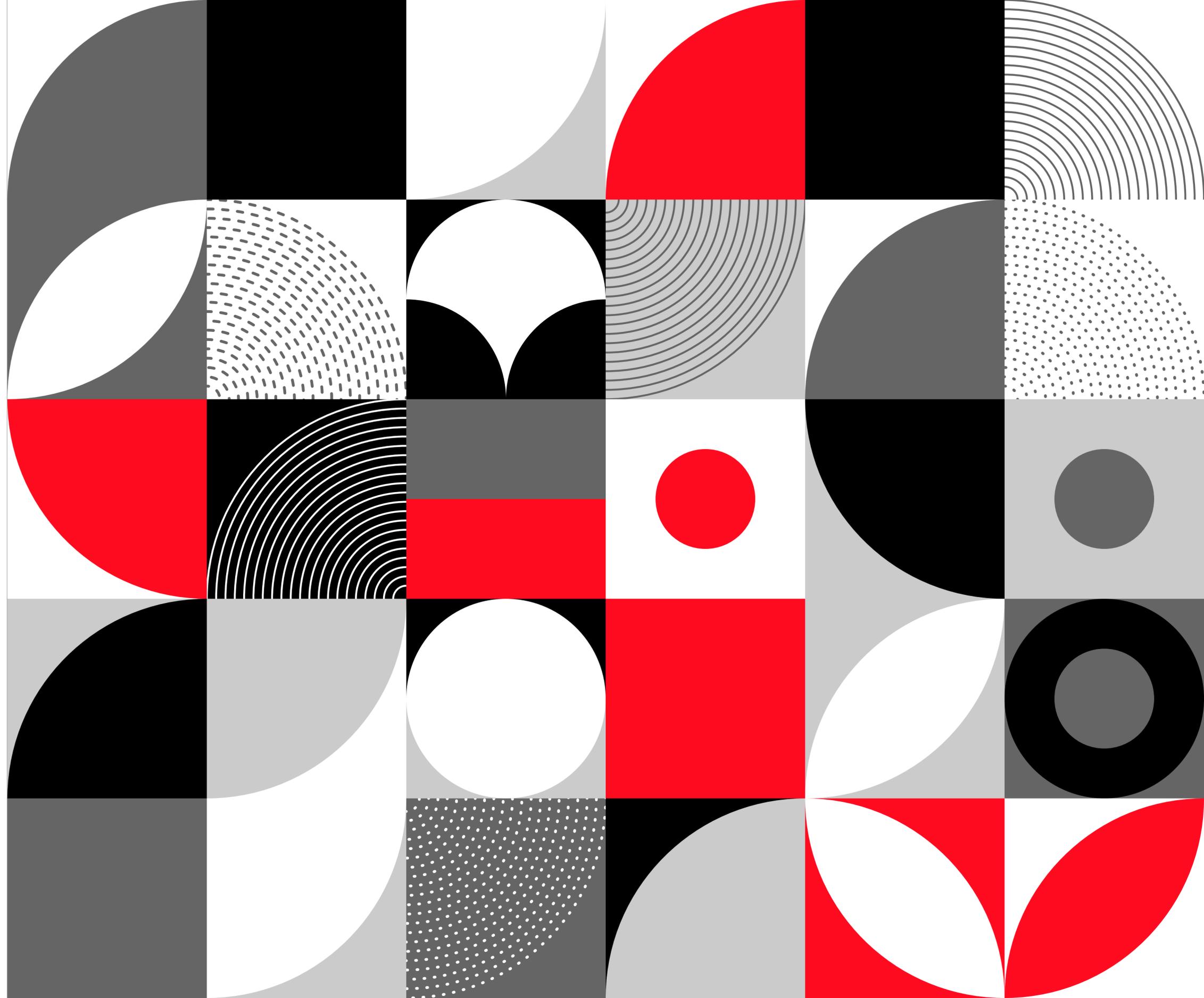


Relocate to Japan

Your Guide

A handy guide on culture, relocation and working in Japan

 **woven** by TOYOTA





woven
by TOYOTA

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General Enquiries

contact@woven.toyota

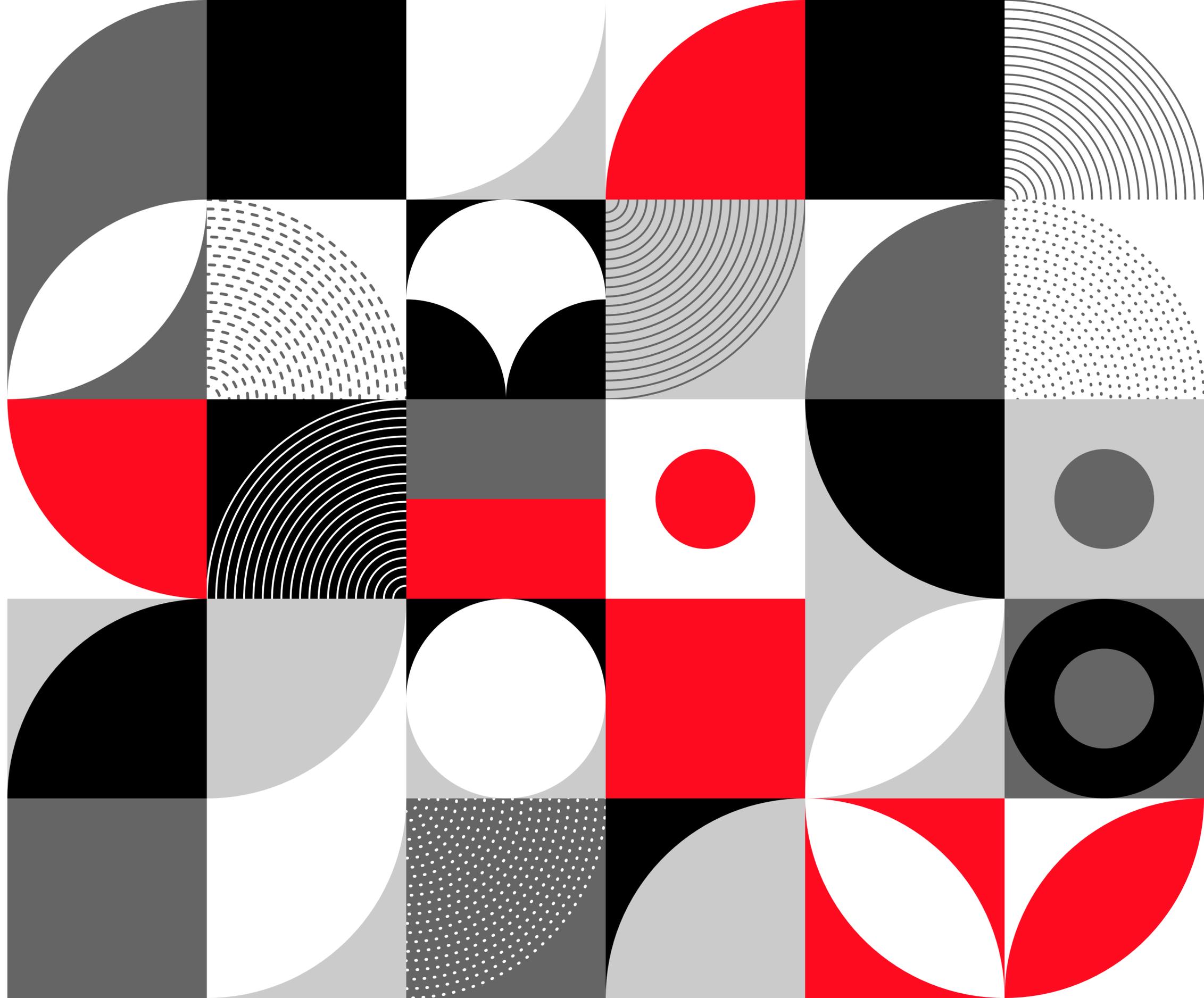
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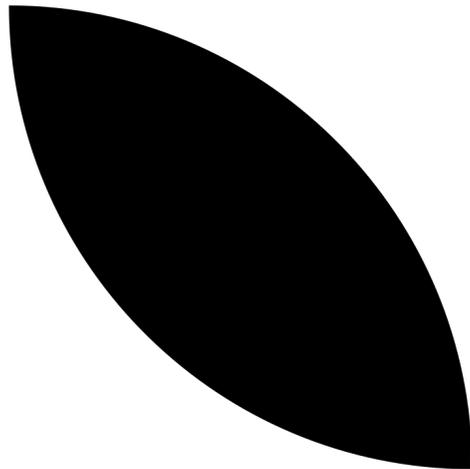
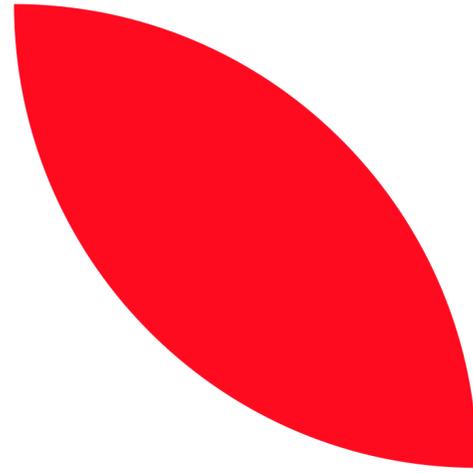
About Japan

Your Guide

A handy guide to culture, traditions and social etiquette in Japan

 **woven** by TOYOTA





Introduction

From 1639-1853, Japan was a closed country that was inaccessible to foreigners except those arriving at her trade ports such as Dejima in Nagasaki prefecture.

Since then, however, Japan has opened her borders, recovered from two world wars, and established herself as a leading global economy. As a result, the number of foreigners living in Japan has tripled within the past twenty years. Japan's unique history has created a modern country that also has a well-preserved traditional culture, making Japan a special place to live.

As the nation's capital, Tokyo has much to offer. The lifestyle can be bustling, though, so residents sometimes venture an hour or so outside of central Tokyo where there are scenic hot springs, mountain ranges, and traditional sites that provide a relaxing escape. Due to Tokyo's location, close to both mountains and the coast, it is possible to travel easily for activities, no matter the season. Popular choices are skiing, hiking, and visiting the beach.

Japan Guide

[Japan Travel and Living Guide](#)

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Weather & Seasons

Tokyo has four well-defined seasons.

Spring

The temperature in Tokyo is moderate, ranging from 13° to 19° C (55° to 66° F) during the day, which is a popular time for people to gather for picnics for cherry blossom viewing (hanami). The cherry blossom signifies the beginning of the fiscal year for the majority of organizations as well as the school year.

Summer

The timing of the rainy season differs throughout Japan. In Tokyo, it begins in June and ends around mid July. Following the rainy season, temperatures rise and humidity increases, making for a hot summer in Tokyo through September.

This period is also the peak of the typhoon season, which starts in May and runs until October.

Fall

Fall is a popular season, with crisp air that brings much relief after the hot summer days, along with beautiful foliage and the tastiest produce.

Winter

In winter, the average day temperature in Tokyo ranges from 0° to 5° C (32° to 41° F) whereas in summer it can reach above 30° C (86° F) with very high humidity.



National Holidays

There are 16 national holidays spread evenly over the course of each year in Japan.

Some of them were established for observing practices in Shinto, Japan's indigenous religion, such as worshipping nature, while others are related to observing milestones in a person's life. The spring and fall equinoxes are also celebrated as national holidays.



The most popular holiday in Japan is New Year's Day, and most people spend New Year's Eve through the first few days of the new year with family.

[The Japanese Calendar & National Holidays](#)

Currency

There are four types of common banknote denominations in Japan: ¥1,000, ¥2,000, ¥5,000, and ¥10,000.

However, the ¥2,000 note is not commonly in circulation in the country and is typically only issued at banks and places where you can do currency exchange. In addition to paper bills, Japan issues six denominations of coins; ¥1, ¥5, ¥10, ¥50, ¥100, and ¥500. Both the ¥5 and ¥50 coins feature a small hole in the center.

[About Money in Japan](#)

As a largely cash-based and safe society, it is not uncommon for Japanese people to carry ¥30,000- ¥40,000 in their wallet. ATMs can be found in many convenience stores and commercial bank branches, though 24-hour services are usually available only at convenience stores. The consumption tax in Japan is 10%.
For more information about money in Japan, please have a look at the Finance playbook.



Language

The national language is Japanese (*nihongo*), which is spoken by 128 million native Japanese.

The Japanese written language consists of three alphabets: Hiragana, Katakana, and Kanji. Hiragana and katakana are the native phonetic alphabets, each consisting of 46 characters, while kanji utilizes logographic characters adapted from Chinese characters. In larger cities, such as Tokyo and Osaka, there are more English speakers and more English-supported services than there are in rural areas. Despite learning English (as children) as part of their school curriculum, many do not get regular exposure to English speakers so they tend to have a difficult time communicating in English.

However, Japanese people are generally very polite and will often eagerly help foreigners as best they can.

Apps to help navigate language barriers:

[Google Translate](#)

[Papago](#)

[iTranslate](#)

[Waygo](#)



Culture & Festivals

There are countless local festivals (*matsuri*) in Japan because almost every shrine has a celebration of its own.

In Tokyo, there are many seasonal festivals and events such as firework displays, cherry blossom viewing (*hanami*), autumn leaf viewing, and Christmas illuminations. Many Japanese participate in their local festivals, which can feature shrine floats, food and drink stalls, and activities for both children and adults.

For more information on festivals, visit the Entertainment, Recreation & Fitness playbook.

[Shinto Shrines](#)



Social Etiquette

Having an awareness of social etiquette in Japan is essential.

With harmony (wa) being the primary cultural value, Japanese people are mindful of being respectful of others and hold strong values for cleanliness. You will see examples of this respect for others throughout Tokyo. On buses and trains there is designated seating for the elderly, the injured and infirm, as well as pregnant and nursing mothers, and people will often offer their seats when the transport is crowded.

In public, people generally are reserved and remain quiet, especially on public transport. Eating or drinking while walking or while on public transport is generally frowned upon. Littering is practically non-existent despite the absence of public trash bins, so most people usually hold on to their trash until they find an appropriate bin. Be sure to sort and throw your trash out according to bin labels; you'll find public trash bins designated for combustibles, plastics, cans, etc. When entering a Japanese house or apartment, removing one's shoes and positioning them to face the door is custom. As a general rule, being reserved and keeping the environment around you clean will take you far.

Business Etiquette

There are numerous customs to keep in mind when it comes to business etiquette in Japan, especially when interacting with external clients.

Internally, it is important to greet coworkers by saying phrases such as ohayō gozaimasu (good morning) when you start your work day and otsukaresama desu (thank you for your hard work). People also use otsukaresama desu to greet coworkers during the day and before they leave the office. It is advisable to greet your coworkers by using their last name plus san unless they advise you otherwise. For example, if a fellow coworker's last name is Fukada you should address them as Fukada-san.

The same goes for non-Japanese coworkers unless otherwise stated. When greeting clients or employees from other companies, the honorifics used are sama and san. Sama is not used among coworkers as it is used exclusively with clients. When exchanging business cards, both hands are used to give and receive, and one should not put away another person's business card until the meeting has concluded.

When storing another person's business card, do not store it in your wallet or a place where it could be easily damaged, instead store it in a designated case or similar place for safekeeping.

Business Etiquette in Japan:

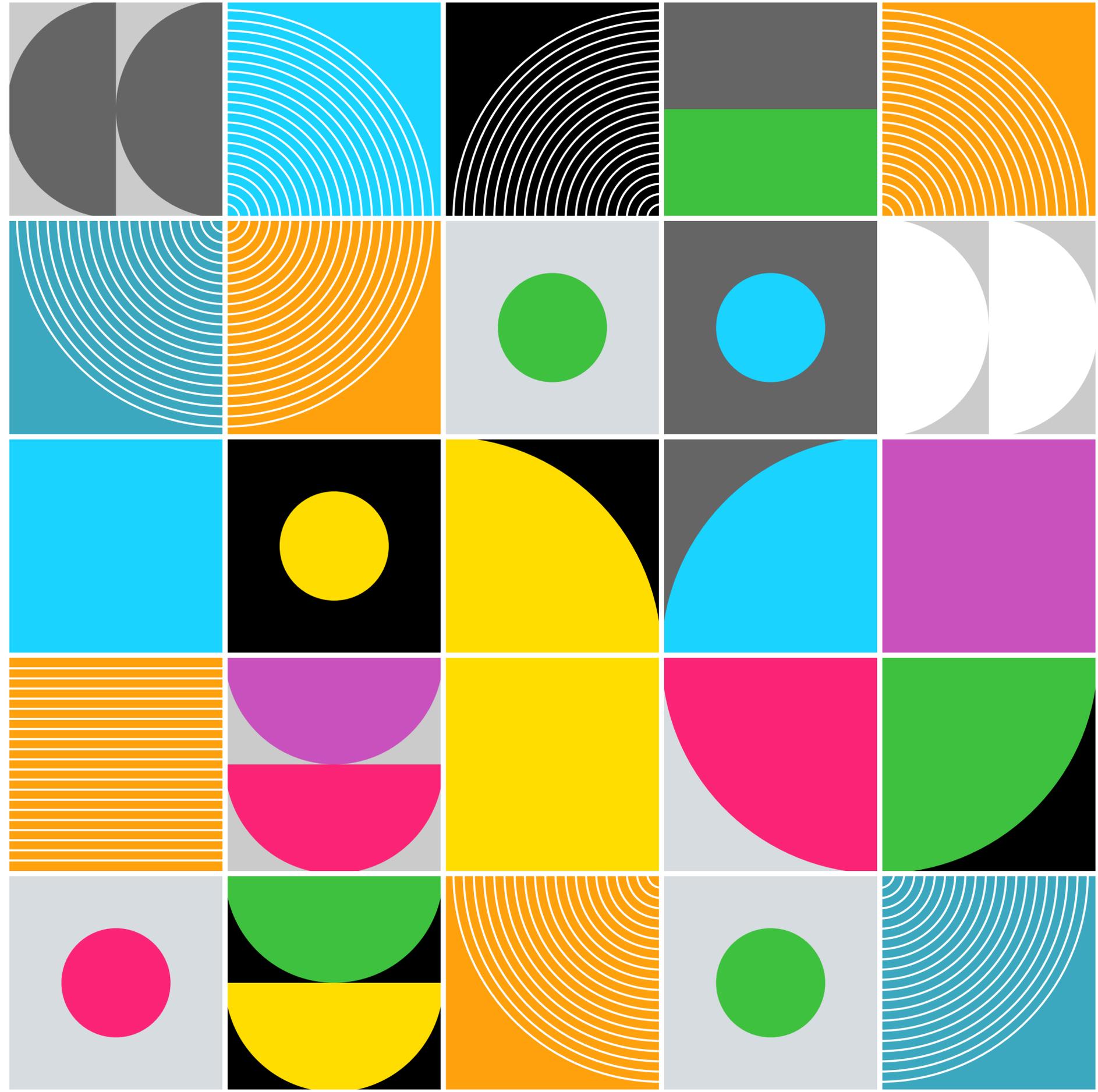
[Business Etiquette in Japan: 17 Definitive Tips to Do Business With the Japanese](#)

Entertainment, Recreation & Fitness

Your Guide

A handy guide to culture,
entertainment, fitness and leisure
in Japan

 **woven** by TOYOTA





Introduction

Tokyo is a year-round hub for art, recreation, and fitness activities.

