university in Matsuyama, Ehime.

Kyushu

- [Kyushu University International Student Center](#) - International student support and exchange programs at Kyushu University in Fukuoka.

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International Schools

Directories & Services

- [International Schools in Japan](#) - Directory of English-language international schools across Japan.
- [Japan With Kids International Schools](#) - List of international schools with parent-focused details.
- [ReloJapan](#) - Relocation service with information on international schools, housing, and settling in.

Tokyo

- [The American School in Japan](#) - American curriculum school in Chofu-shi. One of the oldest and largest international schools in Japan.
- [British School in Tokyo](#) - British curriculum school in Shibuya.
- [Canadian International School](#) - Canadian curriculum school in Kitashinagawa.
- [Christian Academy in Japan](#) - International school in Higashi Kurume serving missionary and international families.
- [International School of the Sacred Heart](#) - Girls school in Hiroo, Shibuya-ku. Catholic tradition with an international curriculum.
- [The Montessori School of Tokyo](#) - Montessori education in Minami Azabu, Minato-ku.
- [Nishimachi International School](#) - Bilingual school in Moto Azabu, Minato-ku emphasizing both English and Japanese.
- [St. Mary's International School](#) - Boys school in Seta, Setagaya-ku. Catholic school with a strong academic tradition.

Kansai

- [Canadian Academy](#) - K-12 school on Rokko Island, Kobe. IB World School with boarding options.
- [Kansai Christian School](#) - K-12 school in Ikoma City, Nara.
- [Osaka International School](#) - Pre-K through 12 in Minoo-shi, Osaka. IB curriculum.
- [Tezukayama Montessori International School](#) - Ages 18 months to 6 years in Abeno-ku, Osaka.
- [Kyoto International School](#) - K-8 school in Kamigyō-ku, Kyoto.

Hokkaido

- [Hokkaido International School](#) - International school in Sapporo serving the Hokkaido region.

Central Japan

- **Gunma Kokusai Academy** - 12-year English immersion school in Ota City, Gunma. One of few full-immersion options outside major cities.

Hiroshima

- [Hiroshima International School](#) - International school in Asakita-ku, Hiroshima.

Kyushu

- [Fukuoka International School](#) - K-12 school in Momochi, Sawara-ku, Fukuoka.

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Healthcare & Medical

How It Works

TIP

Japan has mandatory National Health Insurance covering 70% of costs. Enroll at your local city/ward office after registering your address.

Mental Health & Counseling

- [TELL Japan](#) - Free anonymous counseling in English via phone and chat.
- [International Mental Health Professionals Japan](#) - Database of therapists and counselors experienced with international clients.
- [ICC Kobe / Kobe Kaisei Hospital](#) - Counseling services available in Kobe.
- [East-West Psychotherapy Service](#) - Therapy services in Kyoto. Phone: 075/724-1356.
- [Nishi-Shinjuku Public Health Center](#) - English, Thai, Portuguese, and Spanish health consultations available.

Finding Doctors & Hospitals

- [AMDA International Medical Information Center](#) - Multilingual medical consultation and hospital referrals across Japan.
- [Japan Healthcare Info](#) - English-language guide to understanding and navigating the healthcare system.
- [Japan Hospital Search \(JNTO\)](#) - Official tourism org hospital search for foreigners, organized by area and language.
- [Tokyo Midtown Clinic](#) - High-quality international clinic with English staff in Roppongi.
- [Hiroo International Clinic](#) - Long-running international clinic in Tokyo serving expat families.
- [King Clinic](#) - English-language general practice and family medicine clinic in Tokyo.
- [Tokyo Medical and Surgical Clinic](#) - Established Tokyo clinic with English-speaking specialists.
- [Medical Resources in Tokyo](#) - U.S. Embassy list of doctors and medical facilities in Tokyo.
- [Medical Resources in Sapporo](#) - U.S. Embassy list for the Sapporo area.
- [English-Speaking Medical Facilities](#) - Broader Embassy list of English-friendly facilities.
- [Tokyo Metropolitan Health Info Center / Himawari](#) - Hospital search by location and specialty. Phone: 03/5285-8181.
- [Emergency Translation Services](#) - Phone translation for patients who need language help during medical visits. Phone: 03/5285-8185.
- [Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare](#) - Official government health policy and information.
- [Japan Accessible Tourist Center](#) - Accessibility information for disabled persons visiting or living in Japan.
- [Useful Japanese Expressions at a Hospital](#) - Handy phrases for communicating with medical staff.

- **Stedman's English-Japanese Medical Dictionary** - Useful app for looking up medical terminology in both languages.
- **National Health Insurance Enrollment Guide** - Step-by-step guide to enrolling in NHI.

Hospitals by Region

Tokyo

- **Seibo International Catholic Hospital** - Located in Naka-Ochiai, Shinjuku-ku.
- [St. Luke's International Hospital](#) - Well-known international hospital in Chuo-ku.
- **Tokyo Adventist Hospital** - Located in Suginami-ku. Phone: 03/3392-6151.
- **Tokyo Metropolitan Hiroo Hospital** - Located in Ebisu, Shibuya-ku. Phone: 03/3444-1181.

Hokkaido

- **Sapporo Medical University Hospital** - Located in Chuo-ku, Sapporo. Phone: 011/611-2111.
- **Kushiro City General Hospital** - Phone: 0154/41-6121.
- **Shiritsu Hakodate Byoin** - Phone: 0138/23-8651.

Central Japan

- **Nagano City Health Center** - Offers low-cost checkups and vaccinations.
- [Nagano Medical Information Network](#) - Online medical facility search for Nagano Prefecture.
- **Karuizawa Health Center / Karuizawa Hospital** - Local medical services in the Karuizawa area.
- **Shinshu University Medical Hospital** - Located in Matsumoto. Phone: 0265/82-2121.
- **Nagano Sekijuji Hospital** - Located in Wakasato, Nagano. Phone: 026/226-4131.
- **Kokuritsu Takasaki Byoin** - Located in Takasaki. Phone: 0273/22-5901.
- **Tezuka Dentistry** - English-speaking dentist in Takasaki. Phone: 027/322-3843.

Kansai

- **Osaka National Hospital** - Located in Chuo-ku, Osaka.
- **Oak Clinic Group** - Located in Namba, Osaka, specializing in gynecology, fertility, and IVF.
- **Ueroku Women's Clinic** - Located in Osaka. Phone: 06/6762-5842.
- **Yodogawa Christian Hospital** - Located in Osaka. Phone: 06/332-2250.
- **Japan Baptist Hospital** - Located in Kyoto. Phone: 075/781-5191.
- **Kyoto City Clinic for Emergency Illness** - Phone: 075/811-5072.

Hiroshima

- [Hiroshima University Hospital](#) - Major university hospital in the region.

Shikoku

- [Takamatsu City Health Center](#) - Health and insurance information for Takamatsu residents.
- [Ehime Emergency Medical Treatment Network](#) - Emergency facility search for Ehime Prefecture.
- **Kagawa Kenritsu Chuo Byoin** - Located in Takamatsu. Phone: 0878/35-2222.
- **Kochi Sekijuji Byoin** - Phone: 0888/22-1201.
- **Matsuyama Sekijuji Byoin** - Phone: 0899/24-1111.

- **Tokushima University Medical Hospital** - Phone: 0886/31-3111.

Kyushu

- [International Clinic Tojinmachi](#) - English-speaking European doctor in Fukuoka.
- [Medical Information Fukuoka](#) - List of foreigner-friendly medical facilities in Fukuoka.

Health Tips

- [Health Issues for Travel Abroad](#) - General health guidance for Americans living overseas.
- [Japan Foundation for AIDS Prevention](#) - HIV/AIDS information and resources. Phone: 03/5940-2127.

Emergency Numbers

- **Fire/Ambulance:** 119
- **Police:** 110

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Finance & Banking

TIP

Japan Post Bank is recommended as the easiest first bank account for newcomers. Branches are located in every post office nationwide and the process is relatively straightforward.

Major Banks

- [Japan Post Bank](#) - Most accessible for foreigners with branches in every post office across the country.
- [MUFG Bank](#) - Japan's largest bank with extensive ATM and branch networks.
- [Mizuho Bank](#) - One of Japan's three mega-banks with solid international services.
- [SMBC](#) - Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation, another mega-bank with English support options.
- [Citibank Japan](#) - Good option if you already have a Citi account abroad for easier transfers.

Online & Digital Banks

- [Sony Bank](#) - Best foreign currency account in Japan with English support online.
- [Rakuten Bank](#) - Popular online-only bank with rewards points and easy mobile app.
- [SBI Shinsei Bank](#) - Long-time favorite of foreigners thanks to English support and no-fee ATMs.
- [Seven Bank](#) - Best ATM network for foreign card withdrawals (in every 7-Eleven).

International Money Transfers

- [Wise](#) - The cheapest and fastest way to transfer money in/out of Japan. Essential for newcomers.
- [Revolut Japan](#) - Multi-currency account with debit card, good for travelers and expats.
- [Remitly](#) - Popular for sending money home to many countries.
- [GoRemit by Shinsei](#) - Japan-based service for international outgoing transfers.

Investing & Brokerages

- [SBI Securities](#) - Japan's largest online broker. NISA, iDeCo, and global stock access.
- [Rakuten Securities](#) - Another major online broker with strong NISA and crypto support.
- [Monex](#) - Foreigner-friendly broker with U.S. stock access.
- [Interactive Brokers Japan](#) - Global trading platform for residents of Japan.
- [r/JapanFinance](#) - The best community for foreigners discussing investing, taxes, NISA, and iDeCo in Japan.
- [RetireJapan](#) - English-language blog and forum on investing and retirement in Japan.

Investing & Markets

- [Tokyo Stock Exchange](#) - Japan's primary stock exchange.

- [Nikkei Indexes](#) - Real-time data on Japan's major market indexes.
- **Nikkei Interactive** - English financial news from the Nikkei.
- **Nikkei Weekly** - Weekly English-language business publication.
- [Wall Street Journal Japan](#) - International financial coverage with Japan-relevant reporting.
- **Japan Securities Agents** - Resources for understanding brokerage and securities trading in Japan.