From museums and galleries to festivals and karaoke, there are plenty of things to keep you entertained and connected with Japanese culture.

Various fitness groups and clubs geared toward foreigners provide opportunities to join communities and meet people with shared interests and hobbies. In this guide we will provide some useful information to help you navigate your recreational time in Tokyo.

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Culture

Museums & Galleries

Tokyo is full of various types of museums and galleries, many of which are one of a kind and unique to Japan. New exhibits are opened frequently and feature a wide variety of works from interactive sites such as Teamlab to contemporary art museums such as the Museum of Contemporary Art.

From traditional art museums to digital exhibits to children's museums, Tokyo has a museum for everybody. Department stores often host temporary exhibitions, which are convenient and economical. Tickets can be bought on site, but there are often long lines for the more popular exhibits.

[TeamLab](#)

[Museum of Contemporary Art](#)

[List of popular museums and galleries](#)

[TeamLab Borderless](#)



Entertainment

Cinemas

Cinemas in Japan show both domestic and international box office films. However, showings of Hollywood films may be delayed up to a year from their original release. Hollywood films released in Japan are typically in English with Japanese subtitles, excluding those aimed at a younger audience which are frequently Japanese dubbed. Promotional events are common at movie theaters and might include discounts for women, the elderly, and students. Generally, standard adult tickets are priced between ¥1,500 to ¥1,800. Please note that children under 18 will not be permitted into movie screenings if the movie ends after 11:00 p.m., even if they are accompanied by an adult. This rule also applies for arcades and other entertainment establishments.

Karaoke

Japan is renowned for karaoke, a form of entertainment where you can sing along to your favorite songs. Most people in Japan enjoy gathering with friends at karaoke venues, but it is not uncommon for some to go alone during the day to relax. Unlike karaoke outside Japan, which is typically held at bars or restaurants with an open mic and stage, karaoke venues in Japan are primarily private rooms where people can gather, drink, and sing. Most karaoke establishments have systems with English support and songs are frequently updated. In addition to Western pop songs they have many Japanese and Western hits as well as other genres to suit various tastes.

Popular karaoke establishments:

[Uta Hiroba](#)

[Karaoke Kan](#)

[Big Echo Karaoke](#)

Live music

Nippon Budokan, Tokyo Dome, and Yokohama Arena host many music concerts, opera performances, theatre groups, and classic performances. There are also many jazz clubs throughout Tokyo hosting local and international artists.

Additionally, there are two big summer music festivals in Japan; Fuji Rock and Summer Sonic. These festivals feature artists from around the world as well as Japan.

For more information on music and theater entertainment, please visit the links below:

[Live Music, Films and Karaoke](#)

[Going to a Movie Theater in Japan](#)



Festivals

Each of Japan's four seasons has its own unique set of festivals and events. Festivals take place across the country and many regions and cities host their own special events. In Tokyo, there are many unique festivals celebrating traditional holidays and seasons as well as the culture of various countries. Some are religious while others are secular and wide-ranging, including modern anime conventions and even firework displays. Below is a list of the most popular festivals in Tokyo.

Tokyo Festivals

[10 Top Tokyo Festivals to Satisfy Your Cultural Craving](#)

Events also take place on weekends in Yoyogi Park (a large, centrally located park), including many of the country-themed festivals such as Brazil Fest and Thai Fest.

Yoyogi Park events

[Yoyogi Park Events & Festivals](#)

Major Sports

The traditional sport of Japan is sumo wrestling, whereby two opponents try to force each other out of a circular ring or knock each other to the ground. Sumo tournaments in Tokyo take place in January, May, and September. Each tournament lasts 15 consecutive days, and wrestlers have one match per day.

Sumo tournament dates and tickets:

[Nihon Sumo Kyokai Official Grand Sumo Homepage](#)

Baseball is incredibly popular and there is a professional men's league. The Japanese version of Major League Baseball consists of two leagues: the Central League and Pacific League, each with six teams.

Soccer is also very popular, with a men's league that was first launched in 1965 consisting of 8 teams, which has now grown to 18. The Tokyo-based team (FC Tokyo) plays at Ajinomoto Stadium in the suburb of Chofu. Tickets for sporting events are sold at both the respective sites and physical venues.

Japan baseball tickets and schedule

[Baseball Tickets Calendar](#)

Japan soccer tickets and schedule

[Tickets: J.League.jp](#)

Family Activities

There are many fun activities for families and children of all ages in Tokyo. Amusement parks, such as Tokyo Disneyland and Yomiuriland, as well as attraction-packed places like Odaiba offer fun-filled day trips. There are also plenty of inexpensive and free activities for families throughout Tokyo. The Imperial Palace cycling course and ferry rides in Tokyo Bay are nice activities that will not break the bank. For a list of family-friendly activities please visit the link below.

List of Family Activities

[50 Things to Do With the Kids in Tokyo](#)



Fitness

Gyms

Private gyms in Tokyo often require a membership fee. At around ¥12,000 per month on average, they can be expensive compared to gyms in other countries. There are also public community gyms in the city that are inexpensive and do not require membership fees, but facilities may be limited.

Most local authorities operate a training gym or sports center that is open to the public, with admission prices typically less than ¥700 per visit. These facilities usually include a workout area with weights and machines in addition to areas where visitors can practice sports like badminton, basketball, and table tennis. Some may have a swimming pool as well, depending on the location. Here are links to lists of both private and public gyms in Tokyo.

Public gyms

[Municipal Gyms & Sports Centers](#)

Private gyms

[Fitness Clubs & Tai Chi](#)

Martial arts are popular and there are classes and gyms for each discipline, from karate to Tai Chi. In addition to having rich cultural value in Japan they offer practitioners the opportunity to develop self-defense knowledge and ability. The link below provides a list of public and private martial arts gyms in Tokyo.

Martial arts in Tokyo:

[Learning Japanese Martial Arts in Tokyo – Karate, Judo, Kendo and Aikido](#)

Fitness Communities

Tokyo offers many cycling and running communities as well as other fitness groups for both Japanese and foreigners. Many of them use social media networks like Facebook and Meetup to organize events and connect with people who share the same interests. One popular group is Sogo Fitness, which offers activities for various sports and skill levels.

[Meetup](#)

[Sogo Fitness](#)

Indoor Facilities

In addition to indoor public and private gyms, Tokyo has indoor sporting facilities such as ice skating rinks, rock-climbing gyms, and squash courts.

[The best indoor sports facilities in Tokyo](#)



Leisure

Spas & Estheticians

Whether you need some time to unwind or to look your best, there are plenty of spas and estheticians in Tokyo for all budgets. Many of these places offer English-speaking employees to assist foreign clientele. There are also many beauty and hair salons in Tokyo that cater specifically to foreigners. Below is a list of recommended spas, hair salons, and estheticians.

Beauty Salons

[50 Best Beauty Salons in Tokyo](#)

Men's Barbers

[Best English Speaking Men's Barbers in Tokyo](#)



QB House is one of the most popular and inexpensive chain barbers throughout Tokyo, though English-speaking employees are limited. You can show staff a picture of your ideal haircut and they will serve you based on that.

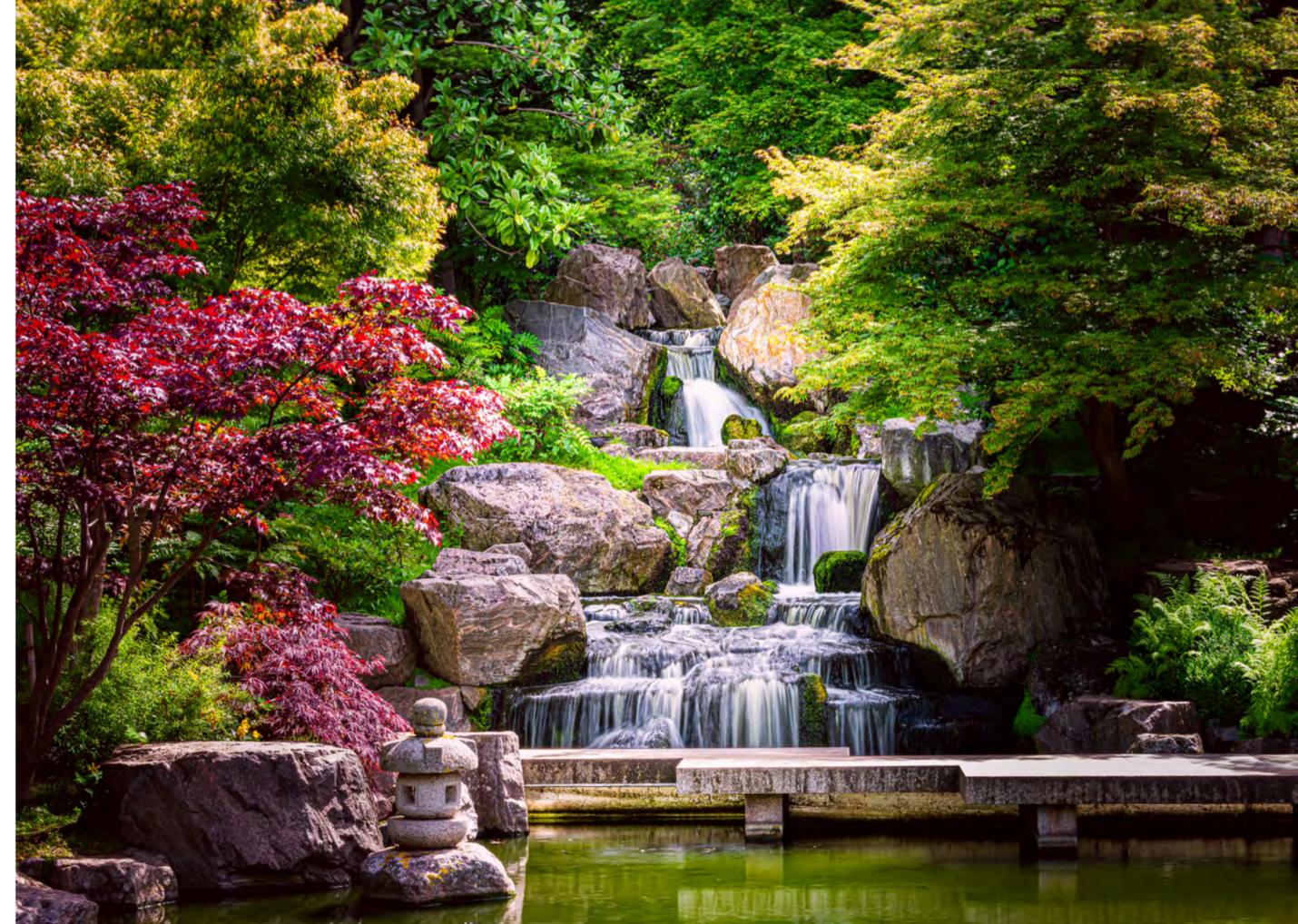
[QB House](#)

Parks & Gardens

Tokyo is one of the few major cities in the world with greenery spread throughout the city, making it easy to escape into nature. There are some centrally located parks and gardens, including Ueno Park, Shinjuku Gyoen and Yoyogi Park, which are famous for their cherry blossoms in spring. Some of the larger public parks feature event spaces and open grass fields which allow visitors to enjoy a wider selection of activities, ranging from sports to cultural activities.

Teien (gardens) feature the historically tranquil ambience of traditional Japanese landscaping. They tend to charge a small admission fee and have limited opening hours.

[List of popular parks and gardens](#)



Walk & Explore

Tokyo is a great city to explore on foot. Not only does it boast modern and traditional architecture but it is also very safe and convenient. There are sidewalks on most streets excluding narrow back streets of residential neighborhoods. The city has many different neighborhoods and walking through them is the best way to explore and have a mini adventure. Whether you are looking for a city stroll or a nature hike, Tokyo and its surroundings have it all. Below you can find a list of some of the best walking routes in the city as well as walking tours around Japan.

[Great Tokyo walks](#)

[Walk Japan – Walking Tours in Japan](#)

Cycling

Many people in Japan ride bicycles as a means of transportation but there are also many cycling communities and trails for recreation.



Some of the best trails are just outside the city on riverbanks, though there are also some trails in downtown Tokyo such as the ones in Yoyogi Park. There are also many groups and communities for cycling enthusiasts to enjoy together such as the Tokyo Great Cycling Tour.

[Tokyo Great Cycling Tour](#)

[List of cycling groups in Tokyo](#)

Yoga

Yoga has become very popular in Tokyo and there are many yoga studios, both boutique and franchise, located throughout the city. Hot yoga is also becoming more popular. Below is a list of yoga studios that offer classes in English.

[Foreigner-Friendly Yoga Studios in Tokyo](#)

Outdoor activities

There are plenty of outdoor activities to do in Japan. In spring, many people visit parks and gardens for cherry blossom viewing (hanami). In summer, you can take advantage of the beaches in Kamakura and Chiba, just outside Tokyo. Within Tokyo, there are many summer festivals and outdoor beer gardens to enjoy. Autumn and winter are fairly mild in Tokyo, so outdoor activities are almost year-round.

Below you will find a more extensive list of outdoor activities in Tokyo and the surrounding area.

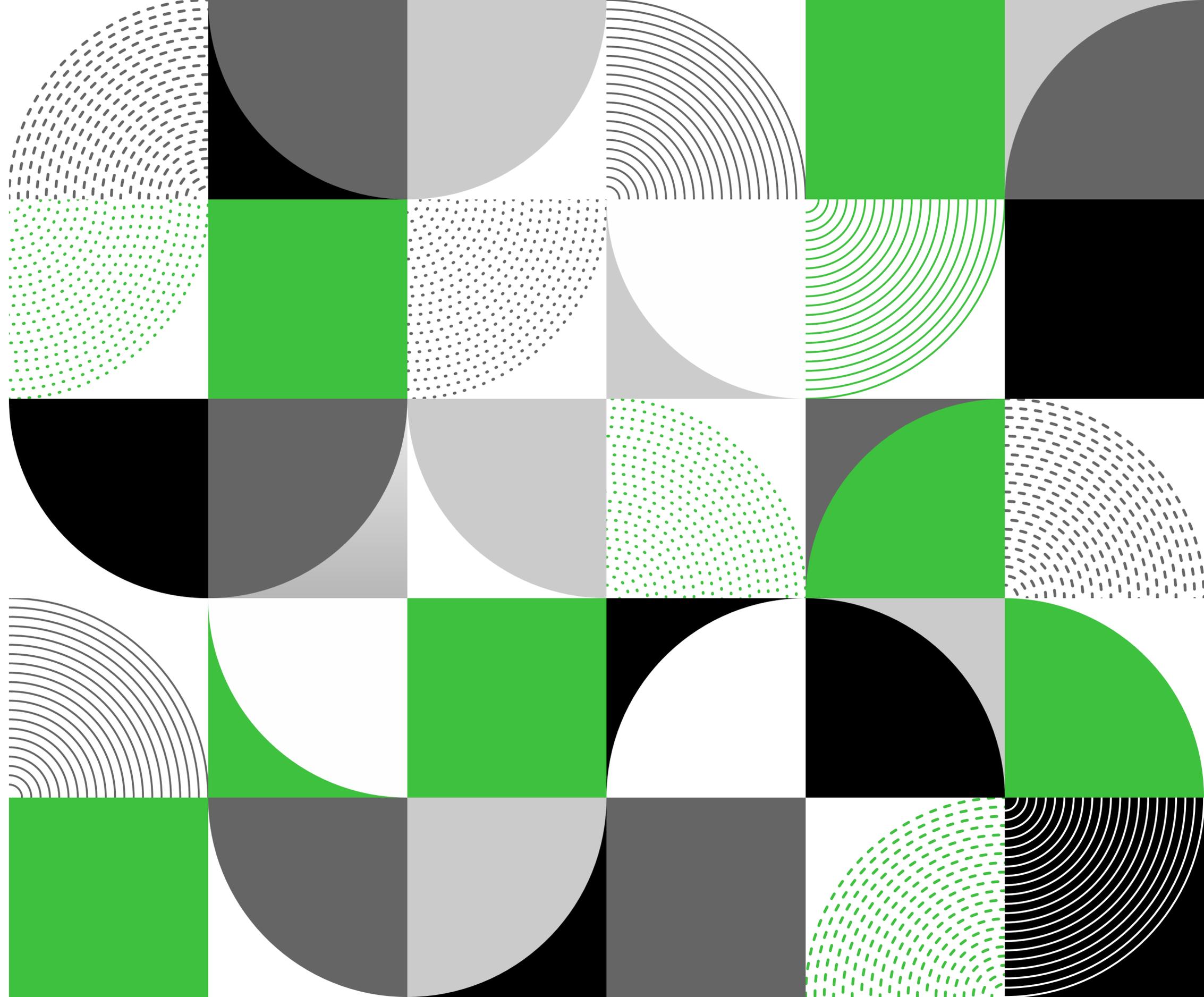
[List of outdoor activities in Tokyo](#)