Taxes

- **Guide to Metropolitan Taxes** - Available from the Tokyo Metropolitan Citizens Information Room. Phone: 03/5321-1111.
- [JCRA](#) - Japan Credit Rating Agency, useful for understanding credit and financial ratings.

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Taxes & Pension

Japan has multiple tax types and a mandatory pension system. The basics: if you're a resident, you pay income tax (national), residence tax (local), and contribute to either National Pension or Employees' Pension.

TIP

This page is informational. For your specific situation, consult a licensed tax accountant (税理士 *zeirishi*) or your ward office.

Income Tax (所得税)

- [National Tax Agency \(NTA\)](#) - Official English info on income tax, returns, and procedures.
- [NTA Income Tax Guide for Foreigners](#) - Official PDF guide.
- [Tax Answer \(English\)](#) - FAQ-style answers on common tax questions.

Tax Residency Status

- **Non-resident** - Less than 1 year in Japan. Only taxed on Japan-sourced income.
- **Non-permanent resident** - In Japan 1-5 of past 10 years. Taxed on Japan income plus foreign income remitted to Japan.
- **Permanent resident (for tax)** - 5+ of past 10 years. Taxed on worldwide income.

Residence Tax (住民税)

- Paid to your prefecture and city. Roughly 10% of taxable income.
- Billed based on previous year's income, not current. **Plan for this** if your income drops or you leave Japan mid-year.
- Tokyo Metropolitan Tax Bureau - English info on residence tax for Tokyo residents.

Consumption Tax (消費税)

- 10% on most purchases. 8% on food and non-alcoholic drinks.
- Already included in displayed prices in most stores.

National Pension (国民年金) & Employees' Pension (厚生年金)

- [Japan Pension Service](#) - Official site with English info.
- [Pension Booklet \(English\)](#) - Overview of how the system works.

Two Pension Types

- **National Pension (Kokumin Nenkin)** - Mandatory for self-employed, students, and unemployed residents aged 20-59. Flat monthly contribution.
- **Employees' Pension (Kosei Nenkin)** - Automatic for company employees. Higher contribution (split with employer), higher benefits.

Lump-Sum Withdrawal (脱退一時金)

- If you leave Japan after paying into pension, you can claim a partial refund.
- Apply within 2 years of departure.
- Lump-Sum Withdrawal Guide

Totalization Agreements

- [Social Security Agreements](#) - Japan has treaties with the U.S., Canada, UK, Germany, and 20+ other countries. Pension contributions can transfer between countries.

Filing Your Tax Return

- Tax year = calendar year (Jan-Dec).
- File between mid-February and mid-March.
- If you're a company employee with only one salary, your employer usually handles it (年末調整 nenmatsu chousei).
- Self-employed, freelancers, and people with multiple incomes must file.
- E-Tax - Online filing system. English support is limited; many people file in person.

My Number (マイナンバー)

- Japan's individual tax/social security ID number.
- Required for tax filing, opening accounts, starting jobs.
- [My Number Official](#)

Helpful Services

- [TokyoCheapo Tax Guide](#) - Practical English overview.
- [TaxesForExpats Japan](#) - U.S. expat tax help specifically for those in Japan.
- [Greenback Expat Tax Services](#) - U.S. expat tax filing.
- [Tax Office Locator](#) - Find your local tax office.
- [RetireJapan](#) - English-language community on investing, NISA, iDeCo, and pension planning in Japan.
- [r/JapanFinance Wiki](#) - Crowdsourced wiki covering taxes, pension, investing, and crypto in Japan.
- [Free Tax Filing](#) - Most popular software for self-employed tax filing.
- [MoneyForward ME](#) - Personal finance tracker that integrates with Japanese banks and brokerages.

Common Questions

- **Do I pay U.S. taxes if I live in Japan?** - U.S. citizens must file every year regardless of where they live. Most owe nothing thanks to the Foreign Earned Income Exclusion and Foreign Tax Credit, but you must file.
- **What if I leave Japan?** - File a final tax return before leaving and appoint a tax representative (納税管理人) for any post-departure obligations.
- **Do I need a tax accountant?** - For simple salaried jobs, no. For freelancing, business ownership, or complex situations, yes.

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Getting Around

Train & Subway

- [Google Maps](#) - Works extremely well in Japan for live transit directions. The default for most people.
- [Navitime](#) - Japan's most accurate native transit app, slightly better than Google for niche routes.
- [Japan Travel by NAVITIME](#) - English version of NAVITIME built for foreign visitors and residents.
- [Citymapper Tokyo](#) - Detailed Tokyo transit planning with walking and bus integration.
- [Hyperdia](#) - Comprehensive train schedule search across all Japanese railways.
- [Jorudan](#) - Route and fare finder for trains and buses.
- **Japan Rail Pass** - Unlimited JR travel pass for tourists, covering bullet trains and more.
- **JR East** - Covers Tokyo and northern regions including Tohoku and Nagano.
- **JR West** - Covers Kansai and western regions.
- [Tokyo Metro](#) - Nine subway lines covering central Tokyo.
- **Toei Transportation** - Four additional subway lines plus buses and trams in Tokyo.
- [Keisei Skyliner](#) - Fast rail link from Narita Airport to central Tokyo.
- [Hankyu Railways](#) - Connects Osaka, Kobe, and Kyoto in the Kansai region.
- [Hanshin Railways](#) - Runs between Osaka and Kobe.
- **Keihan Railway** - Connects Kyoto, Osaka, and Shiga.
- **Osaka Municipal Transportation Bureau** - Osaka's subway and bus system.
- [Kyoto Municipal Transportation Bureau](#) - Kyoto's buses and subway.
- **Fukuoka City Subway** - Three-line subway system in Fukuoka.
- [Tosa Electric Railway](#) - Trams and buses in Kochi.
- [Kotoden](#) - Local railway in Kagawa/Takamatsu area.

Bus

- [Highway Buses](#) - Budget intercity travel, often overnight routes between major cities.
- [Japan Bus Web](#) - Overview of bus networks and how to use them.
- **JR Bus Kanto** - You can use your Japan Rail Pass on JR-operated buses.

Airlines

- [ANA](#) - Major carrier with extensive domestic and international routes. Phone: 0120/029-222.
- [JAL](#) - Japan's flagship carrier. Phone: 0120/25-5971.
- [Skymark Airlines](#) - Low-cost domestic carrier.
- [Peach Aviation](#) - Low-cost carrier based at Kansai International Airport.
- [Air Do](#) - Budget airline focused on Tokyo-Hokkaido routes.

Airports

- **Narita International Airport** - Tokyo's main international gateway.
- **Kansai International Airport** - International hub serving Osaka, Kyoto, and Kobe.

- [Itami Airport](#) - Osaka's domestic airport, closer to the city center.

Ferry

- **JR Kyushu Jet Ferry** - Hydrofoil service from Fukuoka to Busan, South Korea in about 3 hours.
- **Kansai Kisen Ferry Lines** - Connects ports in the Kansai region to Shikoku and other islands.

Driving

- **Japan Automobile Federation** - Japan's AAA equivalent, offering roadside assistance and driving resources.
- [Japan Driver's License](#) - Detailed guide to converting your foreign license to a Japanese one.
- [Lease Japan](#) - Car leasing options for residents.
- **Tocoo Car Rental** - English-language car rental booking service.
- **Buying a Car** - Guide to purchasing a vehicle in Japan.
- **Buying a Car in Japan** - Another perspective on the car buying process.
- [Northern Road Navi](#) - Hokkaido winter road conditions and driving tips.
- **Fuchu Driver's License Testing Center** - English support available for license testing in Tokyo.
- **Koto Driver's License Testing Center** - Phone: 03/3699-1151.
- **Samezu Driver's License Testing Center** - Phone: 03/3474-1374.

Taxi

- **Info Taxi** - Fare information and tips on how to hail taxis in Japan.

Cycling

- **Cycle Tokyo** - Volunteer-guided cycling tours around Tokyo.
- **Cycletech-IKD** - Bike shop in Takasaki, Gunma Prefecture.
- [Ehicle Bike Shop](#) - Folding bikes available in Shinjuku.
- **Ito Cycles** - Bike shop in Osaka.
- [Kyoto Cycling Project](#) - Guided cycling tours exploring Kyoto's streets and temples.

Travel Agencies

- [JTB](#) - Japan's largest travel agency with offices everywhere.
- [Japan Visitor Travel Information](#) - Travel info and booking resources for visitors.
- [IACE Travel Asia](#) - Package tours and discount airfares.
- **Japanican.com** - Tour and activity booking platform.

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Driving in Japan

Japan drives on the left. Roads are narrow, parking is expensive in cities, but a car is essential in rural areas and very helpful outside the major metros.

License Options

International Driving Permit (IDP)

- Valid for **1 year only** from date of entry to Japan.
- Must be issued in your home country **before** arriving.
- After that year (or if you become a resident), you must get a Japanese license.
- Countries that issue IDPs recognized in Japan: U.S., Canada, UK, Australia, and 80+ others under the Geneva Convention.
- [AAA International Driving Permit](#) - For U.S. citizens.
- CAA International Driving Permit - For Canadians.

License Conversion (Gaimen Kirikae)

- If you held your home country's license for at least 3 months **before** moving to Japan, you can convert it.
- Process: written exam, eye test, and (for some countries) a practical driving test.
- **Easy conversion countries** (no practical test): UK, Australia, Germany, France, South Korea, Taiwan, and 25+ others.
- **Hard conversion countries** (practical test required): U.S., China, Brazil, Russia. The practical test is famously difficult.
- [Gaimen Kirikae Guide](#) - Comprehensive English walkthrough.
- JAF License Conversion Info - Japan Automobile Federation's official guide.

Getting a License from Scratch

- If you don't have a license already, you'll attend driving school (~\$2000-\$3000) and take written and practical tests.
- Process takes 1-3 months.

Driving Schools

- Koyama Driving School - Tokyo driving school with English instructors.
- Mizonokuchi Driving School - Yokohama-area school.