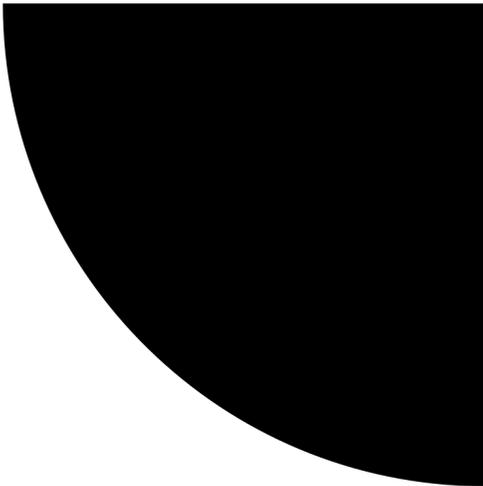
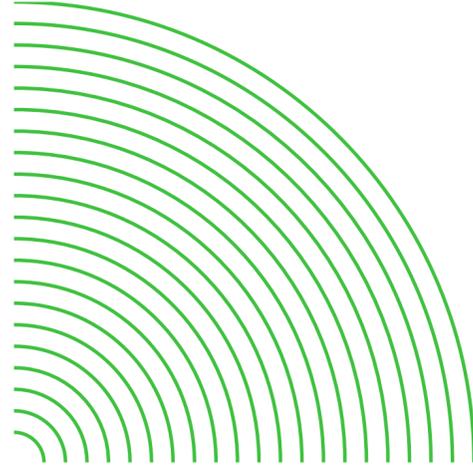
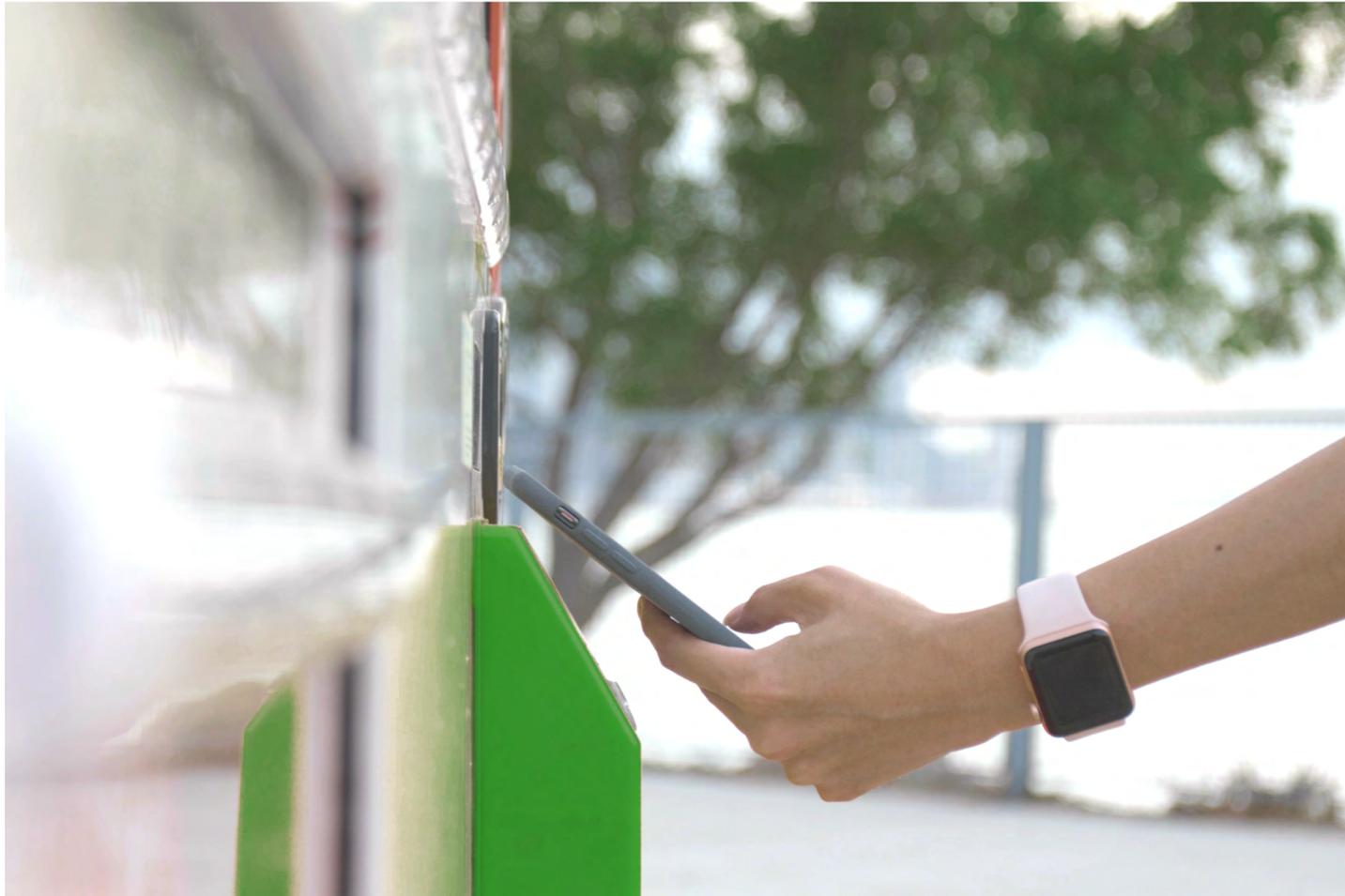


Finance

Your Guide

A handy guide to banking, tax
and personal finances in Japan





Introduction

From opening a bank account to applying for a credit card to paying for things, there is a lot to think about when moving to another country.

One of the most important things that non-Japanese need to do is make sure their finances are in order.

Some of the biggest challenges are having financial commitments in both your home and host country, juggling finances in different currencies, and moving money between countries. There may also be more money to manage and a more complex tax situation to deal with.

This guide will highlight key aspects of finance in Japan, to help you navigate the various nuances of the Japanese financial system. It is not comprehensive; in finance, the situation often varies depending on personal situations and specific needs. However, the information contained here will get you started and we will provide relevant links for further investigation.

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Cash in Japan

Japan is reputed to be a cash-based society but trends are gradually changing.

There has been a significant increase in the acceptance of other payment methods like credit cards and prepaid rechargeable IC cards such as Suica and Pasma. These IC cards are primarily a tool for convenient payment of train and bus fares, but can also be used to pay for goods and services at a large number of businesses including most convenience stores, many chain restaurants, numerous vending machines, and coin lockers.



Payment by smartphone is also becoming increasingly popular. Among the large number of domestic services are Edy, Rakuten Pay, PayPay, and Line Pay. They target residents of Japan and can be difficult to use by foreign tourists and residents. However, Apple Pay is becoming increasingly popular in Tokyo so those already familiar with it may find it easier to use than other methods of transaction.

Bank Accounts & Credit Cards

You need to open a local bank account to ensure that you can do the following:

- Receive your paycheck via bank transfer
- Make automatic payments for utilities and other monthly payments
- Make payments for services (some companies accept only payment by bank transfer)
- Withdraw cash at any time (unlike foreign banks)
- Do online banking

Opening a bank account in Japan may be difficult if you do not speak Japanese. However, woven by toyota offers support to new employees opening a Japanese bank account. In this section we introduce banks that offer services in English. Regardless of the bank you choose, the accounts available and processes involved will be basically the same.

Most common types of accounts to open:

- General deposit account (futsu yokin)
- General savings account (tsujo chokin)*

*This is a post office account and generates a slightly higher rate of interest than a general deposit account.

- Time deposit account (teiki yokin)*

*This type of account usually has higher rates of interest but may require notice for withdrawals.

- Foreign-denominated currency deposits, foreign-currency term deposits (gaika yokin/gaika teiki yokin)

The most widely used accounts are the general deposit account and general savings account



What you will need

Please contact the bank for details of what you need to open an account before you visit. A certificate of employment from woven by toyota is necessary to open a Japanese bank account.

English-friendly Banks

These are the only banks where you can open an account within the first 6 months of living in Japan. All other major banks require residents to have been living in Japan for at least 6 months prior to opening an account. These banks also offer online banking services in English.



Rakuten Bank

← app does not offer English text-support

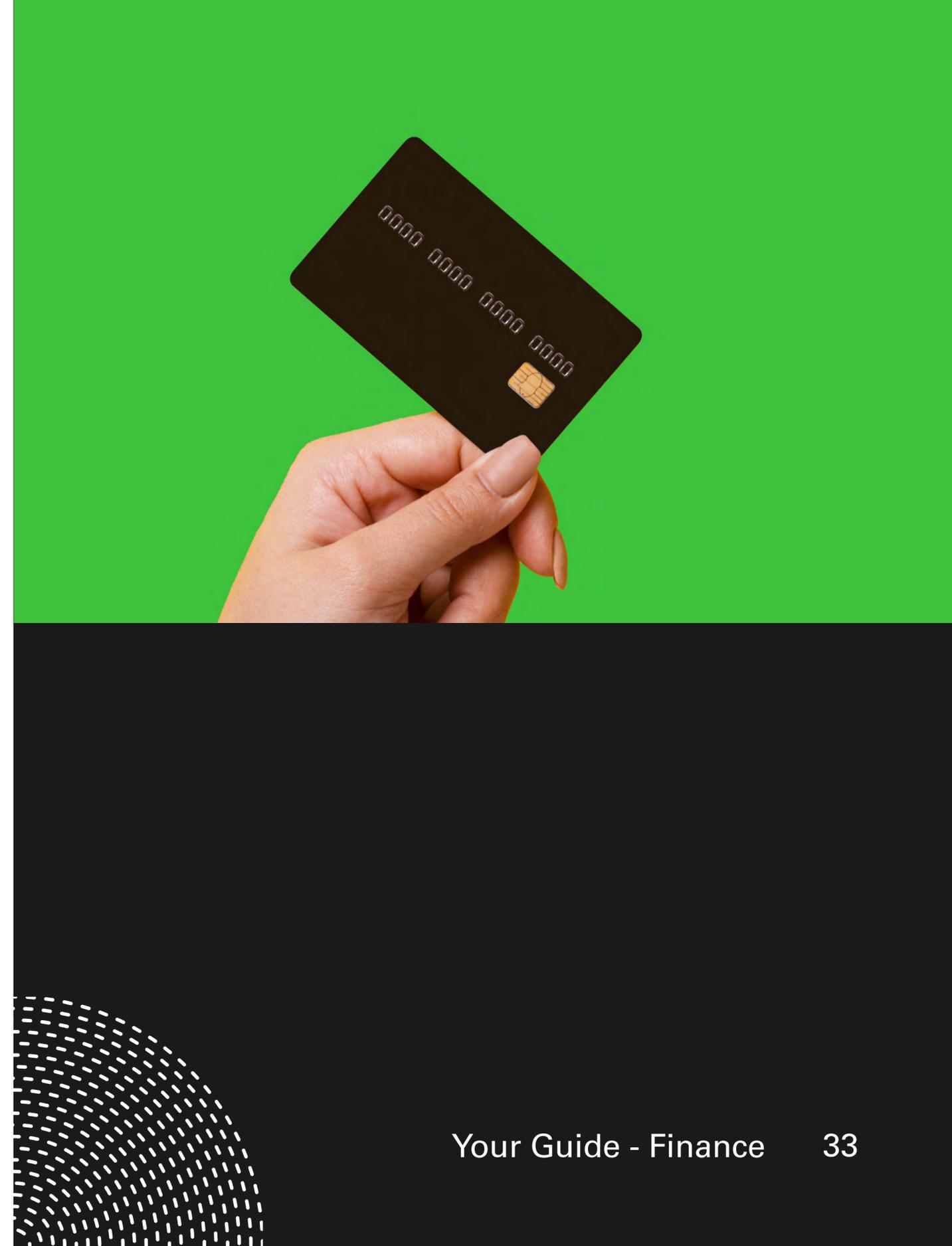


PRESTIA
SMBC TRUST BANK

Applying for a Credit Card

All major credit card companies operate in Japan, so you can continue to use your current country-of-issue cards, but there are exchange rate fees to consider.

Should you like to obtain a Japan-issued credit card, which is advisable for long-term residents, the banks/institutions on page 6 can support your application, provided you have the identification required and details of your employment contract.



Using ATMs

The ATMs in Japanese banks, post offices, and convenience stores (konbini) usually display a menu and instructions in English.

You can make a withdrawal or deposit, check your balance, and make a transfer to another account. You may be charged a fee to use an ATM depending on the bank. While post office ATMs do accept global debit cards not all ATMs do.



Income Tax

There are three categories for compulsory tax payers: Residents, Non-Residents, (and Temporary Residents).

Residents

These are people who have a domicile in Japan through ownership or rental for one year or more. If your employment contract expresses a term of a year or more, you may be considered a resident, with or without a listed domicile. Residents are taxed on their income worldwide.

Non-Residents

These are people who are not domiciled in Japan. Even if you do not live in Japan, any income earned in the country is subject to taxation. However, if you are domiciled in Japan for five years or less and you are not a Japanese national, you are considered a non-resident. If you have an employment contract that has a long term, you may be subject to taxation. Money brought into Japan will be taxed.

Standard Income Brackets

~1,950,000 yen	5%
1,950,000 yen~3,300,000 yen	10%
3,300,000 yen~6,950,000 yen	20%
6,950,000 yen~9,000,000 yen	23%
9,000,000 yen~18,000,000 yen	33%
18,000,000 yen~40,000,000 yen	40%
40,000,000 yen~	45%

Tax deductions in Japan are provided for multiple scenarios such as spousal tax deductions, family members with disabilities, and medical expenses. This table serves as a general outline of tax procedures in Japan, for additional information on deductions please speak with the appropriate woven by toyota representative or a professional tax advisor.

[Japan's Hometown Tax](#)

Japanese Pension System

Japan has two types of pension plans: **Employees' Pension (kosei-nenkin)** and **National Pension (kokumin-nenkin)**. Both are run by the government.

Employees' Pension

If you are a full-time employee, you and your family can apply for Employees' Pension. Your company will automatically deduct the premiums from your salary each month; 50% of the premiums will be paid by your company.

National Pension

Anyone over the age of 20 who is not employed by a company, such as a student or freelancer, is required to enroll in National Pension. You need to apply at your local municipal office.

Lump-sum withdrawal

When you leave Japan, you can claim a lump-sum withdrawal payment, but you must meet certain conditions to apply. Employees should ask their company for details. Starting from April 2021, the maximum lump-sum payment amount is equivalent to five years worth of pension contributions. Information in English and an application form for the withdrawal payment is available at your local municipal office.

Your employer's HR Team can support you with more information on the Japanese pension system.

For more information on tax in Japan, visit the Government and Legal playbook.

Money Exchange

Currency exchange is usually handled by **banks, post offices**, some larger hotels, and a handful of licensed money changers typically found at international airports.

Whether it is better to change your home currency into yen before entering Japan depends on the currency you hold. The US dollar, for example, is a highly traded foreign currency in Japan, so you might get a favorable rate if you change US dollars into yen on arrival.

On the other hand, in some Southeast Asian countries, the foreign exchange market is very competitive and money changers take a smaller cut, so it might be better to convert your money into yen before coming into Japan.

The following institutions provide foreign currency exchange services in English:



[The Best Way to Transfer Money to Japan](#)

Tax Accountants in Tokyo

If you are unable to do your taxes on your own, you may want to consider choosing a reputable English-speaking accounting agency that can help file on your behalf.

The following agencies based in Minato and Chiyoda Wards provide preparation services in English:

[Okamoto & Company](#)

[Capital Tax KK](#)

[Kaori Fuchi Tax and Consulting](#)

Financial Planners in Tokyo

For those seeking thorough financial support while in Japan, there are a number of respected financial planning companies that specialize in supporting non-Japanese customers.

They include:

[Argentum Wealth Management](#)

[AP Advisers Ltd](#)

[Tyton Capital Advisors](#)



Paying Taxes in your Home Country

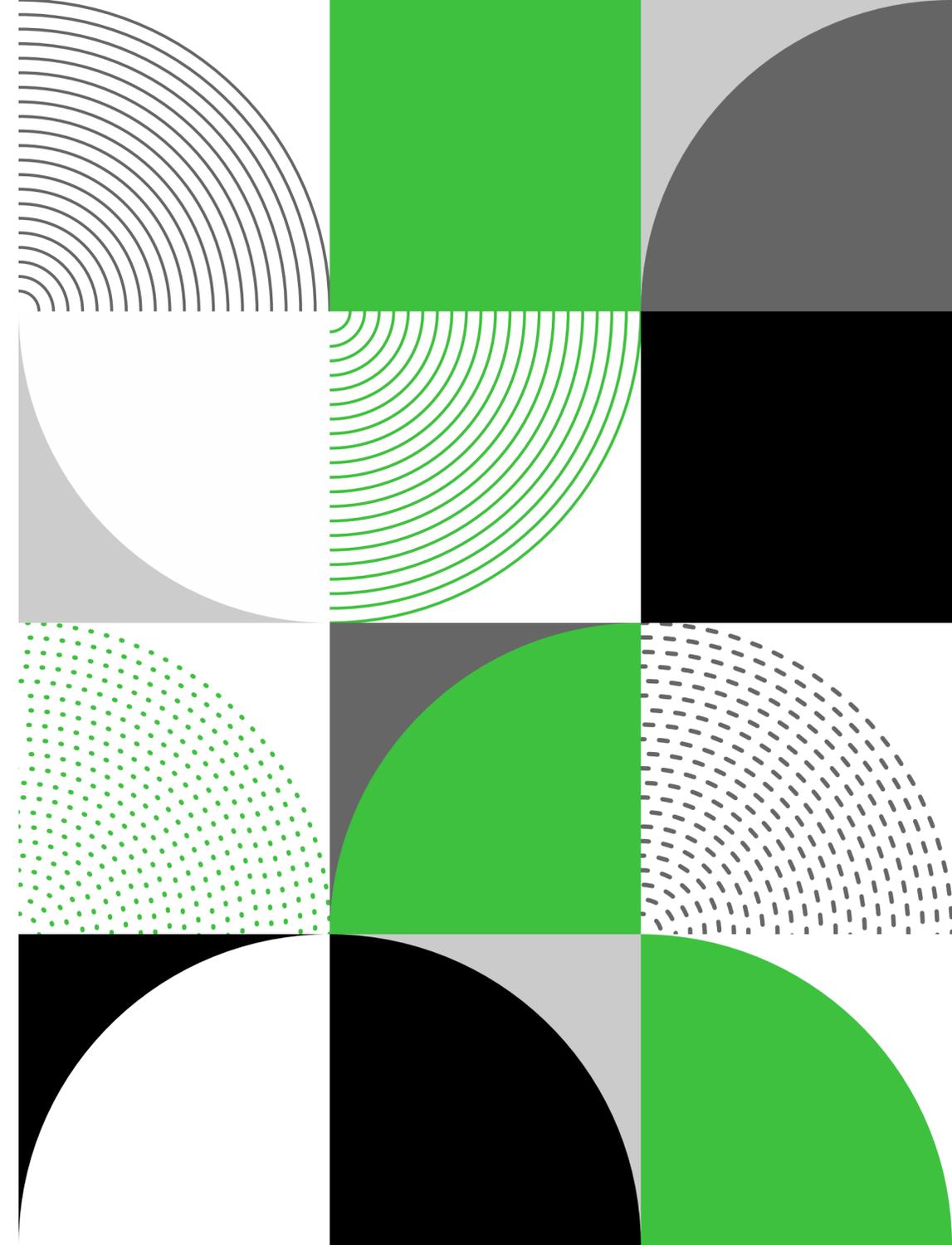
It is important to remember that if you hold citizenship or permanent resident status in another country you may be responsible for filing taxes there as well.