Buying a Car

- [Carview](#) - Japan's biggest used car listings site (Japanese).
- [Goo-net Used Cars](#) - Major used car platform.

- [BeForward](#) - Export-focused but lists Japanese inventory.
- [TC-V](#) - English-language Japanese used car export site.
- Costs Guide - English guide to the buying process.

Shaken (車検)

Every car must pass a costly biennial inspection called shaken. Budget ¥100,000-¥200,000+ every two years. This is a major reason used cars are cheap.

Renting a Car

- Toccoo - English car rental booking platform.
- [Times Car Rental](#) - Major chain with English support.
- [Toyota Rent a Car](#) - Toyota's rental service.
- [Nippon Rent-A-Car](#) - Another major option.

Car Sharing

- [Times Car Plus](#) - Most popular car-share with stations everywhere.
- [Orix Car Share](#) - Another major car-share network.

Roads & Tolls

- [Japan Expressway Toll Calculator](#) - Plan toll costs in advance. Tolls are expensive (~¥3000 Tokyo-Nagoya).
- [ETC Card](#) - Highly recommended for any expressway driving. Saves money and skips toll booths.
- [Northern Road Navi](#) - Hokkaido winter road conditions.

Driving Rules & Culture

- **Drive on the left.**
- **0.0% BAC for alcohol.** Penalties are severe, including for passengers.
- **Speed limits:** ~40 km/h on urban roads, 60 km/h on rural roads, 80-100 km/h on expressways.
- **No right turn on red.** Wait for the green arrow.
- **Stop sign (止まれ)** = full stop, always.
- Cyclists often ride on sidewalks and roads. Watch carefully.
- [Japan Driving Rules \(JAF\)](#) - Official English summary.

Roadside Assistance

- [JAF \(Japan Automobile Federation\)](#) - Japan's AAA equivalent. Annual membership ~¥4000.

Apps

- [Google Maps](#) - Works well in Japan, traffic data included.
- Yahoo Car Navigation - Better for in-Japan routing (Japanese).
- [NAVITIME](#) - Highly accurate Japanese navigation.

Selling Your Car

- [Gulliver](#) - Major used car buyer chain.
- Apple International - Used car export and resale.

Scrapping / Disposal

- Cars in Japan must be properly scrapped through a registered scrapper. There's a recycling fee paid when buying that funds this.

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Phone & Internet

Mobile Carriers

- **NTT Docomo** - Japan's largest mobile carrier with the widest nationwide coverage.
- [KDDI/au](#) - One of three major carriers with strong urban coverage.
- **SoftBank** - Third major carrier, also offers budget sub-brands.
- **B-Mobile** - Budget SIM cards popular with foreigners. No long-term contract required.

TIP

NTT Docomo has the widest coverage across Japan, including rural areas. However, budget SIMs like B-Mobile are popular with newcomers since they offer flexible plans without the commitment of a two-year contract.

Phone Rentals

- [CellularAbroad.com](#) - Rent a phone before arriving in Japan. Ships to your home country.
- **JAL ABC Mobile Phone Rental** - Convenient airport pickup and drop-off.
- **Pupuru** - Pocket WiFi and phone rental with delivery to your hotel or airport.
- **Rentafone Japan** - Phone rental service for short-term visitors.
- [SoftBank Rental](#) - Rental phones from a major carrier.
- [Telecom Square](#) - WiFi router rental available at major airports.

Landline

- **NTT East** - Landline provider for Eastern Japan.
- **NTT West** - Landline provider for Western Japan.
- **KDDI Landline** - Dial 0057 for English support.
- [NTT Communications](#) - Phone: 0120/532-839.

Internet Service Providers

- [Asahi Net](#) - English-friendly ISP with solid support. Phone: 0570/013522.
- **J:COM** - Cable TV and internet bundle provider.
- [KDDI AU Internet](#) - Fiber internet from a major carrier.
- [Nifty](#) - Established ISP with various plan options.
- **SpinNet** - ISP with English-language support available.

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News & Media

English-Language News

- [Japan Times](#) - Japan's oldest English-language newspaper. Great for daily news and opinion.
- [NHK World](#) - Japan's public broadcaster with free English news, video, and radio.
- [Asahi Shimbun](#) - English edition of one of Japan's major national papers.
- [Yomiuri Shimbun](#) - English edition of the world's highest-circulation newspaper.
- [Mainichi Daily News](#) - English edition of the Mainichi, covering politics and society.
- [International Herald Tribune Japan](#) - International news with Japan coverage.
- [TV Asahi News](#) - Mostly Japanese but useful for staying current on breaking stories.
- [SoraNews24](#) - Fun, lighthearted stories about Japanese culture, food, and trends.
- [GaijinPot Blog](#) - Articles about expat life, jobs, and navigating Japan.
- [BeHere Asia](#) - Immersive travel and living stories from across Asia.

Regional Publications

- [Kansai Scene](#) - Free English magazine covering the Kansai region (Osaka, Kyoto, Kobe).
- [Fukuoka Now](#) - English magazine for events and life in Fukuoka.
- [Metropolis Magazine](#) - Tokyo's leading English magazine for events, dining, and culture.
- [Kyoto Journal](#) - Quarterly publication about life in Kyoto and greater Asia.
- [Kyoto Shimbun News](#) - Local Kyoto newspaper with English section.

Radio

- [Radio Japan Online](#) - NHK's English radio programming available online.

Social Media

- [Mixi](#) - Japan's original social network. Some community groups are still active and useful for local connections.

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Daily Life Guides

Comprehensive Guides

- [GaijinPot](#) - All-in-one platform for jobs, apartments, study, travel, and community forums.
- [Japan Guide](#) - The most comprehensive English travel and living guide for Japan.
- [About Japan](#) - General information portal covering many aspects of life in Japan.
- [About Moving to Japan](#) - Practical preparation guide for your move.
- [Global Compassion](#) - Tips and advice for getting settled after arrival.
- [Handbook for Newcomers](#) - Comprehensive legal guide covering rights and responsibilities for foreigners.
- [Moon Living Abroad in Japan](#) - Online companion to the Moon guidebook series.
- [Expat Exchange](#) - Forums and firsthand advice from people who have moved abroad.
- [Ampontan](#) - Insider blog offering deep dives into Japanese culture and politics.

City Living Guides (PDFs)

Most major Japanese cities publish multilingual living guides for foreign residents covering registration, garbage, healthcare, schools, and emergencies. Look up your specific city's "外国人向け生活ガイド" (foreigner living guide) on its official site.

Tokyo & Kanto

- [Yokohama Living Guide](#) - Yokohama's official multilingual guide for foreign residents.
- [Kawasaki Living Guide](#) - Kawasaki City foreigner living information.
- [Saitama City Foreign Resident Guide](#) - Multilingual Saitama living info.
- [Chiba City Foreign Resident Guide](#) - Chiba's official multilingual portal.
- [Edogawa City Living Guide](#) - PDF guide for residents of Edogawa ward, Tokyo.
- [Tokyo Your Guide](#) - Official Tokyo metropolitan living guide PDF.

Central Japan

- [Nagoya Living Guide](#) - Nagoya International Center's PDF guide.
- [Hamamatsu Foreign Resident Manual](#) - Multilingual living info for Hamamatsu.
- [Iga City Living Guidebook](#) - Iga City multilingual guide.
- [Toyota City Multilingual Living Guide](#) - Living info for Toyota City residents.
- [Shizuoka Multilingual Information](#) - Shizuoka prefecture multilingual portal.

Kansai

- [Kobe Living Guide](#) - Kobe's official multilingual life info.
- [Osaka Information for Foreign Residents](#) - Osaka prefecture's portal.
- [Kyoto City Foreign Residents Guide](#) - Kyoto multilingual living info.
- [Nara City for Foreign Residents](#) - Nara multilingual portal.

Hokkaido

- [Sapporo Living Guide](#) - Sapporo multilingual foreigner support.
- [Living Guide Hakodate](#) - PDF guide for living in Hakodate.

Western Japan

- [Hiroshima Living Guide](#) - Hiroshima City's English info portal.
- [Okayama Multilingual Living Guide](#) - Okayama City foreigner info.

Kyushu

- [Kitakyushu Foreign Resident Info](#) - Kitakyushu's multilingual portal.
- [Kumamoto Living Guide](#) - Kumamoto City foreigner info.
- [Kagoshima Foreign Resident Guide](#) - Kagoshima living info.

Multi-City / National

- [CLAIR Living in Japan Guide](#) - Multilingual housing and daily living guide published by the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations.
- [Immigration Services Agency Living Guide](#) - Official national multilingual guide.

Emergency & Safety

- [Japan Helpline](#) - 24-hour multilingual emergency hotline. Phone: 0120/46-1997.
- [Honjo Life Safety Learning Center](#) - Free disaster prevention training including earthquake simulation.
- [Emergency Numbers](#) - Fire/Ambulance: 119, Police: 110.

Organizations & Community

- [Association of Foreign Wives of Japanese](#) - Support network for foreign spouses living in Japan.
- [Global Youth Exchange Program](#) - MOFA cultural exchange program for young people.

Accessibility

- [Accessible Tokyo and Osaka](#) - Guides for wheelchair-accessible accommodations and transport.
- [Japan Accessible Tourist Center](#) - Travel planning for visitors with disabilities.

Useful Tools

- [Online Conversion](#) - Metric to imperial converter for all units.
- [World Wide Electric Guide](#) - Info on outlets, voltage, and plug types by country.
- [Tokyo Price Guide](#) - Typical consumer goods prices in Tokyo to help you budget.
- [Visit Japan Links](#) - Official curated links from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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Family & Childcare

Raising kids in Japan can be a great experience, but the system is different from most Western countries. Here's how to navigate daycare, schools, healthcare, and parental support.

Pregnancy & Birth

- Maternity Handbook (Boshi Techo) - Free handbook from your ward office tracking pregnancy and child health.
- [AMDA International Medical Information Center](#) - Multilingual referrals for OB/GYN.
- [Tokyo Pregnancy Group](#) - English-language pregnancy and birth support community.
- [Japan Healthcare Info: Pregnancy](#) - English guide to Japanese maternity care.
- [Birth in Japan](#) - English childbirth education classes and doula services.
- [Aiiku Hospital](#) - Tokyo international maternity hospital popular with foreign families.

Birth Registration & Citizenship

- Birth must be registered at the ward office within **14 days** of birth.
- MOFA Birth Registration Info
- Children of foreign parents in Japan are **not** automatically Japanese citizens. Register with your home country's embassy.

Government Support

- [Child Allowance \(Jido Teate\)](#) - Monthly payment for children up to age 15. Apply at your ward office.
- [Lump-Sum Birth Allowance](#) - ~¥500,000 paid through health insurance to cover birth costs.
- Tokyo Child-Rearing Support - Tokyo's official multilingual info on benefits.

Daycare (Hoikuen / Yochien)

- **Hoikuen** (保育園) - Daycare for working parents, ages 0-5. Subsidized public ones are competitive.
- **Yochien** (幼稚園) - Kindergarten, ages 3-5, half-day. Less work-friendly.
- **Kodomoen** (こども園) - Combined hoikuen and yochien.
- Apply through your ward/city office. Application timing varies by city.

International Daycares & Preschools

- [Poppins International Pre-School](#) - Premium English-language daycare with multiple Tokyo locations.
- Global Kids Academy - English immersion preschool.
- Komazawa Park International School - Tokyo bilingual preschool.

Public Schools

- Public schools are free and generally good. All instruction in Japanese.
- Apply through your ward office; placement is by district.
- [Tokyo Public School Info](#)
- How to Enroll Your Child (Fukuoka example) - Example process.

International Schools

See the full [International Schools page](#) for a comprehensive list.

Healthcare for Children

- [Pediatric Emergency Number](#) - In Tokyo: dial **#8000** for after-hours pediatric advice.
- Children's Medical Subsidy - Most cities cover or heavily subsidize children's medical costs.
- Vaccination Schedule (Japan) - Japan's recommended vaccination schedule.

Parenting Communities

- [Tokyo Mothers Group](#) - English-speaking mothers in the Tokyo area.
- [Family Matters Online](#) - English magazine and community for families in Japan.
- [Savvy Tokyo](#) - English lifestyle site with strong parenting content.
- [Japan With Kids](#) - Family guide with school directories.

Childcare Help

- [Poppins \(Babysitting & Sitters\)](#) - Premium babysitting service in English.
- Sitters - Babysitter matching platform (Japanese).
- Family Support (Famisapo) - Community-based low-cost childcare network in most cities.

Single Parents

- [Single Parent Support](#) - Government info for single-parent households.
- Local ward offices offer subsidies and counseling for single parents.

Special Needs

- [Tokyo English Lifeline \(TELL\) Counseling](#) - English support, including family and child mental health.
- Tokyo Special Needs Network - English-language community.

Adoption & Foster Care

- Across Japan (Kodomo no Niji) - Info center on child welfare.
- Foreign adoption in Japan is rare and complex. Consult an immigration lawyer.

Travel With Kids

- Japan is very family-friendly for travel. Trains, restaurants, and public spaces accommodate kids well.
- [Japan Travel with Kids](#) - Practical travel guides.

TIP

Many cities have a "family card" (子育てパスポート) giving discounts at participating businesses. Ask your ward office.

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Utilities & Postal

Electricity

- **TEPCO** - Tokyo area electricity provider. You can sign up online or by phone.

Gas

- **Tokyo Gas** - Tokyo area gas provider. Schedule a start date before you move in.

Water

- **Tokyo Waterworks** - Tokyo water service. Call to start service at your new address.

Residential Info

- **Tokyo Metropolitan Government Residence Info** - Registration and residential services information for Tokyo residents.

Postal Services

- **Japan Post** - National postal service handling mail, packages, and even savings accounts.
- **Postal Information Service** - English postal help. Phone: 03/5472-5851 or 03/5472-5852.
- [EMS International Mail](#) - Cheapest and most reliable international shipping option from Japan.

Domestic Delivery

- **Yamato Transport / Kuroneko** - Japan's ubiquitous delivery service. You will see their black cat logo everywhere.
- **Sagawa Express** - Major domestic delivery company.
- [Nittsu / Nippon Express](#) - Large logistics and delivery company.

International Shipping & Courier

- [DHL Japan](#) - International express shipping.
- [FedEx Japan](#) - International courier with English support.
- **Overseas Courier Service** - Get foreign newspapers and books delivered to your door in Japan.

Baggage Delivery

- **JAL ABC** - Send your luggage from the airport to your hotel or home.
- **Yamato Transport** - Airport baggage forwarding service.

Moving Services

- **Nippon Express USA** - Ship your belongings to Japan by sea or air freight.
- **Nippon Express Japan** - Domestic moving within Japan.
- [Sterling International](#) - International movers. Phone: 800/989-2198.
- [FIDI International Movers](#) - Verify your moving company is certified and reputable.
- [Moving Scam](#) - Check reviews and avoid fraudulent moving companies.

TIP

Always get at least 3 estimates when shipping your belongings internationally. Prices vary wildly between companies, and some charge hidden fees for customs clearance or delivery to your door.

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Shopping & Services

Classifieds & Marketplace

- [Tokyo Classifieds](#) - Buy, sell, and find services in Tokyo.
- [Tokyo Craigslist](#) - Apartments, furniture, and jobs in Tokyo.
- [Craigslist Osaka](#) - Classifieds for the Osaka area.
- [Metropolis Classifieds](#) - Apartments, furniture, bicycles, and cars.

Restaurants

- [Gourmet Navigator](#) - Search restaurants by location and cuisine type.

Bookstores

- [Kinokuniya Bookstore Sapporo](#) - Large bookstore with a good selection of English books and magazines.

Accommodation

- [Sakura House](#) - Shared houses, apartments, and dorms in Tokyo.
- [Japanese Guesthouses](#) - Free booking service for ryokan and traditional inns.
- [Guesthouse Jiyuu-Jin Kyoto](#) - Budget guesthouse in Kyoto.
- [Toho Yado](#) - B&B listings in Hokkaido. Mostly Japanese.
- [Tokyu Stay Residences](#) - Serviced apartments for extended stays.
- [WMT Hotels and Apartments](#) - Weekly/monthly furnished apartments in Tokyo.
- [Weekly Mansion Osaka](#) - Short-term furnished apartments in Osaka.
- [Leopalace 21](#) - Furnished apartments in Tokyo, Osaka, and Fukuoka.

Tourism

- [JNTO](#) - Official tourism body with model trip itineraries and travel planning tools.
- [Fukuyama Tourism](#) - Fukuyama City and Tomonoura area guide.
- [Tourism Shikoku](#) - Shikoku island tourism portal.
- [Hiroshima City Fun Walks](#) - Luggage delivery service at Hiroshima station.
- [Tokyo Free Walking Tours](#) - Free volunteer-guided tours of Tokyo.
- [Tokyo Tourism Info](#) - Official Tokyo metropolitan tourism site.
- [Kyoto Visitor's Guide](#) - Comprehensive Kyoto sightseeing guide.
- [Kyoto Travel Guide](#) - Official Kyoto travel information.
- [Kochi Information Center](#) - Kochi attractions and travel info.
- [Sapporo International Communication Plaza](#) - Visitor information and support in Sapporo.
- [Fukuoka Convention and Visitors Bureau](#) - Fukuoka tourism and event information.

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Pets

Bringing Pets to Japan

- **Animal Quarantine Service** - Ministry of Agriculture quarantine office. Required for bringing pets into Japan.

IMPORTANT

Japan has strict animal quarantine rules. Start the import process at least 7 months before your move to avoid a lengthy quarantine period at the airport.

Pet Resources

- [Pets in Japan](#) - Dog runs, parks, and pet-friendly inns. Site is in Japanese.
- **Veterinary Sanitation Section** - Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Public Health. Handles pet registration. Phone: 03/5320-4412.

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Tokyo

City Information

- **Tokyo Metropolitan Government** - Official Tokyo government site with services, news, and resident info.
- **Tokyo Information Net** - Lifestyle and practical info for daily living.
- **Tokyo Tourism Info** - Official tourism portal with events and attractions.
- [Tokyo With Kids](#) - Guide for families living in or visiting Tokyo with children.
- [Tokyo Free Walking Tours](#) - Free volunteer-guided tours around the city.

Ward Guides

- **Arakawa-ku - Bunkyo-ku** (city.bunkyo.lg.jp) - Home of Tokyo University.
- [Chiyoda-ku](#) - Imperial Palace and government district.
- **Itabashi-ku - Meguro-ku** (city.meguro.tokyo.jp) - Popular residential area with a relaxed vibe.
- **Minato-ku** - Roppongi, Tokyo Tower, and many embassies.
- **Mitaka City** - Home of the Ghibli Museum.
- **Nakano-ku** - Otaku culture hub and the famous Broadway complex.
- **Nishi Tokyo City** - Residential western Tokyo area.
- **Setagaya-ku** - Tokyo's most populated residential ward.
- **Toshima-ku** - Home of Ikebukuro.
- **Edogawa City** (city.edogawa.tokyo.jp)

Housing

- [Tokyo Rent](#) - Apartment search service. Phone: 03/3265-6363
- [Tokyo Apartments](#) - Short and long-term apartment listings.
- **Tokyo Cozy House** - Budget furnished and shared rooms.
- **Tokyo Life Guide** - Expat-friendly neighborhood breakdowns.
- **Real Estate Tokyo** - News and property listings.

Utilities

- **TEPCO** - Tokyo's electricity provider.
- **Tokyo Gas** - Gas utility service.
- **Tokyo Waterworks** - Water service and billing info.