Please consult with your respective country's internal revenue office for more information.

Videos to consider:

[Residence Tax | Income Tax | Spouse Deduction for Freelancers Part-timers Full-timers Etc. in Japan](#)

[How to Open a Bank Account in Japan | Docs Required | Top 3 Recos for Online or Regular Bank | Etc!](#)

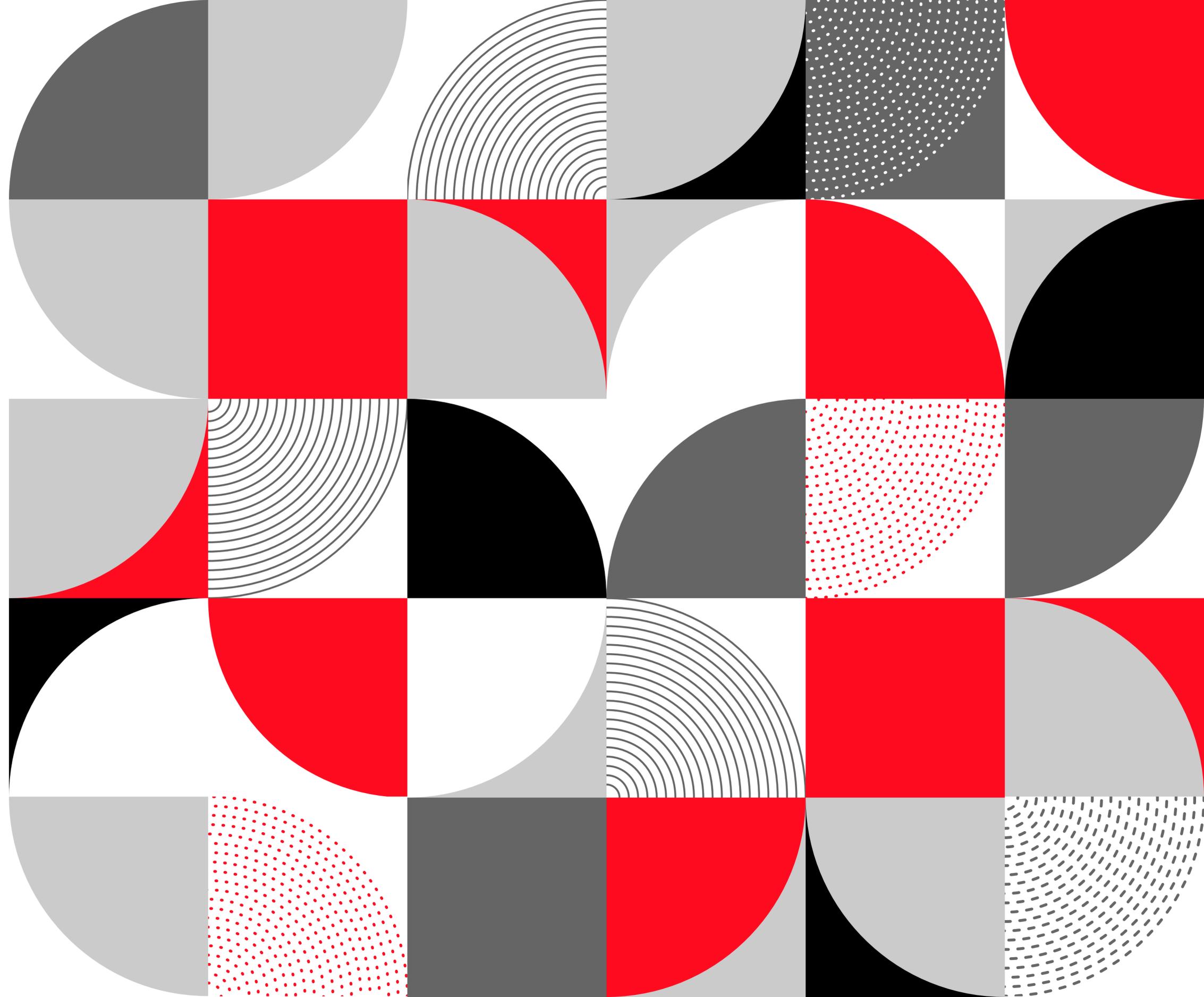


Government & Legal

Your Guide

A handy guide to systems of
government and law in Japan

 **woven** by TOYOTA





Introduction

Governmental and legal procedures are often a challenge in your home country and it is no different in Japan.

Navigating the governmental and legal landscape as a foreigner, however, adds another dimension of complexity. Tasks such as registering your address and applying for "My Number" (the Japanese equivalent of a Social Security and Tax Number System) are essential in settling in.

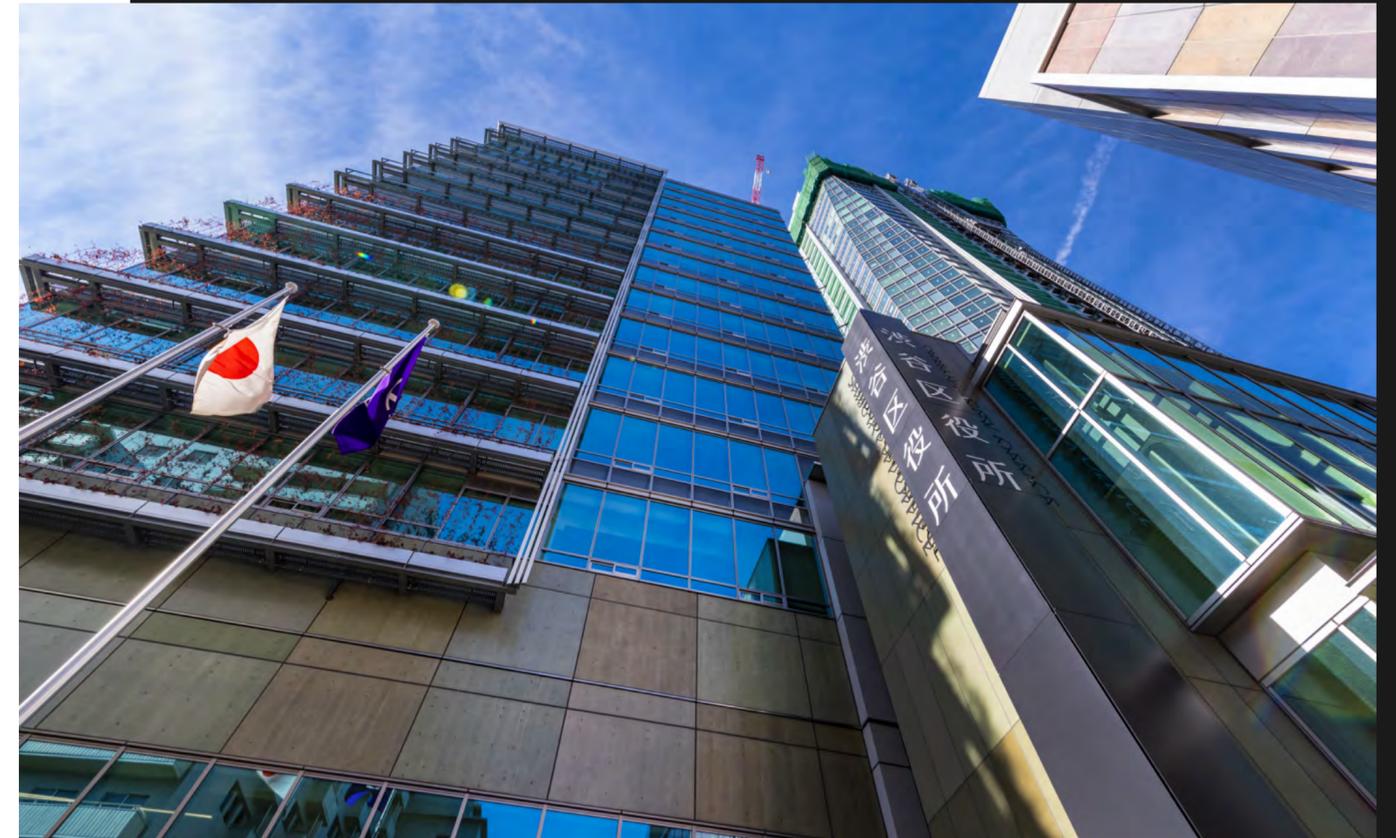
You may also find yourself in need of legal assistance while in Japan. This playbook aims to lessen concern regarding what can be daunting situations and help you navigate your life in Japan.

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Ward Offices in Tokyo

The ward office (kuyakusho) is like your local council office or local government office and is the place to register your address and receive information on general services for residents.

In addition, many ward offices provide dedicated services for foreign residents such as Japanese language classes and cultural activities. There are 23 ward offices in the greater Tokyo area.



Five central neighborhoods are popular with non-Japanese residents due to the language and lifestyle service support offered by the ward offices.

Their websites have English language support pages:

Minato Ward

[Minato City's Official Website \(English\)](#)

Shibuya Ward

[Shibuya City Office \(English\)](#)

Chiyoda Ward

[Website of Chiyoda City \(English\)](#)

Shinjuku Ward

[Shinjuku City Office \(English\)](#)

Chuo Ward

[Shibuya City Office \(English\)](#)

Details about all of Tokyo's municipal offices

[Municipalities within Tokyo](#)

For information about governmental entities of your home country, such as embassies, please view the Social & Support playbook.



Registering your Address

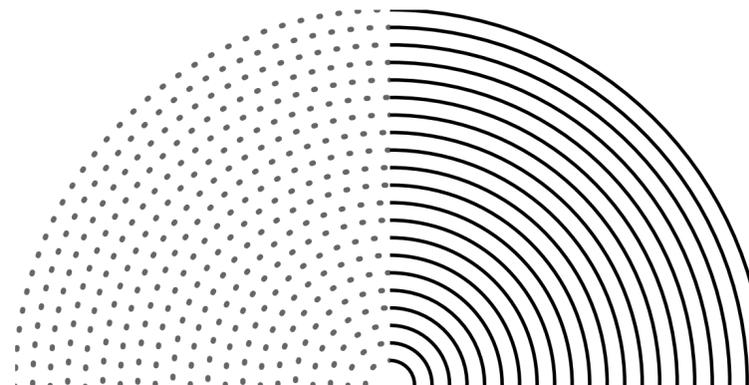
You can register your address while living in a temporary address. Some short-term accommodation providers, such as serviced apartments, allow you to register their address at the city office.

You are required to register your address at the local municipal office within 14 days of moving to your permanent address.

To register your address, bring your passport and Residence Card (zairyū kādo)* to the municipal office and fill out a form. To register any family members, you need to provide a Marriage/Birth Certificate that has been translated into Japanese. Most municipal offices allow your attorney to register your address on your behalf. Your attorney must bring your passport, Residence Card, and the letter of proxy.

If you change your address while living in Japan you must notify your previous municipal office and your new municipal office of your new address within 14 days of the move.

***To learn more about the Residence Card (zairyū kādo), visit the Relocation Playbook.**



A Certificate of Residence (Jūminhyō) is an individual's official registry of their addresses in Japan.

It is required by law for taxes, census, and national health insurance, and there may be other cases when you're asked to provide it. The record is maintained by the local ward office.

Relevant Video Content

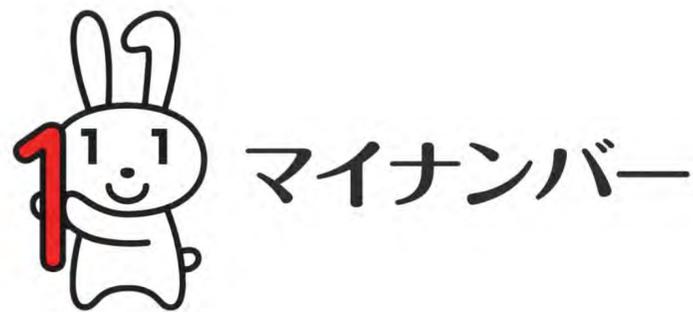
[Register your address in Japan at the city office](#)



My Number

A My Number is a unique 12-digit number issued to all residents who have a residential record at a municipal ward office. The My Number System is essentially a social security and tax number system.

After you have registered your address at your ward office, a My Number number will be created. A My Number Card is a plastic card that contains an IC chip and features the bearer's name, address, date of birth, sex, My Number (the 12-digit number itself), and a photograph.



My Number Card can:

- Act as a document certifying one's Individual Number
- Act as an official identification card for identity verification
- Act as identification for online applications for various administrative procedures
- Act as a seal (an official stamp commonly used in place of a signature in Japan) registration card, a library card, a health insurance card, and as a multi-purpose card for a wide range of public services
- Be used for various private online transactions
- Be used for obtaining various certificates at convenience stores etc.

General Information

Ward offices provide a wide variety of general information about living in your ward including Japanese language classes, living procedures (such as trash and recycling), disaster prevention, health information (including pregnancy), children and education, environment and construction, and culture and tourism.

Researching your ward office's website can provide you with information on which services can be provided in English.

For information regarding your home country, visit the Social and Support playbook for a list of Embassies.



Immigration Services

There are resources available regarding immigration and visas, both online and in person. Support for foreign residents on various issues are available at your municipal ward office and through the Tokyo Regional Immigration Service Bureau.

If you choose to use a professional relocation firm, they may also assist in providing information and/or submit the applications for various types of immigration-related matters.

However, if you choose to use an immigration lawyer they will prepare the application forms and submit them to the immigration bureau on your behalf. Please see the list of professional relocation agents in the Housing playbook in this series.

Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau

[Immigration Services Agency of Japan](#)



Legal Services

If you need legal support while in Japan, please refer to this list of family and criminal lawyers providing support for individuals.

The lawyers and firms listed have expressed their ability and desire to represent foreign clients in criminal and civil cases. Please note that these are private law firms and as such require payment.