Hospitals

- **Seibo International Catholic Hospital** - Located in Shinjuku-ku.
- [St. Luke's International Hospital](#) - Located in Chuo-ku, well-known for English-speaking staff.
- **Tokyo Adventist Hospital** - Located in Suginami-ku. Phone: 03/3392-6151
- **Tokyo Metropolitan Hiroo Hospital** - Located in Shibuya-ku. Phone: 03/3444-1181

- **Himawari / Tokyo Metropolitan Health Info** - Hospital search service with multilingual support. Phone: 03/5285-8181

Medical Tip

Himawari is a great first stop when you need to find a hospital or clinic that speaks your language. Available by phone and online.

International Schools

- [The American School in Japan](#) - Located in Chofu-shi.
- [British School in Tokyo](#) - Located in Shibuya.
- [Canadian International School](#) - Located in Kitashinagawa.
- [Christian Academy in Japan](#) - Located in Higashi Kurume.
- [Nishimachi International School](#) - Located in Moto Azabu.
- [St. Mary's International School](#) - Located in Setagaya-ku.

Services

- [Tokyo Classifieds](#) - Buy, sell, and find services.
- [Tokyo Craigslist](#) - Classifieds for jobs, housing, and more.
- [Fuchu Driver's License Testing Center](#) - English support available for license conversion.
- [Tokyo Price Guide](#) - Helpful price references for everyday items.

Organizations

- [ACCJ](#) - American Chamber of Commerce in Japan.
- [Association of Foreign Wives of Japanese](#) - Support network and community for international spouses.

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Yokohama & Kanagawa

Yokohama is Japan's second-largest city by population, just 30 minutes south of Tokyo. Many foreign residents pick Yokohama for slightly cheaper rent, an international history, and easy access to the Tokyo job market.

City & Government

- [City of Yokohama](#) - Official multilingual site for residents.
- Yokohama Association for International Communications and Exchanges (YOKE) - Support, consultation, events, and Japanese classes.
- [Kanagawa Prefectural Government](#) - Multilingual prefecture site.

Living Guides

- [Yokohama Living Guide](#) - City's official guide for foreign residents.
- [Kanagawa International Foundation](#) - Multilingual consultation and resources.
- Yokohama Living - English blog about life in Yokohama.

Neighborhoods

- **Minato Mirai** - Modern waterfront with offices, shopping, and the iconic Landmark Tower.
- **Motomachi & Yamate** - Historic foreigner quarter, still home to international schools and Western-style houses.
- **Chinatown (Chukagai)** - Largest Chinatown in Japan.
- **Kannai & Bashamichi** - Historic business district with classic Western architecture.

Transportation

- [Yokohama Municipal Subway](#) - Blue and Green subway lines.
- [Tokyu Toyoko Line](#) - Direct connection to Shibuya in 25 minutes.
- [JR Yokohama Line](#) - JR routes through Kanagawa.
- [Keikyu Line](#) - Connects Yokohama, Tokyo, and Haneda Airport.
- [Haneda Airport](#) - Tokyo's domestic and international hub, fastest from Yokohama.

Healthcare

- Yokohama City University Hospital - Major teaching hospital.
- Bluff Clinic (Yamate) - English-speaking clinic in the historic Yamate district.

Education

- [Yokohama National University](#) - Top public research university.

- [Yokohama International School](#) - One of Japan's oldest international schools (founded 1924).
- [Saint Maur International School](#) - Catholic K-12 in Yamate.
- [Yokohama Christian School](#)

Jobs

- Many residents commute to Tokyo. See the main [Jobs page](#) for general resources.
- Yokohama Employment Service Center for Foreigners - Hello Work branch with foreigner support.

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Nagoya & Chubu

Nagoya is Japan's manufacturing heartland (Toyota's home), the country's fourth-largest city, and a great middle ground between Tokyo and Osaka. Lower rent, less crowded, but plenty of jobs and amenities.

City & Government

- [City of Nagoya](#) - Official English site with resident services and city info.
- [Nagoya International Center \(NIC\)](#) - Information, consultation, library, and events for foreign residents.
- [Aichi Prefectural Government](#) - English site for Aichi prefecture.

Living Guides

- [Nagoya Living Guide](#) - Multilingual guide to settling in.
- [Nagoya Info](#) - Tourism and culture portal with practical info.
- [Centrally Japan](#) - Central Japan tourism and travel info.

Housing

- [Nagoya Apartments](#) - Major rental search for the Tokai region.
- [Able Nagoya](#) - National rental chain with Nagoya branches.

Transportation

- [Nagoya Subway](#) - City subway and bus system.
- [Central Japan Railway \(JR Tokai\)](#) - Tokaido Shinkansen and local lines.
- [Meitetsu](#) - Major private railway in Aichi.
- [Chubu Centrair Airport](#) - Nagoya's international airport on an artificial island.

Healthcare

- [Nagoya University Hospital](#) - Major teaching hospital.
- [Aichi Medical University Hospital](#)

Education

- [Nagoya University](#) - Top national university with strong international programs.
- [Nagoya International School](#) - K-12 international school.
- [Nagoya University of Foreign Studies](#)
- [Nanzan University](#)

Jobs

- Toyota Careers - Toyota and related manufacturers are major employers in the area.
- Nagoya International Center Job Info

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Osaka & Kansai

Osaka City Info

- **Osaka City Hall** - Official city government portal in English.
- **Osaka Prefecture Government** - Prefectural services and information.
- **Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents** - Dedicated support for foreign residents.

Housing

- **AB Housing Osaka** - English-friendly housing assistance.
- **Able Victory Housing** - Real estate agency, in Japanese.
- [Japan Home Search Osaka](#) - Apartment and house listings.
- **Osaka Municipal Housing Information Center** - Public housing inquiries. Phone: 06/6242-1177
- **Weekly Mansion Osaka** - Short-term furnished apartments.
- [Century 21 Will House](#) - Real estate chain, in Japanese.

Transportation

- **Osaka Municipal Transportation Bureau** - Subway and bus info.
- [Hankyu Railways](#) - Connects Osaka, Kobe, and Kyoto.
- [Hanshin Railways](#) - Connects Osaka and Kobe.
- **Kansai International Airport** - Main international gateway for the region.
- [Itami Airport](#) - Domestic flights hub.

Getting Around

The Kansai region has excellent rail connectivity. A Kansai Thru Pass or ICOCA card will cover most of your transit needs across Osaka, Kyoto, Kobe, and Nara.

Healthcare

- **Osaka National Hospital** - Located in Chuo-ku.
- **Oak Clinic Group** - Located in Namba, specializing in gynecology and fertility.
- **Ueroku Women's Clinic** - Phone: 06/6762-5842
- **Yodogawa Christian Hospital** - Phone: 06/332-2250
- **ICC Kobe** - International counseling services in Kobe.

Education

- **Osaka University** - One of Japan's top national universities.
- **Kansai University** - Large private university.
- **Kansai Gaidai University** - Well-known for foreign language and exchange programs.

- **Osaka International School** - International curriculum school.
- [Canadian Academy](#) - K-12 international school in Kobe.
- **Kansai Christian School** - Located in Nara.
- **Osaka Japanese Language Education Center** - Japanese language training for international students.

Media

- [Kansai Scene](#) - English-language magazine covering events, dining, and culture.
- **Craigslist Osaka** - Classifieds for the Osaka area.

Employment

- **Osaka Employment Service Center for Foreigners** - Job support and consultations. Phone: 06/6485-6142
- **Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau** - Visa and residency matters. Phone: 06/4703-2150

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Kyoto

City Info

- **Kyoto Prefectural Office** - Official prefectural government site.
- [Kyoto City International Foundation](#) - Support services, events, and resources for international residents.
- **Kyoto International Community House** - Community space with a library, counseling, and events.
- **Kyoto Visitor's Guide** - Comprehensive visitor and resident info.
- [Kyoto Travel Guide](#) - Official tourism portal.
- [Kyoto Northern Region Relocation Portal](#) - Vacant properties, jobs, and subsidies for northern Kyoto.

Rural Kyoto

If you're looking outside the city center, the northern Kyoto relocation portal lists vacant houses (akiya), local jobs, and financial support for newcomers.

Housing

- [Kyoto Apartment](#) - Apartment search for the Kyoto area.
- **Kyoto City Housing Service Company** - Public housing inquiries. Phone: 075/681-0541
- **Able Company Fushimi-ten** - Real estate agency. Phone: 075/601-6251

Transportation

- **Kyoto Municipal Transportation Bureau** - Bus and subway info.
- **Keihan Railway** - Connects Kyoto, Osaka, and Shiga.
- [Kyoto Cycling Project](#) - Guided cycling tours around the city.

Healthcare

- **Japan Baptist Hospital** - Phone: 075/781-5191
- **Kyoto City Clinic for Emergency Illness** - Phone: 075/811-5072
- [East-West Psychotherapy Service](#) - English-speaking mental health support. Phone: 075/724-1356

Education

- [Kyoto University](#) - One of Japan's most prestigious universities.
- **Ritsumeikan University** - Large private university with English-taught programs.
- **Doshisha University** - Well-regarded private university in central Kyoto.
- **Kyoto University of Foreign Studies** - Focused on language and international studies.

- **Kyoto Institute of Technology** - Engineering and design programs.
- [Kyoto International School](#) - K-8 international school.
- **Kyoto Consortium for Japanese Studies** - Semester and year-long study abroad programs.
- [Kyoto One-Stop Business Center](#) - Support services for foreign entrepreneurs starting a business in Kyoto.

Media

- [Kyoto Journal](#) - English-language journal covering culture, art, and sustainability.
- [Kyoto Shimbun News](#) - Local news in English.

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Sendai & Tohoku

Sendai is the largest city in Tohoku and one of Japan's most livable mid-size cities. Easy bullet train access to Tokyo, mild summers, and lower costs than the major metros.

City & Government

- [City of Sendai](#) - Official English site with resident info, garbage rules, and city services.
- [Sendai International Relations Association \(SIRA\)](#) - Multilingual support center for foreign residents with consultation, classes, and event info.
- [Miyagi Prefectural Government](#) - Multilingual prefecture site covering Sendai and surrounding areas.

Living Guides

- [Sendai Living Guide](#) - SIRA's comprehensive guide covering housing, healthcare, education, and emergencies.
- [Tohoku Tales](#) - English blog covering travel, food, and life across the Tohoku region.

Transportation

- [Sendai City Subway](#) - Two-line subway system map and fares.
- [JR East Sendai](#) - Shinkansen and local trains in the Tohoku region.
- [Sendai Airport](#) - Regional airport with domestic and limited international routes.

Healthcare

- [Tohoku University Hospital](#) - Major university hospital with foreign patient support.
- [Sendai Medical Center](#) - National hospital in central Sendai.

Education

- [Tohoku University](#) - One of Japan's top national research universities.
- [Tohoku International School](#) - K-12 international school with English-language curriculum.
- [Miyagi University of Education](#)

Disaster Info

WARNING

The Tohoku region was heavily impacted by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami. Familiarize yourself with local disaster procedures and evacuation routes.

- [Sendai Disaster Prevention](#) - City disaster preparedness info (Japanese, but translatable).
- [Japan Meteorological Agency](#) - Earthquake and tsunami warnings.

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Hokkaido

Sapporo

- [City of Sapporo](#) - Official city government portal.
- **Hokkaido Government** - Prefectural government site.
- **Sapporo International Communication Plaza** - Multilingual support, consultations, and community events.
- **Hokkaido Insider News-Jobs** - Local news and job listings for foreigners.

Housing

- **Elm Fudosan** - Real estate listings, Japanese only.

Education

- [Hokkaido International School](#) - K-12 international school.
- [SIL Sapporo Nihongo Gakkou](#) - Japanese language school.
- **Japanese Language Institute of Sapporo** - Language courses for international students.
- **Hokusai Gakuen University** - University with international programs.
- **JALT Hokkaido** - Japan Association for Language Teaching, Hokkaido chapter.

Healthcare

- **Sapporo Medical University Hospital** - Phone: 011/611-2111
- **Medical Resources in Sapporo** - US Embassy list of English-speaking doctors.

Services

- **Sapporo Regional Immigration Bureau** - Visa and residency services.
- **Legal Service Network for Foreigners** - Free legal consultations.
- **Inspection Division, Labor Standards Dept** - Worker consultation and labor rights.
- [Northern Road Navi](#) - Winter road conditions and driving info.
- **Kinokuniya Bookstore Sapporo** - Carries English-language books.

Winter Driving

Hokkaido winters are serious. Check Northern Road Navi before any drive and make sure your car has studless winter tires (required by local custom, not law).

Kushiro

- **City of Kushiro** - City info for international residents.
- **Kushiro City General Hospital** - Phone: 0154/41-6121
- **Hokkaido University of Education Kushiro** - Education-focused campus.

- **Kushiro Public University of Economics** - Public university in Kushiro.

Obihiro

- **City of Obihiro** - City information for residents.
- [Joy English Academy](#) - English language school.
- **Obihiro University of Agriculture** - Agriculture and veterinary science programs.
- **Chien, Inc.** - Real estate, Japanese only.

Hakodate

- **Living Guide Hakodate** - PDF living guide from the city.
- **Future University Hakodate** - Systems information science university.
- [Hakodate University](#) - Local university.
- **Hokkaido University of Education Hakodate** - Education campus.
- **Hakodate Fudosan Web** - Real estate listings, Japanese only.
- **Shiritsu Hakodate Byoin** - City hospital. Phone: 0138/23-8651

Airlines & Travel

- [Air Do](#) - Budget airline running Tokyo-Hokkaido routes.
- [Toho Yado](#) - Affordable B&B listings across Hokkaido.

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Central Mountains

Nagano City

- **Nagano City Hall** - Official city government site.
- **Nagano Prefectural Government** - Prefectural information in multiple languages.
- **IEC Nagano** - Japanese classes and international library.
- [Shinano Mainichi Shimbun](#) - Local newspaper.
- **Shinshu Services, Inc.** - Business consulting for foreigners.

Housing

- **Nagano City Residential Housing Section** - Public housing info. Phone: 026/224-5424

Healthcare

- **Nagano City Health Center** - Low-cost health checkups available.
- [Nagano Medical Info Network](#) - Find hospitals and clinics.
- **Nagano Sekijuji Hospital** - Red Cross hospital. Phone: 026/226-4131
- **Nagano Women's Consultation Center** - Phone: 026/235-5710

Education

- **Nagano University** - Local university.
- **Shinshu University** - Major national university with campuses across Nagano.

Services

- **Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau Nagano Branch** - Phone: 026/232-3317

Karuizawa

- **Karuizawa Town Hall** - Town information and living guide.
- **Karuizawa Health Center / Hospital** - Local medical services.

About Karuizawa

Karuizawa is a popular mountain resort town about an hour from Tokyo by shinkansen. It's a favorite weekend escape and some expats choose to live here year-round.

Matsumoto

- **Matsumoto City** - Official English city page.
- **Matsumoto City Hall** - Government services.

- [Matsumoto Welcome Project](#) - Sightseeing, events, and a guest blog.
- [Matsumoto Transportation](#) - Getting around the city.

Housing

- [Asia Real Estate Co., Ltd](#) - Real estate listings, Japanese.
- **Nagano Prefecture Housing** - Matsumoto branch. Phone: 026/227-1211

Healthcare

- **Shinshu University Medical Hospital** - Phone: 0265/82-2121

Education

- **Kunoichi College Business Japanese Course** - Business-focused Japanese language training.
- [Talent Education Research Institute / Suzuki Method](#) - World-famous music education method, headquartered in Matsumoto.

Gunma Prefecture

- **Gunma Prefecture Office** - Prefectural government in English.
- [Gunmajet](#) - News, events, and teaching info for the JET community.
- **Gunma Tourism International Association** - Tourism and international exchange.
- **Nippon Language Academy** - Japanese language school in Maebashi-shi.

Housing

- [Era Cosmo City](#) - Real estate, Japanese.
- **Kobayasi Fudosan** - Real estate, Japanese.

Takasaki

- **Immigration Office Takasaki** - Phone: 027/328-1154
- **Insider's Scoop on Takasaki** - Community guide to life in Takasaki.
- **Kokuritsu Takasaki Byoin** - National hospital. Phone: 0273/22-5901
- **Tezuka Dentistry** - English-speaking dentist. Phone: 027/322-3843
- **TTA Real Estate** - Real estate, Japanese.
- **Cycletech-IKD** - Well-known bike shop.

Education

- **Takasaki City University of Economics** - Public university.
- [Takasaki University of Commerce](#) - Commerce-focused university.
- [Takasaki University of Health and Welfare](#) - Health sciences programs.
- **University of Creation, Music and Social Work** - Arts and social work programs.

Ota

- **Gunma Kokusai Academy** - English immersion school.
- [Ota City Hall](#) - City government services.

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Hiroshima

City Info

- **Hiroshima City Government** - Official city site.
- [Hiroshima City International House](#) - English living guide PDF and community support.
- **Hiroshima International Information Network** - Multilingual info for daily life.
- **Hiroshima Peace Cultural Foundation** - Peace education and cultural exchange programs.
- **Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum Virtual** - Virtual tour of the peace memorial.
- **Hiroshima City Tourist Information** - Tourism portal with guides and events.
- **Hiroshima City Fun Walks** - Guided walking tours with luggage delivery available at JR station.
- [Fukuyama Tourism](#) - Info on the nearby Tomonoura area, a beautiful coastal town.

Day Trips

Hiroshima is a great base for visiting Miyajima Island (the famous floating torii gate) and the historic port town of Tomonoura in Fukuyama.

Healthcare

- **Hiroshima University Hospital** - Major university hospital.
- **Hiroshima Regional Immigration Bureau** - Phone: 082/221-4411

Education

- **Hiroshima City University** - Public university with international programs.
- **Hiroshima University Study Abroad** - Study abroad and exchange programs.
- [Hiroshima International School](#) - International curriculum school.
- [Hiroshima YMCA International Business College](#) - Business and language programs.

Business

- **JASSO Hiroshima** - Student support and scholarship info.
- **JETRO Hiroshima** - Trade and investment support for businesses.

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Shikoku

Kagawa / Takamatsu

- **Welcome to Takamatsu City** - Official English city portal.
- **Multilingual Living Guide for Takamatsu** - Practical living info in multiple languages.
- [Takamatsu International Association](#) - Events, classes, and international community support.
- [Kagawa International Exchange Center / I-PAL](#) - Prefectural international exchange hub.
- [Kagawa Prefecture Government](#) - Prefectural information for foreigners.

Healthcare

- **Takamatsu City Health Center** - Health and insurance info.
- **Kagawa Kenritsu Chuo Byoin** - Prefectural central hospital. Phone: 0878/35-2222

Services

- **Takamatsu Regional Immigration Bureau** - Phone: 087/822-5852
- **Takamatsu Center for the Advancement of Women** - Support services.

Housing

- **Able Network Takamatsu** - Apartment and rental listings.

Education

- [Anabuki Business College Japanese Course](#) - Japanese language training.

Transportation

- [Kotoden](#) - Local railway connecting Takamatsu's neighborhoods.

Tokushima

- [Tokushima City](#) - Official city government page.
- **Tokushima Prefecture Office** - Includes a downloadable Pocket Living Guide.
- **TOPIA** - Counseling, books, internet access, JLPT info, and the Awa Life magazine.

Healthcare

- **Tokushima University Medical Hospital** - Phone: 0886/31-3111

Housing

- **Tokushima Prefecture Housing Division** - Phone: 088/621-2590
- **Oka Jutaku** - Real estate, Japanese.

Education

- **University of Tokushima** - Major national university.

Culture

- [Tokushima International Cultural Village / KAIR](#) - Artist-in-residence program in the Kamiyama area.

Awa Odori

Tokushima is famous for the Awa Odori dance festival every August. It's one of Japan's biggest festivals and a great way to connect with the local community.

Ehime / Matsuyama

- **Ehime Prefecture Government** - Prefectural info in English.
- **Matsuyama International Center** - Consultations and events. Phone: 089/943-2025

Healthcare

- [Ehime Emergency Medical Treatment Network](#) - Find emergency care.
- **Matsuyama Sekijuji Byoin** - Red Cross hospital. Phone: 0899/24-1111

Education

- [Ehime University](#) - National university.
- **Matsuyama University** - Private university.
- [Ehime Prefectural International Association Japanese Classes](#) - Free or low-cost Japanese classes.