List of lawyers in Tokyo

[U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Japan](#)

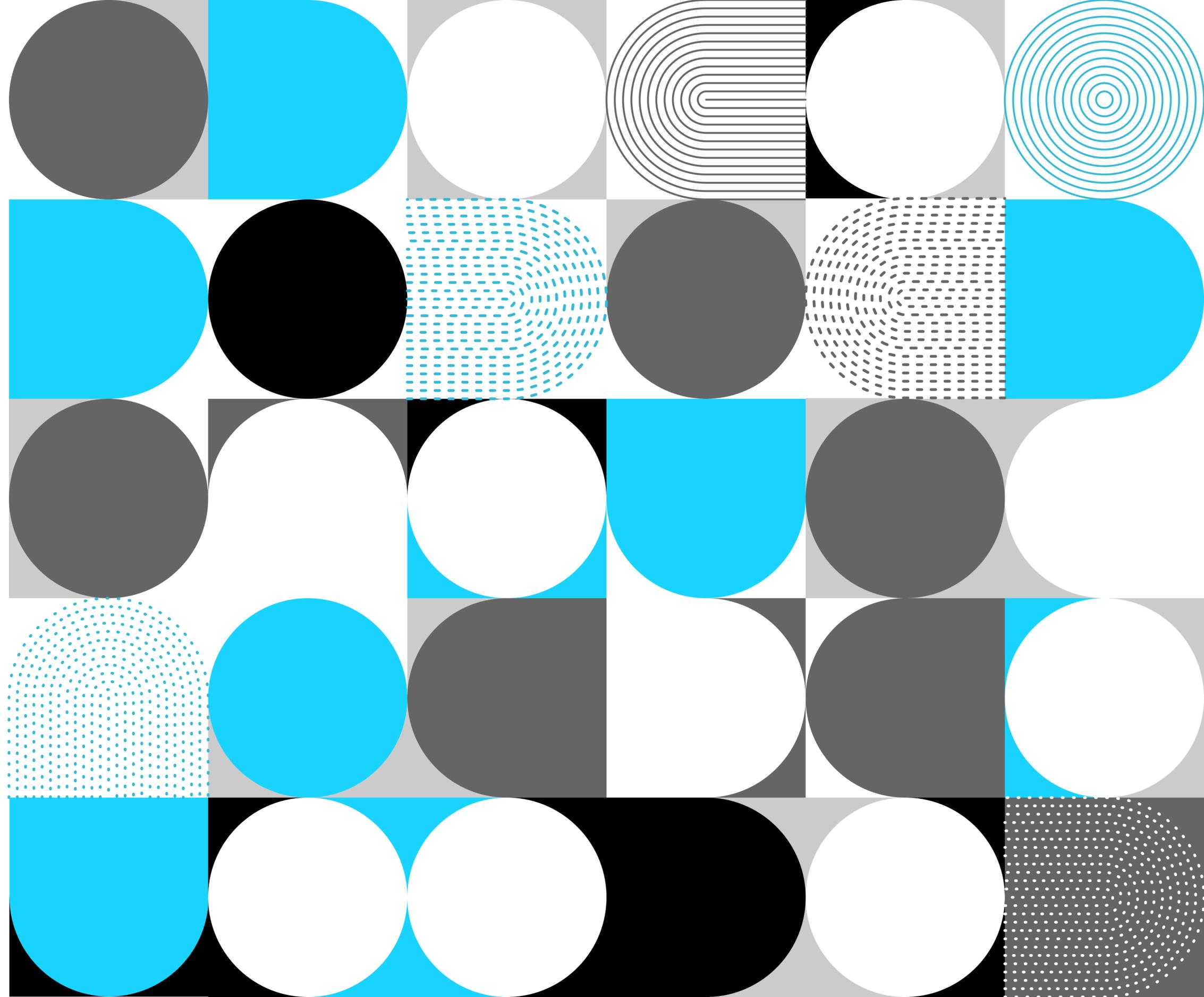
Free English Consultations

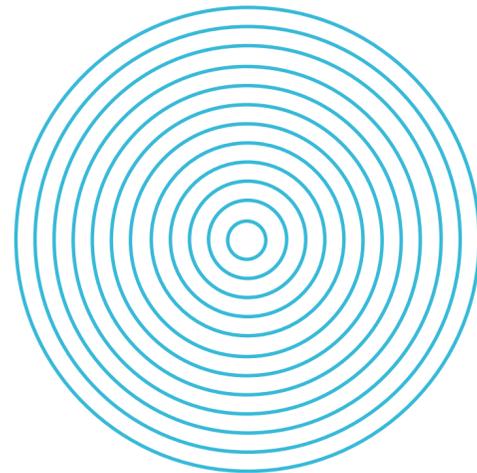
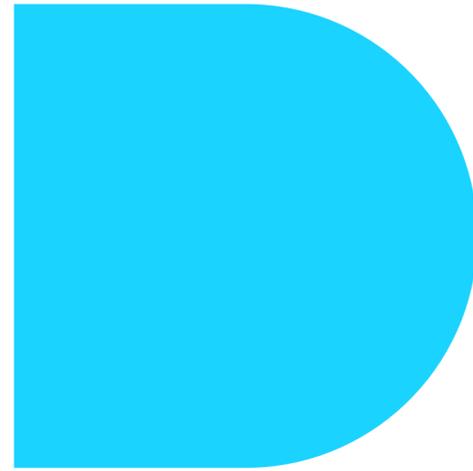
[Free Consultations in English and Lawyers in Tokyo](#)

Healthcare & Dental

Your Guide

A handy guide to medicines,
hospitals and dental clinics in
Japan





Introduction

Japan has a world-renowned healthcare system comprising medical facilities that are generally clean and modern, with helpful staff.

There are relatively few General Practitioners and family doctors; rather, most doctors are specialists in a particular field of medicine.

The most common specializations include otolaryngology (ear, nose, and throat), internal medicine, and dermatology. When you are sick or injured you need to choose a facility that specializes in the appropriate area of medicine for your condition. This guide has information that will help you navigate the Japanese healthcare system.

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Japanese Health Insurance

Japanese healthcare covers most medical fields including dental and vision care.

Areas not included in national Japanese healthcare include mental health, contraception, and giving birth, though vouchers are provided by the local government for giving birth and prenatal procedures. There are two public health insurance programs in Japan: Social/Employees' Health Insurance and National Health Insurance. By law, all residents of Japan (including foreign nationals with a residence card) must be enrolled in a public health insurance program. Those over the age of 40 are also required to pay Long-term Care Insurance.

Social/Employees' Health Insurance

Social/Employees' Health Insurance (shakai kenko hoken) is a workplace-based health insurance system for company employees and their dependents.

Premiums are based on your income, and are equally shared by employer and employee. The employee's portion is automatically deducted from their salary each month. An insured person's number of dependents does not affect the premiums. If a dependent's annual income exceeds ¥1,300,000, they will be required to get their own insurance.

National Health Insurance

National Health Insurance (kokumin kenko hoken) is run by local municipal offices and designed for self-employed persons, students, and others who do not have Employees' Health Insurance.

Paying for treatment

Japanese health insurance generally covers 70% of the cost of diagnostic and

treatment procedures, and is accepted at most clinics and hospitals. The remaining 30% can be paid in cash. For treatments that fall inside the bounds of public health insurance, the cost of treatment should not differ, regardless of the clinic. A consultation fee will always be charged when you see a doctor. Some services, however such as health check-ups, comprehensive medical examinations (ningen-dokku), dental check-ups, and

special operations such as implants may not be covered by insurance, so it is advisable to inquire first. If you incur high-cost medical expenses (kōgaku ryōyōhi) in a given month, the amount above the limit will be reimbursed to you. This reimbursement letter will be sent to you by mail 2-3 months after your hospitalization which you can then claim at your local municipal office.

Medical Expenses and Health Insurance



Note: Some dental procedures differ from those in other countries, specifically in regard to cavity fillings and anesthetics. Please ensure that you understand the procedure before proceeding to avoid confusion regarding price and method.

Private and Foreign Insurance

Private insurance plans are available that will reimburse the portion of fees not covered by public insurance.

If you do not have Japanese health insurance or the hospital or clinic does not accept it, your medical expenses must be paid in full on completion of treatment. Japanese health insurance is often not accepted by clinics specifically serving foreign residents, therefore it is advisable to inquire when making an appointment.

Foreign and international insurance schemes may allow you to receive reimbursement for medical expenses incurred in Japan. However, these are more applicable to tourists and not people relocating.



Medications and Prescriptions

Many over-the-counter drugs are available at pharmacies. If you cannot find what you are looking for, a quick search on a translation app can often uncover a drug's active ingredient in order to find a substitute drug.

In major metropolitan areas, there are limited 24-hour pharmacies. Some 24-hour drug stores, which also sell general health products, may have their pharmacy windows or shelves locked at certain hours.



Japanese pharmacies do not honor foreign prescriptions, therefore if you have a chronic illness it is best to find a local care provider to help you.

Prescription Drugs in Japan

Many prescription drugs are available in Japan, but they may not be of exactly the same formula as in your home country.

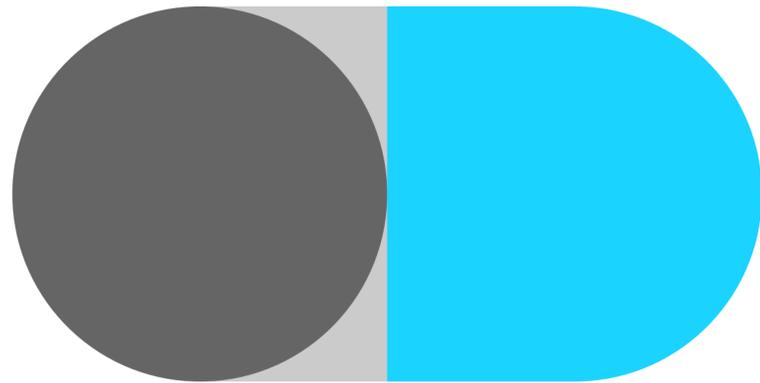
Therefore, while your doctor may prescribe a medication for your ailments, it may not provide the relief you might expect as some medication in Japan can be of a lower strength.



You should consult with your doctor about the specific effects and desired outcome of the medication prescribed if you have any questions or concerns.

When to Fill Your Prescription: in Japan or Abroad?

If you are planning to move to Tokyo and are considering whether to get your prescription filled in Japan or your home country, there are a few things to consider:



- Some drugs that can often be obtained in other countries with a prescription are illegal in Japan. Consult the [Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare website](#) for guidelines.
- You can bring one month's supply of permitted prescription drugs into the country for personal use. If you are planning to bring more than this, you need to get an import certificate approved by pharmaceutical inspectors appointed by the Japanese government (yakkan shoumei) in advance. The process is outlined on the [Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare website](#).
- If you need a foreign prescription filled, either do it before you travel to Japan or wait until you arrive and make an appointment with an English-speaking doctor.

- If you have specific injectable drugs (including insulin pump) or other medical equipment like a CPAP device, these also need to be approved by pharmaceutical inspectors. Make sure to get a yakkan shoumei prior to traveling to Japan with these items.
- Several classes of over-the-counter drugs that are common in some countries are illegal in Japan. Examples include some painkillers and some allergy medicines.

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare: General (English)

[The website of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare](#)

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare: Medicines for personal use

[Information for those who are bringing medicines for personal use into Japan](#)



In Case of Emergency

In the case of an emergency, an ambulance can be called by dialing 119. If you are not sure if your case qualifies as an emergency, you can dial #7119 and speak to an operator. If an ambulance is deemed necessary, your condition will be assessed by the EMT and you will be taken to an appropriate facility.



For more information on what to do in general emergencies, visit the [Safety and Natural Disasters](#) playbook.

Drugstores and Pharmacies

Drugstores selling basic medications and a wide range of everyday items are very common in Japan.

Most do not handle prescriptions, so you should check the location of the nearest pharmacy to have your prescription filled.

Pharmacies typically specialize in prescriptions, but may also have some basic medicines available to anyone.



They will often provide you with a kusuri techō (medicine notebook) that can be used to keep track of the medicines you have received.

Pharmacies with English-speaking support in Tokyo:

[English speaking pharmacies in Tokyo](#)

Children's Immunization

Japanese preventive vaccination law states that parents have a duty to make efforts towards having their children immunized against certain diseases.

In Japan, immunizations are classified into two major types: routine immunizations (teiki-yobou-sesshu) and optional immunizations (nini-yobou-sesshu). Most local governments provide routine immunizations free of charge.

In some cases, immunization slips will be sent to your house when your child becomes the eligible age. Since these immunization slips are sent according to resident registration data, be sure to let your local government know of new family births or a change of address. Optional immunizations are not free; charges may differ depending on the hospital or clinic. Your municipal office will automatically send you a notification in the mail as soon as the vaccination season begins. Additionally, some schools will request a list of immunizations your child has received, so please check with the school you plan to send your children to for a specific list of required immunizations.

Children Immunization:

[Child Immunization](#)

Women's Healthcare Providers

Tokyo offers many high-quality women's healthcare providers. However, most offer services only in Japanese.

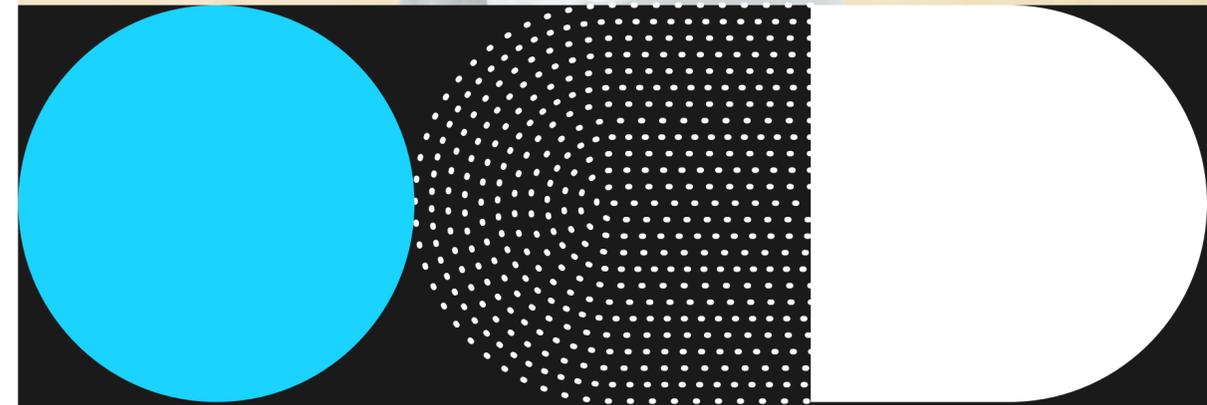
The following links provide a basic overview of relevant services, including check-ups, obtaining the pill, fertility, and more.

List: OBGYNs

[Tokyo-based English Speaking OBGYNs](#)

Blog: OBGYN in Japan

[Lady Doctor Basics: Women's Health in Japan](#)



Things to Consider when Having a Baby in Japan

The Japanese health and social support system can be a little confusing when it comes to pregnancy.

From discount vouchers and booking of hospital beds to the different types of medical facilities, the system of care and support can all seem somewhat old fashioned.

The links on the right will provide an overview of what to expect and what you need to do, as well as a rough idea of overall expected costs.

Pregnancy and childbirth resources

[Having a Baby in Japan: Everything you Need to Know](#)

[Giving Birth In Japan: How Much Does Childbirth And Childcare Cost?](#)

[Make labour a little “easier” and more effective with Movement!](#)

[Tokyo Pregnancy Group](#)

[Childbirth Education Center](#)

(CEC) for consultation, pre-natal classes of all kinds, and doula/interpreting services

[Japan With Kids](#)

an interactive on-line community for English-speaking parents featuring support groups, discussions, and so on.

Mental Health Support

Sometimes living in a foreign country can really take its toll on you, especially if your personal life isn't going so well and/or you have a mental illness.

If you require mental health support there are a number of English-speaking mental healthcare providers in Tokyo.

Additionally, woven by toyota has a Psychologist stationed at their office 4 days a week and provides free consultations. They also conduct an annual stress check survey.

TELL Japan

An English-speaking mental health organization offering TELL Lifeline, for free, confidential support, and counseling services.

Additional Resources

[English-Speaking Therapists, Psychiatrists and Psychologists in Tokyo](#)



Dental Clinics with English Support in Tokyo

Like healthcare, Japanese dental services are of high quality. Visiting a dentist (haisha) is by appointment only.

The process is likely to be very similar to that in your home country. Call or book online before you go, and show up for your appointment with your health insurance.

You will be asked to fill in a questionnaire before proceeding to your checkup. On your first visit, the dentist will usually take an X-ray, even if it is just a regular checkup, so have at least ¥5,000 with you as you will often be required to pay cash.

Dental Services (English Support):

[Doctors, Dentists and Staying Healthy](#)

List: Dental clinics (English support)

[Hospitals and Clinics \(Tokyo\)](#)

Hospitals and Clinics with English Support in Tokyo

Hospitals usually operate on a reservation-only basis for your initial visit and always reservation-only from your second visit.

If you have a referral letter (shokaijo) from a clinic, show this to the person in charge at the reception desk along with your health insurance. You will then be guided to the relevant department where you can wait at the waiting area.

Once you are called, your doctor will guide you through the examinations, typically asking more detailed questions. Be prepared to wait longer if you are visiting a larger hospital. From your next visit, you will be given a medical card (shinsatsuken) for the hospital, usually with your next appointment written on the back. Carry this with you every time you visit the hospital.

Top options for expats:

[St. Luke's International Hospital](#)

[Tokyo Metropolitan Hiroo Hospital](#)

[Japanese Red Cross Medical Center](#)

[Sanno Hospital](#)

[Seibo Hospital](#)

[Japan Hospital Search](#)

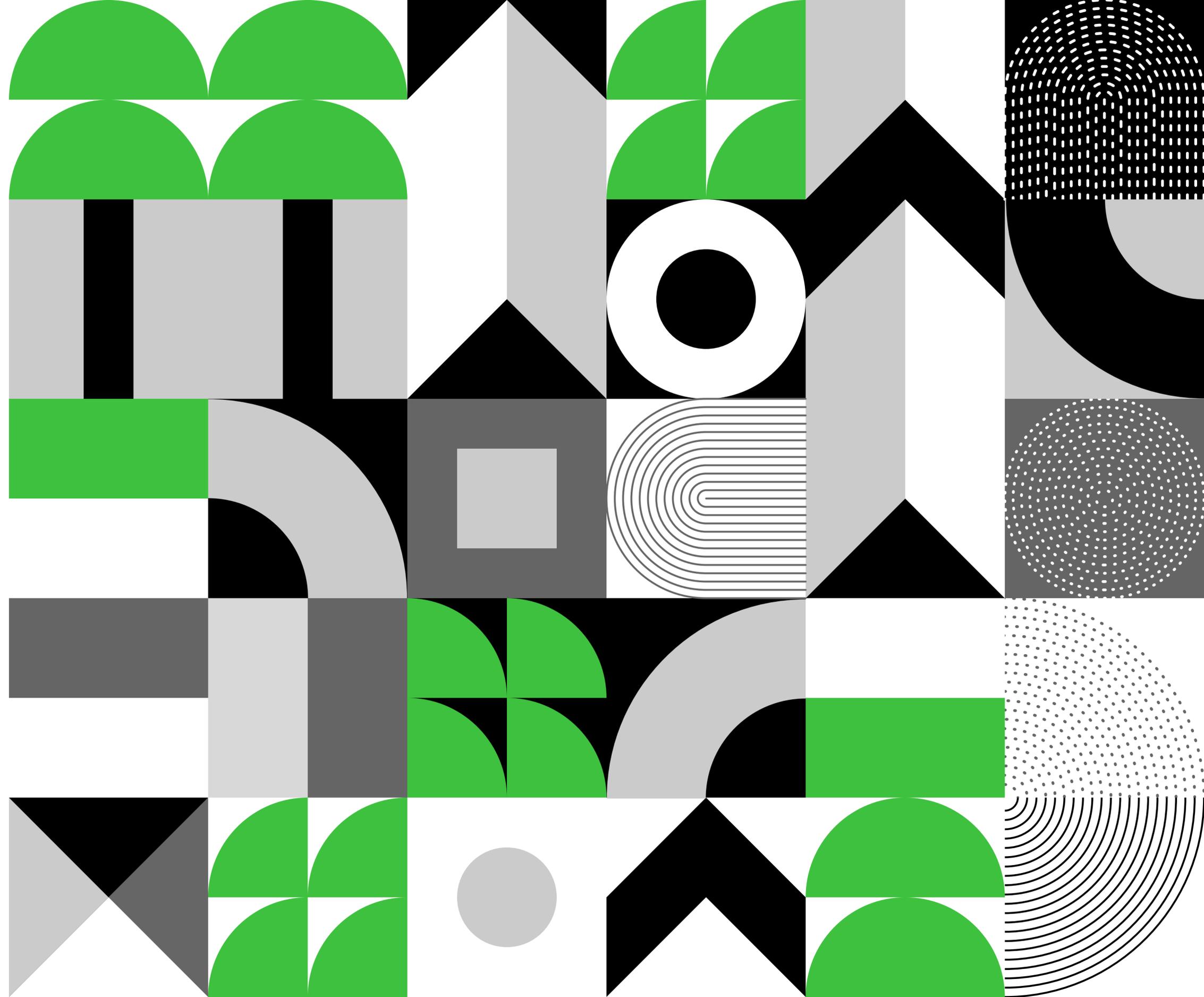
Others:

[Hospitals and Clinics \(Tokyo\)](#)

Housing

Your Guide

A handy guide to real estate,
property leasing and
homemaking in Japan





Introduction

While any international move can be challenging, a move to Tokyo often requires unique lifestyle adjustments and the reordering of one's priorities.

The sheer size and complexity of Tokyo may initially seem insurmountable. However, with proper planning many foreign residents are able to settle in comfortably and quickly come to appreciate the unique cultural and social opportunities living in Japan's capital affords.

The key lies in creating a lifestyle that is convenient and rewarding for all family members. Choosing the right suburb to live in is a key ingredient.

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Choosing a Suburb

The following neighborhoods are known to be comfortable and foreigner-friendly, making them popular among newcomers to Tokyo.

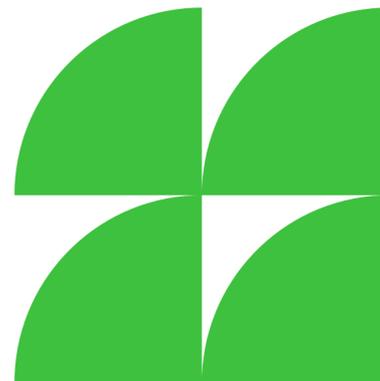
They have many international schools, shops, and restaurants, each with English-speaking staff. You should decide on the best place to live based on where you work, access to school for your children, and the type of lifestyle you lead.

Finding the right home and understanding a lease

[Guide to Renting an Apartment in Tokyo, Japan](#)

Image: Tokyo Area Flood Map

[Ground elevations in the lowlands of Tokyo](#)



Regardless of where you choose, be assured that Tokyo is known for its safety and convenience. Grocery stores, drug stores, convenience stores, and post offices are usually no more than a 5–10-minute walk from your home.





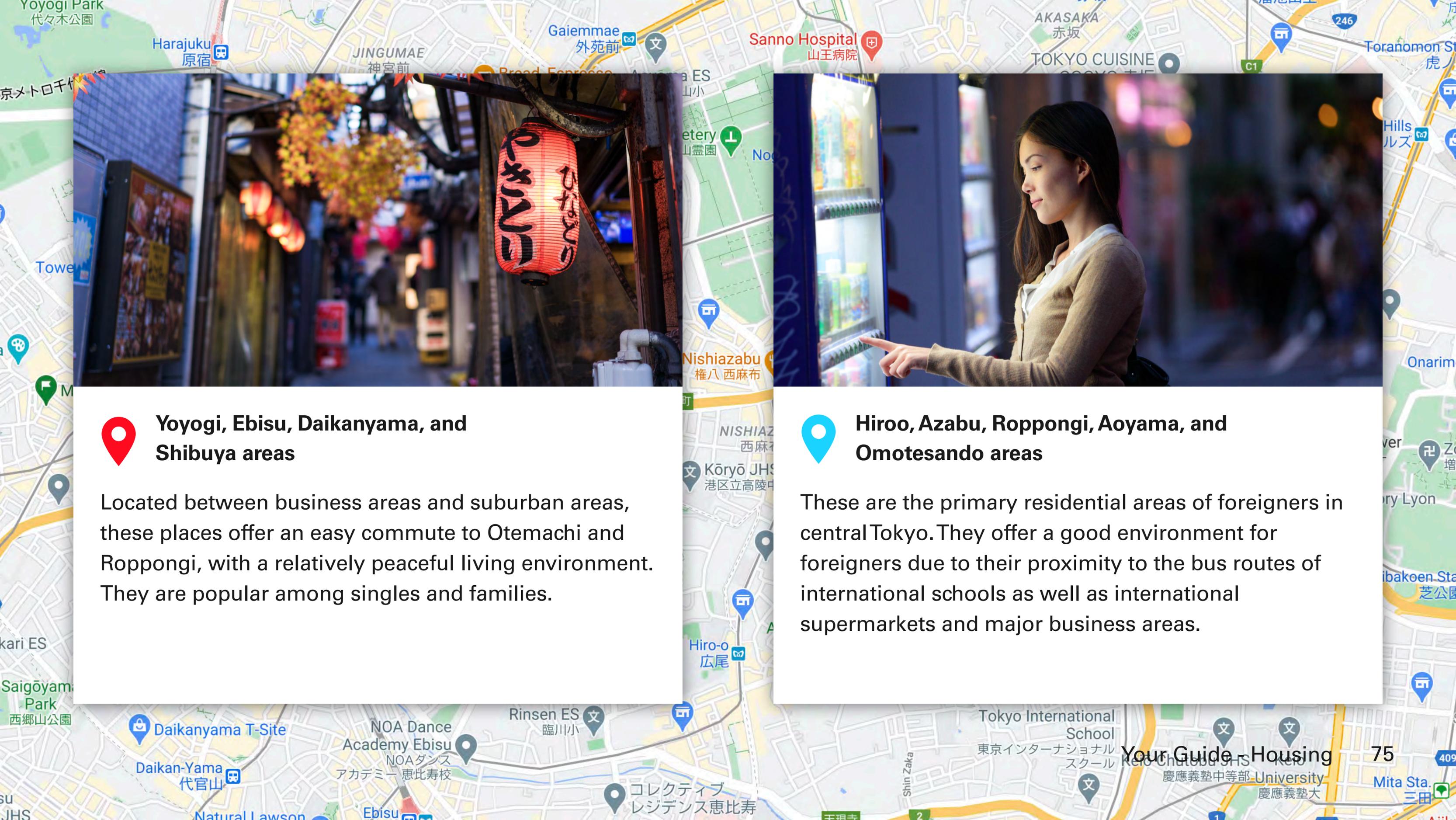
Yoyogi, Ebisu, Daikanyama, and Shibuya areas

Located between business areas and suburban areas, these places offer an easy commute to Otemachi and Roppongi, with a relatively peaceful living environment. They are popular among singles and families.



Hiroo, Azabu, Roppongi, Aoyama, and Omotesando areas

These are the primary residential areas of foreigners in central Tokyo. They offer a good environment for foreigners due to their proximity to the bus routes of international schools as well as international supermarkets and major business areas.





Meguro-ku, Setagaya-ku, and the suburbs of Tokyo

These quiet and restful areas are away from busy central Tokyo. There are many foreigner-friendly detached housings, compounds, and low-rise apartments built along the bus routes of international schools.



Nihonbashi, Kachidoki, Toyosu, Ginza, and the Tokyo Bay areas

These areas are located on the east side of Tokyo from Nihonbashi to Tokyo Bay and have attracted many stock brokerage firms. There are therefore many tower apartments in the Tokyo Bay area, which offer hotel-like quality services and ocean views.

Common Forms of Housing

The most common forms of housing for foreigners in Japan are apartments/condominiums and houses.

Apartments/Condominiums

The characterization of buildings in Japan is based on the construction materials and quality. A concrete apartment/condominium complex of three or more floors is called a manshon, whereas, an apāto is usually less than three floors and constructed of wood. This makes “mansions” more expensive as they are better-insulated and can be built much higher. Buildings with at least five floors usually have elevators, and more modern buildings often have a main entrance with auto-lock doors. Apartments range from one-room studios to properties with three or more bedrooms, and may encompass more than one floor.

Houses

Detached houses are the most common type of family home outside of Minato-ku and other central neighborhoods in Tokyo. They are particularly common in the suburbs and smaller towns, but can be found in central locations as well. Renting a house may give you more freedom with pets, and allow you to enjoy activities such as gardening if the property includes a backyard.

Though tatami mat flooring is available in some apartments/condominiums, it tends to be more common in houses, for those who would like to experience a more Japanese living environment. No matter what kind of house you end up living in, you should be no more than a 10–15 minute walk from the local or major train station.

Real Estate Terms

Below is a table of abbreviations and terms commonly used in the real estate business in Japan. Floor plans are written using numbers and alphabets; the number indicates the number of bedrooms and the letters show the other areas the property comprises.

L	Living room	Over 8 jo (approx. 13m ²)
D	Dining room	Over 5 jo (approx. 8m ²)
K	Kitchen	About 4 jo (approx. 6.5m ²)
DK	Dining-kitchen	1 room of 8-14.5m ²
LDK	Living-dining-kitchen	1 room over 14.5m ²
1R	Studio Apartment	Undivided, open space

S	Storage Room	
Washitsu	Japanese style	Tatami floor
Yoshitsu	Western style	Wooden or carpeted floor
Rofuto	Loft	Loft
Beranda Barukoni	Veranda/Balcony	Balcony

As an example, a 3LDK housing unit will have three bedrooms and one living-dining-kitchen room.

The size of each room is usually shown on the floor plan, either using the Japanese unit jo, which is equivalent to the size of one tatami mat (1.6m²). The floor plan will also indicate whether the room has tatami or wood flooring.



Apartment Features

In Japanese apartments one can expect to see a cupboard for shoes in the entrance (genkan).

Should you have a traditional Japanese-style room in your home, you will have an oshiire (deep closet with sliding doors) where futon bedding is stored. These can be converted easily into Western-style closets for storing clothes by using temporary bars and shelving units.

Bathrooms and Toilets

Japanese bathrooms can be broadly divided into two types: those where the toilet and bathtub are in the same room (yūnitto basu), and those where the toilet and bathtub are in different rooms. The yūnitto basu, or unit bathroom, is generally a compact, square room featuring the bathtub, toilet, and sink. A tap is shared by the bath and sink. Most Japanese people wash using the shower (often sitting on a stool) and use the ofuro (bathtub) for soaking only.

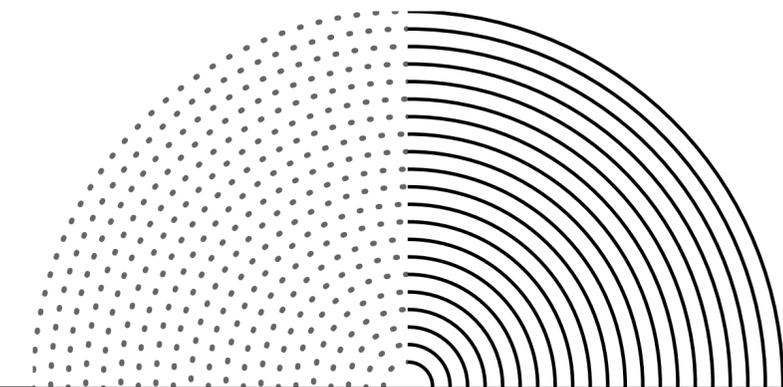


Larger properties will often have the toilet in a small, separate room. Many Japanese people keep slippers specially for use when using the toilet in this room. The washstand may be in a separate room, adjacent to the toilet and bathroom.

Many Japanese toilets feature an electronic bidet and seat-warmer with customizable features. Whether the toilet is separate or not, the bathroom is usually waterproof, with the floor designed so that all water flows towards the drains. Some modern bathrooms have a heating function in addition to the extractor fan, designed both to dry off the bathroom after use to prevent mold and for drying laundry.

Many Japanese apartments have only a washer without a separate dryer, so most people hang their clothes dry outside or in their bathroom.

There may also be a function to automatically fill the bathtub to the desired level at a designated temperature, or to maintain the temperature of the water in the tub.



Heating and Cooling

Most Japanese residential buildings do not have central heating and are very cold in the winter. Air conditioning units (ea-kon), however, have modes for both heating and cooling. Electrical space heaters and standing fans can be used to cover areas where there is no air-conditioning. In winter some people sit with their legs under a kotatsu (a heated coffee table covered with a blanket) for warmth. The heater does not produce enough heat to warm the whole room, but the blanket keeps the heat inside to warm the legs.



Kitchen Appliances

Many kitchens are equipped with either a gas or electric stove. It is traditional in Japan to grill fish, so many stovetops come with a small grill feature. It is not however traditional in Japan to bake, so it is unlikely that you will have an oven in your kitchen unless you select an apartment that has been designed for expatriates. People who enjoy baking will typically purchase a microwave oven which offers both microwaving and baking features. These can be found in electronics stores along with toasters, rice cookers, washers, driers, and other home appliances. For more information on shopping, visit the Shopping playbook.



Renting Costs: an Overview

Here is a rundown of the various costs you can expect when you rent through a Japanese agency:

Rent	<i>Yachin</i>	Paid monthly
Maintenance fee	<i>Kanrihi</i>	Paid monthly with the rent
Key money	<i>Reikin</i>	Non-refundable upfront payment to the landlord. It usually accounts to approximately 1-3 month's rent. Accommodations designed for shorter term stays or for residents from overseas will often not be charged Reikin.
Deposit	<i>Shikikin</i>	Upfront cost, returned when you move out as long as your rent has been paid. The cost of any repairs or cleaning may be deducted.
Guaranty money	<i>Hoshōkin</i>	
Agent's fee	<i>Chūkai-Tesuryō</i>	Commission paid to the real estate agent that helped to close the deal. Consumption tax may be charged.
Renewal fee	<i>Koshinryō</i>	A fee paid to the landlord if you would like to rent the room for another lease term. A lease term is generally two years, and the fee is usually about one month's rent.
Fire insurance	<i>Kasai hoken</i>	Required at most rented rooms, usually charged when signing the contract to rent the room.
Fees to change the door keys	<i>Kagi koukanhiyō</i>	A fee may be charged to change the keys to the property (to discourage break-ins, etc.)

These elements can impact housing pricing (usually mentioned in the listing):

- Train station/line
- Distance from bus stop or other transportation
- Nearby supermarkets and convenience stores
- Age of the building
- Floor level of the apartment
- Direction that the apartment faces (South is most popular for even sunlight; East is least popular as it is very bright in the morning and can be hot in the summertime)
- Land elevation (flood zone or high ground) [see this map](#)

Average Rental Rates in Tokyo Within Key Expat Suburbs

Hiroo, Azabu, Roppongi, Aoyama, and Omotesando areas

Apartment	Size (sqm)	Rent (in 10,000 JPY units)		
		Low	Mid	High
1 bedroom	50	32	46	68
2 bedrooms	80	54	80	100
3 bedrooms	120	77	120	160

Yoyogi, Ebisu, Daikanyama, and Shibuya areas

Apartment	Size (sqm)	Rent (in 10,000 JPY units)		
		Low	Mid	High
1 bedroom	50	29	44	50
2 bedrooms	80	49	66	85
3 bedrooms	120	66	90	120

Meguro-ku, Setagaya-ku, and suburbs of Tokyo

Apartment	Size (sqm)	Rent (in 10,000 JPY units)		
		Low	Mid	High
1 bedroom	50	28	38	52
2 bedrooms	80	36	53	69
3 bedrooms	120	55	70	95

Nihonbashi, Kachidoki, Toyosu, Ginza, and Tokyo Bay areas

Apartment	Size (sqm)	Rent (in 10,000 JPY units)		
		Low	Mid	High
1 bedroom	50	25	35	41
2 bedrooms	80	30	42	51
3 bedrooms	120	57	70	88

Types of Lease Contract

Normal Lease Contract (Renewable)

Usually the length of a lease contract is two years. This does not mean that you must stay in your apartment for the contract's duration and there is no penalty for leaving before your contract ends. Sometimes a renewal fee arises at the time of an agreement renewal.

Fixed-Term Lease Contract (Not renewable)

The rental agreement terminates on the expiry date of the agreement. The agreement can be re-contracted only if both the lessee and lessor agree to do so.



Time Frame and Steps Involved in Obtaining a Home

You should generally begin your home search at least two weeks prior to your desired move-in date.

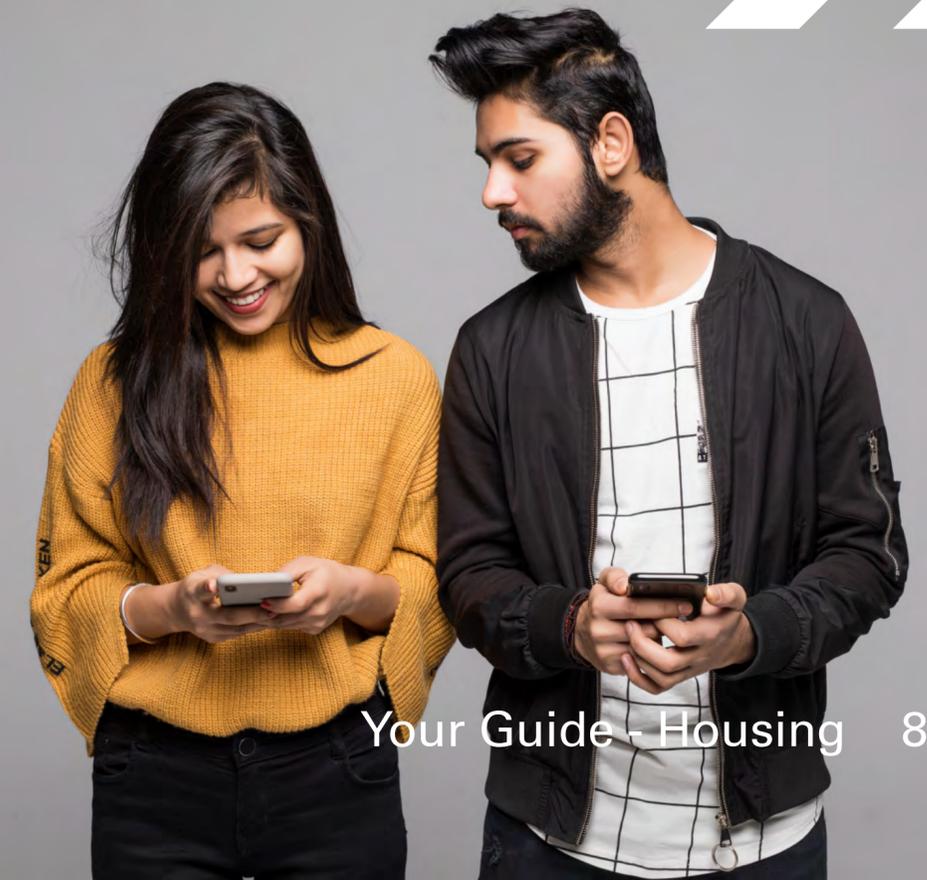
It is difficult to secure a suitable property more than eight weeks before a move-in date, except when applying for a property that is currently under renovation or when the existing tenant cooperates in a property's showing.