Housing

- [Leopalace 21 Matsuyama](#) - Furnished apartments with English support.
- **Nihon Housing Co., Ltd.** - Phone: 089/934-9611

Business

- **JETRO Ehime** - Trade and investment support. Phone: 089/952-0015

Kochi

- **Kochi Prefecture Government** - Prefectural government site.
- [Kochi International Association](#) - Community support and events.
- **Kochi Information Center** - Local tourism and living info.

- **University of Kochi** - Public university.
- **Kochi Sekijuji Byoin** - Red Cross hospital. Phone: 0888/22-1201
- [Tosa Electric Railway](#) - Local streetcar and bus service.

General

- [Tourism Shikoku](#) - Regional tourism portal covering all four prefectures.

88 Temple Pilgrimage

Shikoku is home to the famous 88 Temple Pilgrimage (Shikoku Henro), a 1,200km walking route. Even if you don't walk the whole thing, visiting a few temples is a wonderful way to explore the island.

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Kyushu & Fukuoka

Fukuoka City

- **Fukuoka City Government** - Official city portal in English.
- **Fukuoka Prefectural Government** - Prefectural services and information.
- [Fukuoka Now](#) - English-language magazine covering events, food, and culture.
- [Fukuoka Convention and Visitors Bureau](#) - Tourism and event info.
- **Fukuoka International Association** - Living info, legal consultation, and community programs.
- [Fukuoka International Exchange Foundation](#) - Cross-cultural exchange and support services.
- [Fukuoka Expat Guide](#) - Practical tips on housing, food, and local life.

Why Fukuoka?

Fukuoka is one of Japan's most livable cities for foreigners. It has lower rent than Tokyo or Osaka, excellent food (especially ramen and yatai street stalls), and a growing startup scene.

Transportation

- **Fukuoka City Subway** - Subway route maps and fare info.
- **JR Kyushu Jet Ferry** - High-speed ferry from Fukuoka to Busan, South Korea in about 3 hours.

Housing

- **A Deal Real Estate Fukuoka** - Real estate services in Kitakyushu.
- **Kyushu Institute of Technology Housing** - Housing guidance for students.

Healthcare

- [International Clinic Tojinmachi](#) - English-speaking European doctor.
- [Medical Information Fukuoka](#) - List of foreigner-friendly medical facilities.

Education

- **Fukuoka International School** - K-12 international school.
- [Kyushu University International Student Center](#) - Support for international students at Kyushu University.
- **Asia Japanese Academy Fukuoka** - Japanese language school.
- **How to Enroll Your Child in School** - Guide from the city, in Japanese.

Immigration

- **Fukuoka Regional Immigration** - Visa and residency services. Phone: 092/623-2400

Business

- **Kyushu Fixers** - Support and consulting for foreign companies entering the Kyushu market.
- [WWOOF Japan](#) - Farm work exchange program. Not Kyushu-specific but popular in the region's rural areas.

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Embassies & Consulates

U.S. Embassy & Consulates

- **U.S. Embassy Tokyo** - Main embassy in Minato-ku. Passports, visas, and citizen services.
- **U.S. Consulate Fukuoka** - Serves the Kyushu region.
- **U.S. Consulate Nagoya** - Serves the Chubu/Nagoya area.
- **U.S. Consulate Naha** - Serves Okinawa.
- **U.S. Consulate Osaka** - Serves the Kansai region.
- **U.S. Consulate Sapporo** - Serves Hokkaido.

Other Embassies

- **Canadian Embassy Tokyo** - Located in Akasaka.
- **British Embassy Tokyo** - Located in Chiyoda-ku.
- [Australian Embassy Tokyo](#) - Located in Minato-ku.

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Glossary of Japanese Terms

Common Japanese words and terms you'll encounter while living in Japan.

Everyday Life

- **Konbini** - Convenience store (7-Eleven, FamilyMart, Lawson). Open 24/7 and useful for everything from snacks to paying bills.
- **Koban** - Police box. Small neighborhood police stations found near train stations and intersections.
- **Yakkyoku** - Pharmacy or drugstore.
- **Combini ATM** - ATMs found in convenience stores, often the easiest option for foreign bank cards.
- **Genkan** - Entryway area where you remove your shoes before entering a home or building.
- **Gomi** - Garbage/trash. Sorting rules vary by city and can be very detailed.
- **Sodai gomi** - Large or bulky garbage that requires scheduling a special pickup.
- **Futon** - Japanese bedding laid directly on tatami floors, folded and stored during the day.
- **Tatami** - Traditional woven rush mat flooring found in Japanese-style rooms.
- **Onsen** - Hot spring bath, often at resorts or dedicated facilities.
- **Sento** - Public bathhouse found in neighborhoods, cheaper than onsen.
- **Izakaya** - Casual Japanese pub serving food and drinks. Great for socializing.
- **Nomikai** - Drinking party, very common for workplace socializing.
- **Hanko/Inkan** - Personal seal or stamp used in place of signatures on official documents.
- **Yubinkyoku** - Post office.
- **Eki** - Train station.
- **Densha** - Train.
- **Shinkansen** - Bullet train. Japan's high-speed rail network connecting major cities.
- **Suica/Pasmo/ICOCA** - Rechargeable transit IC cards used for trains, buses, and convenience store purchases.

Administrative

- **Yakusho/Kuyakusho** - City hall or ward office where you handle registrations and paperwork.
- **Juminhyo** - Resident certificate. An official document proving your registered address.
- **Zairyu card** - Residence card issued to foreign nationals with mid- to long-term visas.
- **My Number** - Japan's individual identification number used for tax and social security.
- **Koseki** - Family register. The official record of a Japanese family's vital events.
- **Tsukin teiki** - Commuter pass for regular train/bus routes, usually purchased monthly or quarterly.

Housing

TIP

For a full housing terminology guide, see the [Housing Terminology](#) page.

- **Mansion** - Concrete apartment building (not a large house). Generally nicer than apaato.
- **Apaato** - Wooden or lightweight apartment building, typically cheaper.
- **Fudosan/Fudousan** - Real estate agency. Where you go to find rental apartments.

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Japanese Phrasebook

You don't need to be fluent to get by, but knowing these basics will make your life so much easier. Even a small effort goes a long way in Japan, and people genuinely appreciate it when you try.

Numbers

| Number | Japanese | Romaji |
|-----------|----------|---------------|
| 1 | 一 | ichi |
| 2 | 二 | ni |
| 3 | 三 | san |
| 4 | 四 | yon / shi |
| 5 | 五 | go |
| 6 | 六 | roku |
| 7 | 七 | nana / shichi |
| 8 | 八 | hachi |
| 9 | 九 | kyuu / ku |
| 10 | 十 | juu |
| 100 | 百 | hyaku |
| 1,000 | 千 | sen |
| 10,000 | 万 | man |
| 100,000 | 十万 | juu man |
| 1,000,000 | 百万 | hyaku man |

Days of the Week

| Day | Japanese | Romaji |
|-----------|----------|------------|
| Monday | 月曜日 | Getsuyoubi |
| Tuesday | 火曜日 | Kayoubi |
| Wednesday | 水曜日 | Suiyoubi |
| Thursday | 木曜日 | Mokuyoubi |
| Friday | 金曜日 | Kinyoubi |
| Saturday | 土曜日 | Doyoubi |
| Sunday | 日曜日 | Nichiyoubi |

Useful Phrases

| English | Japanese (Romaji) |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Hello | Konnichiwa |
| Good morning | Ohayou gozaimasu |
| Good evening | Konbanwa |
| Thank you | Arigatou gozaimasu |
| Excuse me / Sorry | Sumimasen |
| Yes | Hai |
| No | Iie |
| Please | Onegaishimasu |
| I don't understand | Wakarimasen |
| Do you speak English? | Eigo wo hanasemasu ka? |
| Where is...? | ...wa doko desu ka? |
| How much is this? | Kore wa ikura desu ka? |
| Help! | Tasukete! |
| I need a doctor | Isha ga hitsuyou desu |
| Where is the station? | Eki wa doko desu ka? |

At a Restaurant

| English | Japanese (Romaji) |
|--|-----------------------|
| Water please | Omizu kudasai |
| Check please | Okaikei onegaishimasu |
| Delicious | Oishii |
| Thank you for the meal (before eating) | Itadakimasu |
| Thank you for the meal (after eating) | Gochisousama deshita |

TIP

"Sumimasen" is your Swiss army knife word. Use it to get someone's attention, apologize, say thank you casually, or flag down a waiter. You'll hear it constantly.

At the Hospital

Visiting a hospital can be stressful enough without a language barrier. For a detailed list of medical phrases and vocabulary, check out the [Healthcare](#) page which includes useful Japanese expressions for hospital visits.

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About Ichiway

What is Ichiway?

Ichiway is a community-maintained collection of resources for people moving to and living in Japan. The goal is to gather the best links, guides, and tools into one easy-to-search hub so you don't have to dig through scattered blog posts, forums, and outdated websites.

What's here

Over 500 curated resources across 25+ categories:

- Visa and immigration guides
- Housing portals and rental help
- Job boards and career resources
- Language schools and study abroad
- Healthcare, hospitals, and mental health support
- Regional guides for cities across Japan
- Embassies, banks, transportation, daily life

What this site is NOT

Important

Ichiway does not host any files, content, or services. Every link points to an external website maintained by its respective owner. We are a directory, not a host.

How to use it

- Browse the sidebar for category-based navigation
- Use the search bar (top right) to find specific resources
- Star/recommended items appear in green
- Check the [Glossary](#) for Japanese terms you'll encounter

Contributing

Spot a broken link? Have a resource to suggest? See the [Contribute](#) page.

Community

Join the [Discord](#) to chat with other people moving to Japan, share tips, and contribute to the site.

Contact

Email: ichiwayofficial@gmail.com

Credits

Source content compiled from official government resources, community guides, books, and personal experiences shared by foreign residents in Japan.