Additionally, the woven by toyota HR Team can provide a list of preferred vendors for relocation assistance including support for finding a home.

Real Estate Negotiation Practices in Japan:

[How to Negotiate on the Asking Price](#)

You should plan on spending at least one day viewing properties. If special needs must be met, you might want to spend up to a week. What follows is a typical schedule of events once you have located a property that interests you.



1 Application

A document stating intent to contract a lease. (Applications are not legally binding but they should not be submitted casually; let your agent guide you in this process). Any requests related to the property must be submitted at this time and will be considered by the owner.

Requests typically include minor maintenance or renovation work and the addition of various fixtures, cable, or satellite TV. Again, it is best to let your agent guide you in making these requests as their negotiability will vary from property to property.

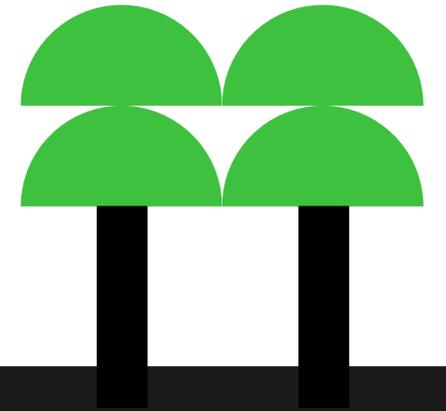
2 Landlord's Response

The time it takes to receive a response to your application varies by landlord. One landlord may give you an answer immediately, while another may take up to 10 days when a background check of applicants is required.

If you are “accepted,” move on to draft the lease. If you are declined, continue your housing search. Landlords may “accept” under certain conditions, meaning the elimination or reduction of requests. Your agent will negotiate on your behalf in these situations.

3 Draft Contract

This is generally prepared in Japanese. An English translation may be available depending on the landlord. A copy may be sent to the corporate HR Team for review, negotiation, and approval. Your real estate agent will also review the lease terms.



4 Final "Original" Contract

Once all parties agree, an "Original" contract is made. There can be no further negotiation at this stage. The "Original" is taken to your company for completion. All related fees must be paid before the lease's start date. Japanese landlords will never turn over a property before receiving a payment in full.

5 Prior to Move-in Day

Your agent will see that all utilities, telephone, and satellite or cable services are arranged before you move in. Your real estate agent will also coordinate with your moving company and the building manager to see that the move is as smooth and trouble free as possible.

6 Move-in Day

Your agent will conduct a thorough inspection of your new property and train you in the use of all appliances and climate control systems, such as how to use the remote for your air conditioner, how to operate your electronic toilet, how to use your washing machine, and more.

Air conditioner:

[How to Use your Japanese Air Conditioner Remote](#)

Electronic toilet:

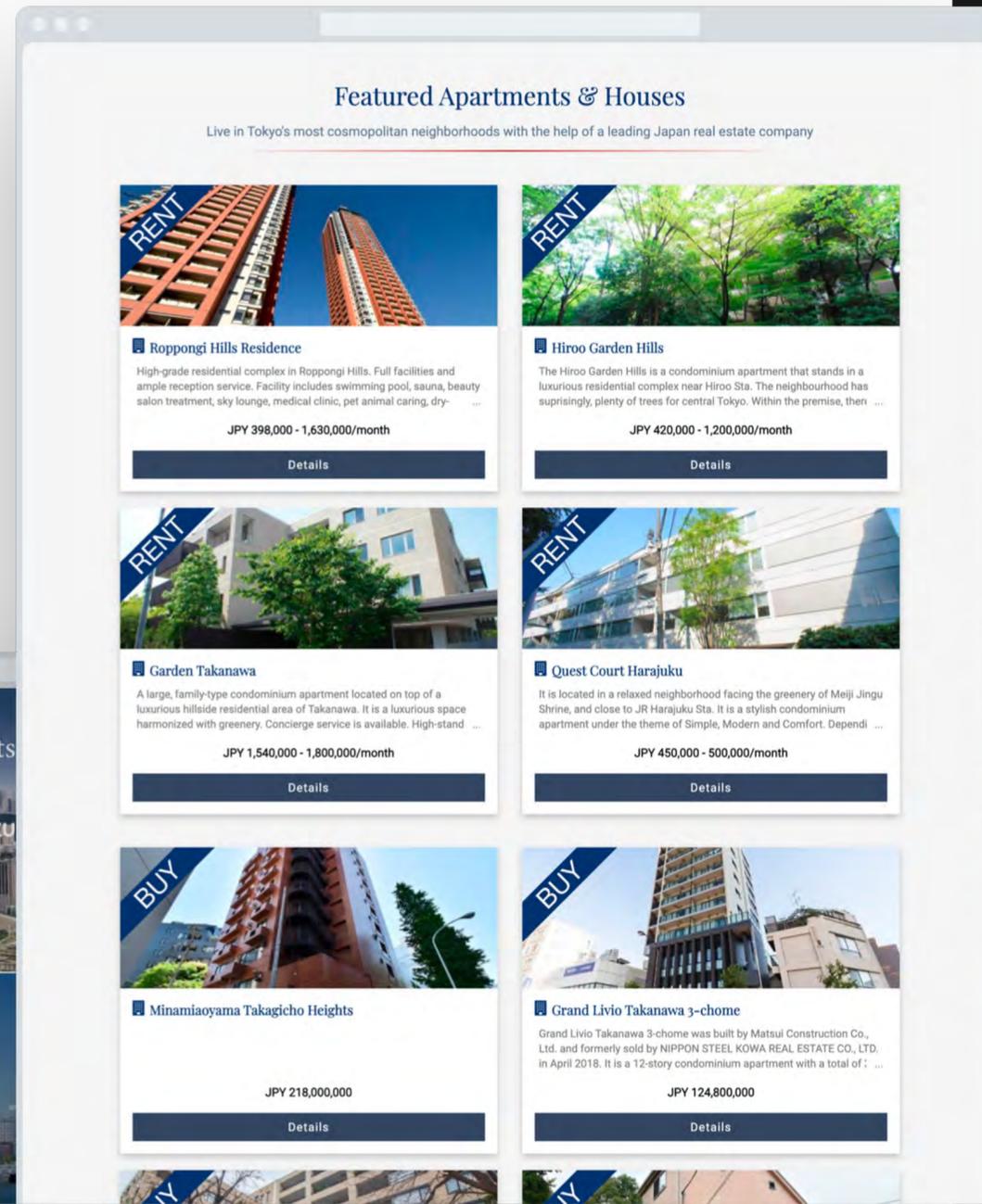
[Guide to Japanese Toilets! Japanese Toilet Buttons Infographic](#)

Washing machine:

[Guide to Japanese Washing Machines!](#)



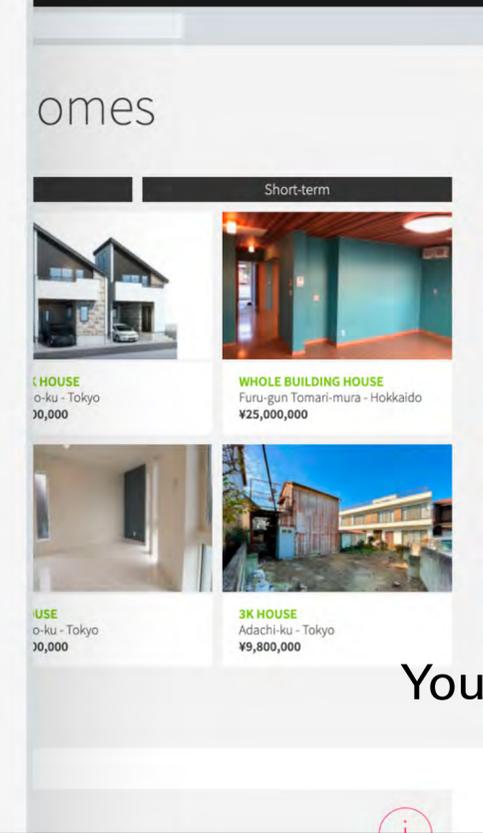
Real Estate Agencies that Support Expat Housing



Plaza Homes, Ltd.
Real Estate in Tokyo, Japan

Ken Corporation Ltd.
Tokyo Real Estate - Ken Corporation Ltd.

Real Estate Japan
Foreigner-Friendly Properties for Sale and Rent in Japan - Real Estate Japan



Short Term Rental

Many people moving to Japan choose to find a short-term rental to live in while searching for a more long-term home.

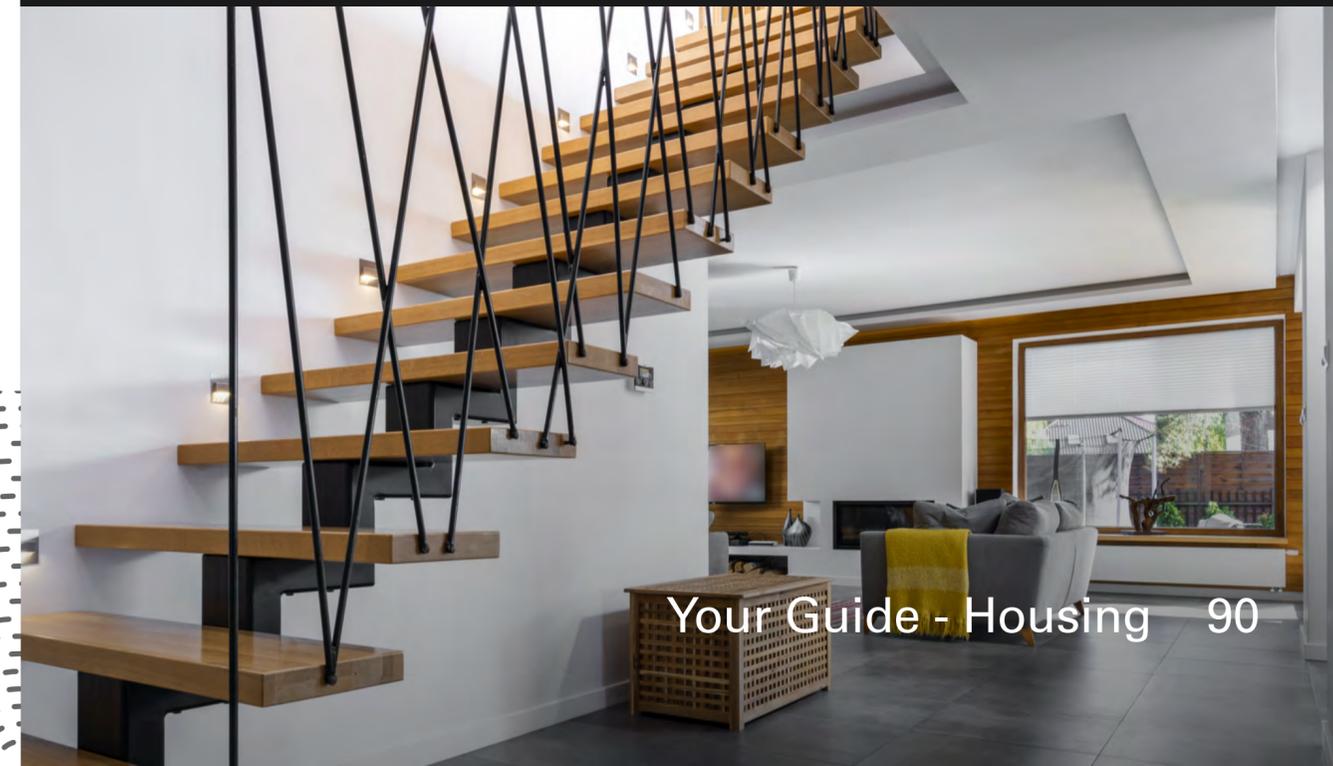
Tokyo can cater to foreigners looking for a place to stay for a few months. Short-term rentals are usually furnished apartments, but there are also a few unfurnished options. Costs vary, starting from ¥80,000 per month, depending on your needs.

Suumo

[Searching for Rentals in Japan: a Beginner's Guide](#)

Monthly Furnished Rentals in Central Tokyo:
[Monthly Furnished Rentals in Central Tokyo](#)

Short Term Rentals and Furnished Apartments in Tokyo:
[Short-term rentals and furnished apartments in Tokyo](#)



Relocation Assistance

If you find yourself overwhelmed by the task of moving to Japan from abroad, consider a relocation company to help you.

In addition to moving your possessions to your new home, experienced relocation companies provide personal assistance in various matters such as visa procedures, applications/registrations with municipal offices and public services, setting up bank accounts and finding schools. They can also advise on the supermarkets, shops, and restaurants in your neighborhood.



The woven by toyota HR team can provide several preferred vendors for relocation support, please contact them for more information.

Purchasing Furniture

As a general rule, it is typically not advised to ship large furniture from abroad as it often does not fit in Japanese apartments.

If you plan to source furniture in Japan after you have made your move, here is a list of furniture companies where you can easily source all of the items that you need. These companies offer shipping and delivery services so you do not need to have a car to transport large items.



It is also common to rent furniture and even other housing materials and appliances from blinds to TVs.

For more information on purchasing homegoods and appliances, please visit the Shopping playbook.

Recommended furniture shops in Japan:

Francfranc

[Francfranc Official Online Store](#)

Muji

[Muji Rushi Ryōhin Keikaku](#)

Ikea

[IKEA Japan - Furniture and Home Goods](#)

Utility Bills and Payment

A “notice of consumption” is mailed to you and indicates the amount to be billed and also counts as a receipt if your bill is paid via bank withdrawal. The notice may appear to be a bill, but it is not.

Utility bills can be arranged to be paid automatically through your bank or post office. You can also pay the bill with cash at the post office, banks, and convenience stores (7-Eleven, Family Mart, Lawson etc.). For further details about contracts and applications for using different payment methods, please contact the utility company.

Utility suppliers:

TEPCO (electricity)

[Credit Card Payment Procedure \(New/Changed\)](#)

Tokyo Gas

[About Credit Card Payment](#)

Bureau of waterworks Tokyo

[Waterworks Bureau Customer Center \(23 wards\)](#)

For more information on setting up your Utilities, TV, mobile phone and internet, visit the Utilities and Communications playbook.

Garbage

The Japanese take their garbage disposal very seriously. Garbage should be divided into six categories, with pick up on specific days depending on your suburb. You will be provided with a timetable and itemized list by your agent.

In addition to keeping your neighborhood clean, disposing of garbage properly is crucial in establishing and maintaining good relations with your neighbors.

- 1 Burnable garbage (moeru-gomi/kanen-gomi)
- 2 Unburnable garbage (moenai-gomi/hunen-gomi)
- 3 Plastic garbage (purasuchikku)
- 4 Food and drink recyclables (PET bottles, glass, cans) (petto-botoru, bin, kan)
- 5 Newspapers, magazines, and cardboard (shinbun, zasshi, danbōuru)
- 6 Other garbage including bulky refuse (sodai-gomi)

House Cleaners

If you are looking for cleaning services on a regular basis or for a spot clean, the following companies offer professional services in English.

Kurashinity

[Kurashinity - professional bilingual housekeeping service](#)

Mamy Tokyo

[Mamy Tokyo Housekeeping](#)

Zehitomo (freelance house cleaning)

[Hire local service professionals](#)

Trustworthy Housekeeper (offers deep cleaning services)

[Trustworthy housekeeper - cleaning services Tokyo](#)



Housing Insurance

Fire insurance is often required for renting or buying a property in Japan. Fire insurance not only covers damages incurred as the result of a fire but also many other household accidents.

Generally, fire insurance covers the personal contents of your home or apartment as well as damage to the interior. Typical fire insurance plans cost between ¥20,000-¥40,000 for every two years. Earthquake insurance covers any damage that occurs to your home as a result of an earthquake, even if it is fire or water damage caused by an earthquake.

While costs for earthquake insurance differ based on prefecture, the typical cost is around ¥30,000 annually. For more information on insurance in Japan, please visit the link below.

Japanese Insurance

[Financial System Stabilization](#)

Note: Some employers in Japan offer housing insurance as part of their benefits, please check with the woven by toyota HRTeam for more information on this.

Getting a House/Mortgage for Foreigners

Generally you must have permanent residency status or have a spouse who is a Japanese citizen or permanent resident. They must be a co-signer on the contract.

Certain Japanese banks may not let you apply for a housing loan without sufficient Japanese language capabilities.

Banks that offer housing contracts for non-Japanese



Getting a house or housing contract (general)

- Must be at least 20 years old to apply for a housing loan or purchase a home, with the loan payment being able to be paid off by a maximum of 80 years old.
- Must be a full-time employee or contract worker with the previous years annual salary totaling at least ¥3,000,000.