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Contribute

Ichiway is community-maintained and gets better when people share what they find. Here's how to help.

Ways to Contribute

Suggest a Resource

Found a great guide, tool, or website that should be on the list? Share it through:

- [Discord](#) - quickest way to suggest something
- Email: ichiwayofficial@gmail.com

Report Broken Links

Links go dead all the time, especially Japanese government sites that love to restructure. If you find one:

- Note the page and the broken link
- Suggest a replacement if you have one
- Drop it in Discord

Fix Outdated Info

Japan's rules, phone numbers, and addresses change. If you spot something out of date, let us know what should be there instead.

Submit a Personal Guide

Wrote a blog post about getting your visa, finding an apartment, or starting a business? Share it. Personal experiences are some of the most valuable content.

Translate

Help make resources accessible by translating sections into other languages.

Submission Guidelines

When suggesting a new resource:

- **Link** - The full URL
- **Name** - What to call it
- **Description** - 1-2 friendly sentences explaining what it is and why it's useful
- **Category** - Which page it belongs on (housing, visa, etc.)

Keep descriptions friendly and helpful. No em dashes. No marketing speak.

What We Won't Add

- Scammy services or known-bad operators
- Outdated/broken sites that have no current value
- Duplicate listings already covered elsewhere on the site

Businesses interested in featured placement, see the [Sponsorships](#) page.

Recognition

Contributors are credited in the [Changelog](#). Big thanks to everyone who's helped build this.

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Sponsorships

Looking to reach an engaged international audience? Sponsor Ichiway. We work with businesses of all kinds, whether you serve people moving to Japan, foreign residents already living here, or anyone in between.

Who We Reach

Ichiway serves people who are:

- Planning a move to Japan
- Already living in Japan as foreign residents
- Researching visas, housing, jobs, healthcare, and daily life
- English-speaking with strong purchasing intent (relocation services, real estate, language schools, etc.)

Sponsorship Options

Featured Resource Listing

Get your service highlighted at the top of a relevant category page (e.g. Housing, Jobs, Language Schools). Clearly marked as a sponsored listing.

Banner Placement

Display a banner on high-traffic pages such as the home page, Getting Started, or category landing pages.

Sponsored Guide

Co-create an in-depth guide on a topic where your service adds value (e.g. "How to get a Business Manager Visa" sponsored by an immigration law firm).

Newsletter Sponsorship

Sponsor a section of the upcoming Ichiway newsletter.

Discord Community Sponsor

Become an official sponsor of the Ichiway Discord community.

What We Promise

- Sponsored content is always clearly labeled

- We only accept sponsors whose services genuinely help our audience
- No misleading placements or fake reviews
- Editorial control stays with Ichiway

What We Won't Do

- Hide or remove negative info about a sponsor
- Take down competing free listings
- Sell user data (we don't collect any)
- Accept sponsorships from scammy or low-quality operators

Get in Touch

Email: ichiwayofficial@gmail.com

Discord: [Join the server](#) and DM an admin.

Tell us:

- Your business/service
- Which sponsorship option interests you
- Your target audience and goals
- Budget range

We'll respond within a few business days.

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Changelog

All notable updates to Ichiway are tracked here.

v1.0.0 - Initial Launch

Date: 2026-05-18

Added

- 518 curated resources across 26 categories
- Visa & Immigration page
- Housing page + Housing Terminology glossary
- Jobs, Teaching English, Business pages
- Language Learning, Language Schools, Universities, International Schools pages
- Healthcare & Medical page with regional hospital listings
- Finance & Banking page
- Transportation page covering trains, buses, airlines, driving, cycling
- Phone & Internet page
- News & Media page
- Daily Life Guides, Utilities & Postal, Shopping & Services, Pets pages
- 8 Regional Guides (Tokyo, Osaka & Kansai, Kyoto, Hokkaido, Central Mountains, Hiroshima, Shikoku, Kyushu)
- Embassies & Consulates page
- Glossary of Japanese terms
- Japanese phrasebook (numbers, days, useful phrases)
- Getting Started, Planning, and Emergency Info pages
- About, Contribute, Privacy, Terms, Backups, Download, Changelog pages
- Local search (powered by VitePress minisearch)
- Dark theme with Ichiway green branding
- Discord community link

Site Features

- Dense wiki-style link layout
 - Sidebar navigation with 14 main categories
 - Per-page table of contents
 - Mobile-responsive design
 - Static-site export (deployable anywhere)
-

v1.1.0 - Expansion Update

Added

- Regional guides for **Yokohama & Kanagawa**, **Nagoya & Chubu**, and **Sendai & Tohoku**
 - **JLPT Prep** page with study resources, textbook recommendations, and level-by-level breakdown
 - **Taxes & Pension** page covering income tax, residence tax, National Pension, and lump-sum withdrawal
 - **Driving in Japan** deep dive with license conversion, buying/renting, road rules, and apps
 - **Family & Childcare** page covering pregnancy, daycare, schools, parenting communities, and government support
-

Roadmap

- Expanded job search guide with interview tips
- Detailed neighborhood breakdowns for major cities
- Cost of living calculator
- Embassy hours and contact details
- Cultural etiquette deep dive
- Onsen and travel itineraries
- Senior care and elder support
- Mental health resources expansion
- More personal moving stories

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Backups & Mirrors

If the main site at ichiway.com is down, try one of these alternatives.

Official Mirrors

TIP

Mirrors are not yet set up. This page will be populated as backup hosts come online.

- **Primary:** ichiway.com
- **GitHub Pages mirror:** (coming soon)
- **Cloudflare Pages mirror:** (coming soon)
- **Netlify mirror:** (coming soon)

Offline Copy

You can download the entire site as a static archive for offline use. See the [Download](#) page.

Wayback Machine

The Internet Archive snapshots Ichiway periodically. Search any page URL at web.archive.org.

Why Mirrors Matter

Resource sites get taken down, lose their domain, or just disappear when the maintainer moves on. Mirrors and offline copies make sure the curated list survives even if the main site goes away. We encourage anyone to fork, mirror, or archive Ichiway.

Source Code

The full site source (markdown content + VitePress config) is available so anyone can self-host or mirror it. See [Download](#).

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Download Site

Want an offline copy of Ichiway? Grab the full PDF.

Why Download?

- Read on the plane to Japan
- Use during your first weeks before you have stable internet
- Archive in case the live site goes down
- Share with friends planning the move

Download PDF

 [Download ichiway.pdf](#)

The PDF includes every page on the site (600+ resources) in a single document. Searchable text, internal links preserved, ~A4 sized for easy printing or tablet reading.

Using the Offline Copy

- Opens in any PDF reader (Adobe, Preview, browser).
- All resource names remain clickable links to external sites (internet required for those).
- Internal page links work within the PDF.

License

Content is shared under Creative Commons CC BY-SA 4.0. Free to use, share, and adapt with attribution.

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Privacy Policy

Last updated: 2026-05-18

TL;DR

Ichiway is a static website. We do not collect, store, or sell your personal information. No accounts, no tracking pixels, no ads.

What We Collect

Nothing directly. Ichiway is a static site with no backend, no database, and no user accounts.

What Third Parties May Collect

Hosting Provider

The site is hosted by a third-party provider (such as Cloudflare Pages, Netlify, or Vercel). Hosting providers may collect basic access logs (IP address, user agent, requested page) for security and abuse prevention. Refer to your hosting provider's privacy policy for details.

Search

The site search runs entirely in your browser (using VitePress's local search). Your search queries are not sent to any external server.

External Links

Every resource link on Ichiway points to an external website. Once you click a link, you are subject to that site's privacy policy and tracking. We have no control over external sites.

Discord

If you join the Discord community, Discord's privacy policy applies. See [Discord's privacy policy](#).

Cookies

Ichiway does not set any tracking cookies. The site may use a local preference cookie to remember your dark/light theme choice, but nothing more.

Analytics

If analytics are added in the future, they will be privacy-respecting (such as Plausible or self-hosted Umami) and will not track individual users.

Children

Ichiway contains general information about moving to Japan and is not directed at children under 13. We do not knowingly collect any data from anyone.

Changes

This policy may be updated as the site grows. Significant changes will be noted in the [Changelog](#).

Contact

Questions about privacy? Reach out via [Discord](#) or email ichiwayofficial@gmail.com.

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Terms of Service

Last updated: 2026-05-18

Acceptance

By using Ichiway, you agree to these terms. If you don't agree, please don't use the site.

What Ichiway Is

Ichiway is a free, community-maintained directory of links and resources related to moving to and living in Japan. We are a directory, not a service provider.

WARNING

Ichiway does not host any files, content, or services. Every link on this site points to an external website maintained by its respective owner. We do not control, endorse, or take responsibility for external content.

No Warranty

Information on Ichiway is provided "as is" without warranty of any kind. We make no guarantees that:

- Links are accurate, current, or working
- Linked resources are safe, legitimate, or trustworthy
- Information is suitable for your specific situation
- The site will be available at all times

Always verify important information (especially visa requirements, legal matters, and medical info) with official sources before acting on it.

Use at Your Own Risk

You use Ichiway and any linked resources at your own risk. We are not responsible for:

- Decisions you make based on information found here
- Content, services, or products on external sites
- Damages, losses, or issues resulting from use of the site or its links
- Outdated, incorrect, or misleading information

User Conduct

When interacting with the community (Discord, contributions, etc.), be respectful. Spam, harassment, illegal content, or bad-faith contributions will be removed.

Intellectual Property

- The site's structure, design, and curation are © ichiway.com
- Resource links and descriptions are shared under Creative Commons CC BY-SA 4.0
- External resources belong to their respective owners
- Logos, names, and trademarks of linked services belong to their owners

External Links

Links to third-party sites are provided for convenience. We do not endorse external sites and are not responsible for their content, accuracy, privacy, or practices.

Changes

These terms may be updated. Continued use after changes means you accept the updated terms. Significant updates will be noted in the [Changelog](#).

Contact

Questions? Reach out via [Discord](#) or email ichiwayofficial@gmail.com.

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