Additional information on housing loans in Japan

[Guide to Home Mortgage Loans in Japan](#)

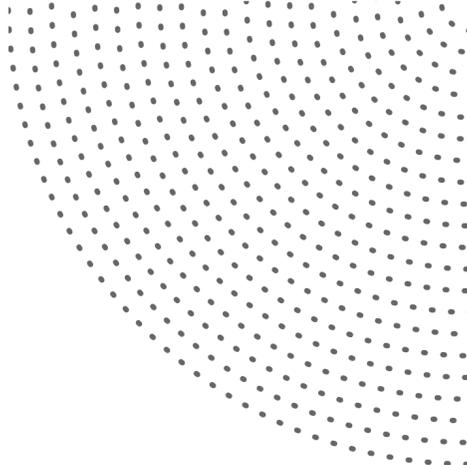
Moving with Pets

If you are bringing your pet into Japan, you need to fill out forms and have your pet vaccinated.

It is best to start preparing as early as possible, as the procedure takes at least seven months. If you own a dog, then once you have moved to Japan you should register it at the local municipal office and have it vaccinated as soon as possible. Many apartments in Japan do not permit pets and some have strict rules on how they should be managed in the apartment.

Some apartment buildings may feature a separate elevator to use when you are with your pet. Generally, the more pets you have the more difficult it may be to find an apartment.





Introduction

Now that you are ready to make the move to Japan, you are likely wondering what essentials you need to bring, how to ship your furniture and personal items, and how to register as a resident.



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Checklist

Make sure that you bring the following items (as appropriate) with you:

- ✓ Passport
- ✓ Visa documents
- ✓ Immunization records
- ✓ Copies of any relevant transcripts
- ✓ A copy of your birth certificate
- ✓ A copy of your marriage license
- ✓ Your driver's license
- ✓ Your International Driving Permit

As it could take time to set up a local bank account, it is recommended that you bring the equivalent of ¥500,000 in cash to cover any purchases over your first couple of months.

Many locations in Tokyo accept credit cards or cashless payments, but it is still largely a cash-based society and there are cases in which you might have to have cash on hand.

Comfort Items

You can find nearly everything you need in Japan. Of the items you cannot find, you can likely order online. Having said that, there are some common items that you might want to consider bringing with you.

- Toothpaste: The taste may be different to what you are used to.
- Deodorant: Deodorants are notably faint in smell compared to ones outside of Japan.
- Laundry detergent: It may be hard to come by your preferred smells.
- Tampons: Japanese women generally prefer pads, so tampon varieties are harder to source.
- Snacks & non-perishables: Certain candies, spices, dressings, and comfort foods, such as peanut butter, are difficult to find in Japan.
- Sheets & towels: The towels in Japan are relatively thin (which make them easy to dry on a balcony). If you prefer softer towels and sheets, you may want to consider bringing them from your home country.
- Over-the-counter drugs*: Some people find comfort in having medicines they are familiar with, featuring labels and instructions they can read. Note that certain prescription drugs that are legal in other countries are illegal in Japan.
***Refer to the Healthcare playbook for more information**

Prohibited Items

Before coming to Japan, read through this list of prohibited items as having them could result in you being turned away at the border. While some items are generally prohibited when entering most countries, there may be some items that are legal in your home country but illegal in Japan.

- Prescriptions: Certain prescription and over-the-counter drugs that are legal in other countries are illegal in Japan. Look at Healthcare playbook for more information.
- Raw meat and animal products that are not approved by the government, even if just for personal use.
- Many tropical fruits and vegetables.
- Items that infringe on intellectual property such as fake brands and counterfeit goods.
- Obscene magazines and DVDs, and child pornography.
- Illegal drugs such as narcotics and stimulants.
- Counterfeit bills and checks.
- Firearms and explosives.

There are also some items that are permitted in Japan but come with regulations, including fur and leather items which are subject to tax, and pets like dogs and cats that are subject to quarantine. For a comprehensive list of prohibited items in Japan, please visit the link below.

Japan Customs Restricted Items

[Japan Customs Restricted Items: Careful! Things You 'Can' and 'Can't' Bring Into Japan](#)

Power Supply

If you are bringing appliances with you, you may be wondering about the voltage and power supply. The power supply in Tokyo (eastern Japan) is 100V/50Hz.

If you are coming from North America, you do not need a converter; however, if you are coming from other locations, then you will likely need a converter. It may be easier to get all of your appliances in Japan if you have many appliances that would need converters.



For information on whether or not you require a converter, visit [World Plugs](#).

Plug adapter requirement calculator

[World Plugs](#)

Relocation Companies

If you are planning on moving your furniture to Japan, you can contact a relocation company to assist you.

It could take a few months for your items to arrive in Japan, so plan the shipment based on how long you will likely stay in temporary housing before moving into your home of choice. Other than shipping furniture, relocation companies can help with a variety of relocation services including assisting you to select an international school for your children, find a home, register your address, and settle in via a tour of your neighborhood.



Visa & Residence Card

New residents are eligible to have a residence card issued upon arrival or in the following first days (zairyū kādo). Those visiting Japan on a tourist visa are not eligible for a residence card.

It is essential that you obtain this card as it acts as a form of ID in Japan. You can pick up your residence card directly at major airports (Narita and Haneda) by showing your visa to a staff member at immigration who can direct you to where you can have your card created. If you do not receive your residence card at the airport, you will have to visit the immigration office to obtain one. Once you have your card and you have moved to your new temporary or permanent home, you need to visit your local ward office* to register your address within 14 days.

Ask woven by toyota about their visa/residence card procedure.

***For more information on your local ward office, visit the [Government & Legal](#) playbook.**

Immigration office

[Immigration Services Agency of Japan](#)

Driver's license

You can drive using a foreign license with an International Driving Permit or an official translation (depending on your country) during your first year of residence, but you must get a Japanese driver's license before the start of the second year.

For more information on driver's licenses, please visit the [Transportation](#) playbook.

Where to Purchase and Lease Furniture

If you do not ship your furniture or are looking for additional furniture to add to your new home, you can visit the popular furniture stores listed on the following page.

This list contains standard and affordable furniture shops. Should you wish to source high-quality and luxury items, you can find many nice furniture stores in the Aoyama and Roppongi areas.

Note that many furniture stores will provide shipping, so you do not need to arrange any transportation to pick up bulky items. Japanese furniture stores provide items that are suitable for Japanese sized apartments. However, in cases where you purchase oversized furniture that will not fit into your building elevator, companies might arrange a crane to lift furniture in through the balcony.



Leasing furniture is also popular among foreigners, since it does not require moving large furniture across countries. What follows is a list of furniture stores, both rental and purchase.

Rental

[Tokyo Lease Corporation](#)

[Advance International](#)

[May's Corporation](#)

Purchase

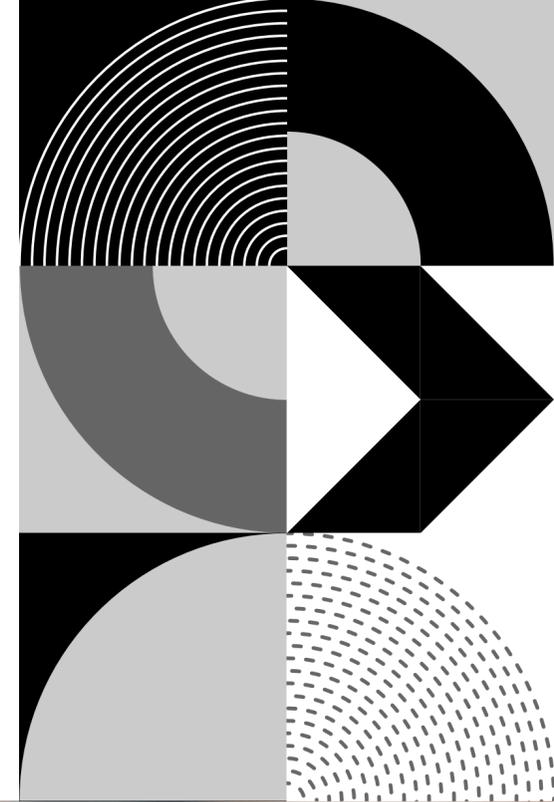
[IKEA Japan](#)

[Muji](#)

[Nitori](#)

[Franc Franc](#)

[Loft](#)



Living Etiquette

It is important to be mindful of the etiquette and customs typically shared by your new neighbors.

One of the first things you should do when you move into your new home is greet the neighbors who live on your floor (or next to you, if you live in a house) by ringing their doorbell, introducing yourself, and offering a small gift (such as snacks). You can easily find small snacks at local department stores or specialty shops in your neighborhood.

Another thing to be mindful of is trash disposal and recycling. There are regulations on how to sort and dispose of trash as well as designated trash and recycling disposal days. Following these rules ensures that you can live peacefully with your neighbors.

How to Sort Trash in Japan

[YouTube Video Guide](#)



Finally, you will want to be mindful of noise. Walls can be thin in many apartments and people live in relatively close proximity. If you are going to have a conversation outside on your balcony, for example, keep it quiet. Also, bring the conversation indoors at night so as not to disturb anyone. Being aware of noise also includes taking proper care of your pets. For more information on pet etiquette, visit the resource below.

Moving with Pets

If you are bringing your pet into Japan, you need to fill out forms and have your pet vaccinated. It is best to start preparing as early as possible, as the procedure takes at least seven months. If you own a dog, then once you have moved to Japan you should register it at the local municipal office and have it vaccinated as soon as possible. Note that having a pet will narrow your housing options to select apartments that permit pets; notify your real estate agent about your pets so that you can be matched with the best fit.



For more information on pet etiquette, please visit the resources below.

[Pet Manners & Etiquette in Japan](#)

[Bringing your pet dog or cat to Japan](#)

[Import dogs and cats into Japan](#)

Japanese Language Classes

The sooner you start to learn Japanese, the sooner you can be independent when living in the city.

While you will likely come across signs in English, there can be a language barrier when communicating with locals so it is essential to study helpful phrases. The Dojo, which is an in-house training organization at Woven by Toyota, offers language support in addition to various training programs.

Additionally, here is a list of some popular Japanese language schools that offer a variety of programs from survival Japanese to business Japanese:

Coto Academy

[Japanese Language School in Tokyo and Yokohama](#)

UJS Language Institute

[Japanese Language School](#)

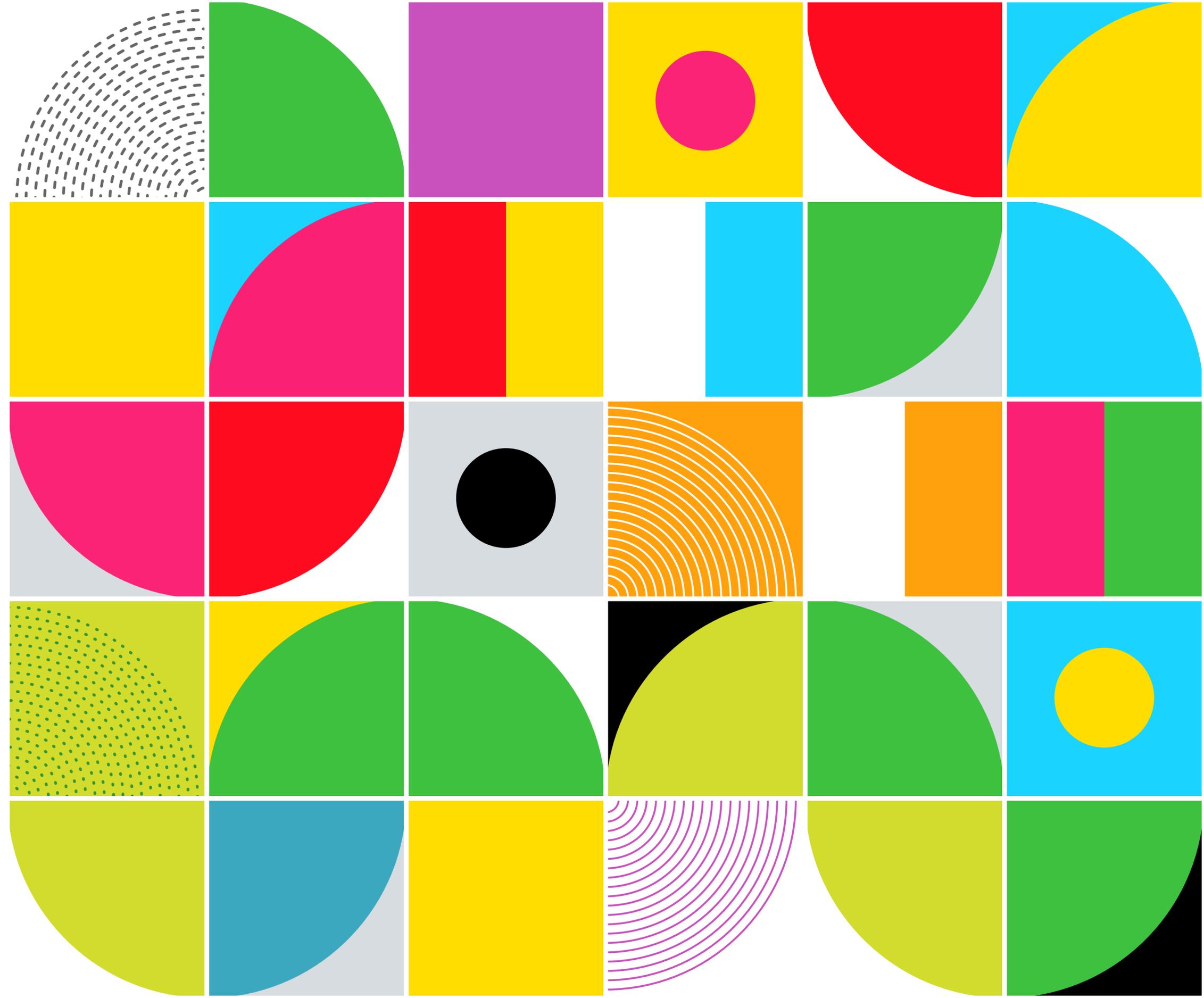
Tokyo Central Japanese Language School

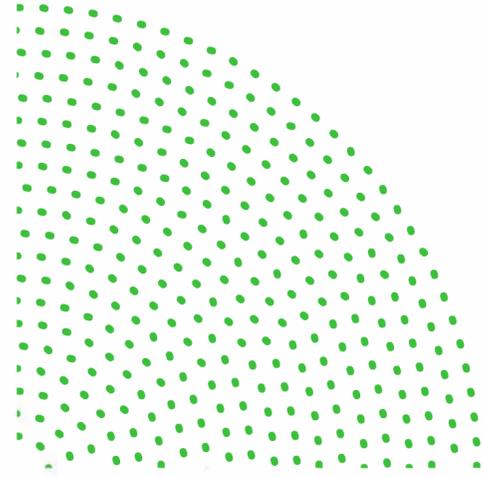
[Tokyo Central Japanese Language School](#)

Schools & Daycare

Your Guide

A handy guide to childcare and international children's education in Japan





Introduction

A primary concern for many parents is how their children will adapt to a new environment, especially one with a different culture and language.

However, there is no need to worry as there are many good international schools and preschools in the Tokyo metropolitan area.

Local Japanese schools follow a different schedule from international schools in Japan. Their first term starts in April and their third term ends in March, with seasonal breaks in between. International schools in Japan follow the academic calendar of the country they represent.

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International Schools

There is a good selection of international schools in Japan, offering a wide curriculum with a diverse student body not found in Japanese schools.

They can be expensive (¥1-3 million per year) and places are limited. It is a good idea to research the curriculum of each school to find the right one for your child. See the listings on the next page for information on specific international schools.

Applying to an international school

Because of the time required to prepare the necessary documents, it is advisable to apply at least six months in advance of your desired enrollment date. Entry requirements differ from school to school.

Check the school's website or call for more information. It will be useful to have transcripts prepared from the schools your child has attended in other countries. It may be necessary for your child to undergo a health checkup and take an entrance exam. Some schools have a minimum requirement for English language ability.

International School Resources

List of international schools

[International Schools \(Tokyo\)](#)

A comprehensive list of all international schools in Tokyo.

Pre-schools and kindergartens

[Preschools, Kindergartens and After School](#)

A list of all preschools, kindergartens and after school services.

Quest Tokyo

[Quality Educational Services and Tutoring](#)

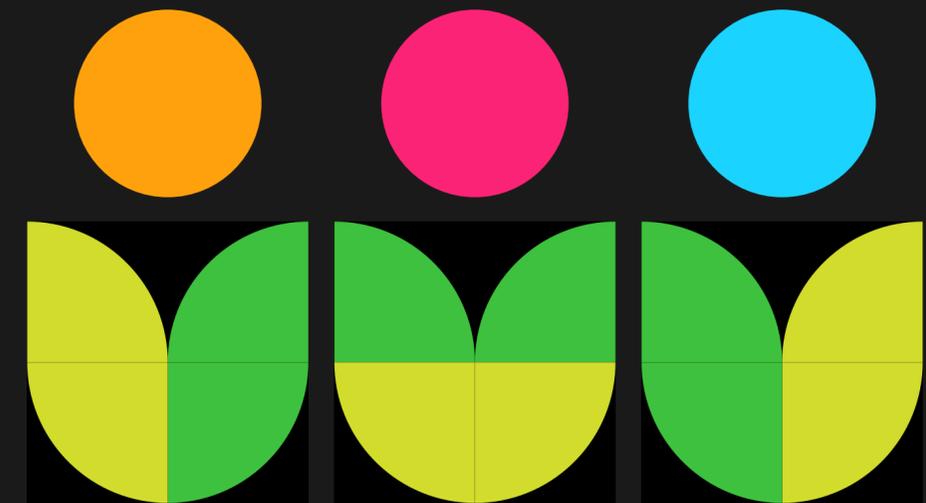
Quest Tokyo offers tutoring and consulting services about international schools in Tokyo.



Schools for Children with Special Needs

Mainstream schools tend to not advertise that they are open to accepting children with special needs and usually consider enrollment on a case-by-case basis.

A number of international schools have support for children with special needs and many of the larger ones employ one or more specialists in the field. It is advisable to contact these schools prior to visiting and making an application as criteria and services offered can change.



International schools that offer support for children with special needs

[Aoba-Japan International School](#)

[International School of the Sacred Heart](#)

[Seisen International School](#)

[The American School in Japan](#)

[KAIS Elementary & Middle School](#)

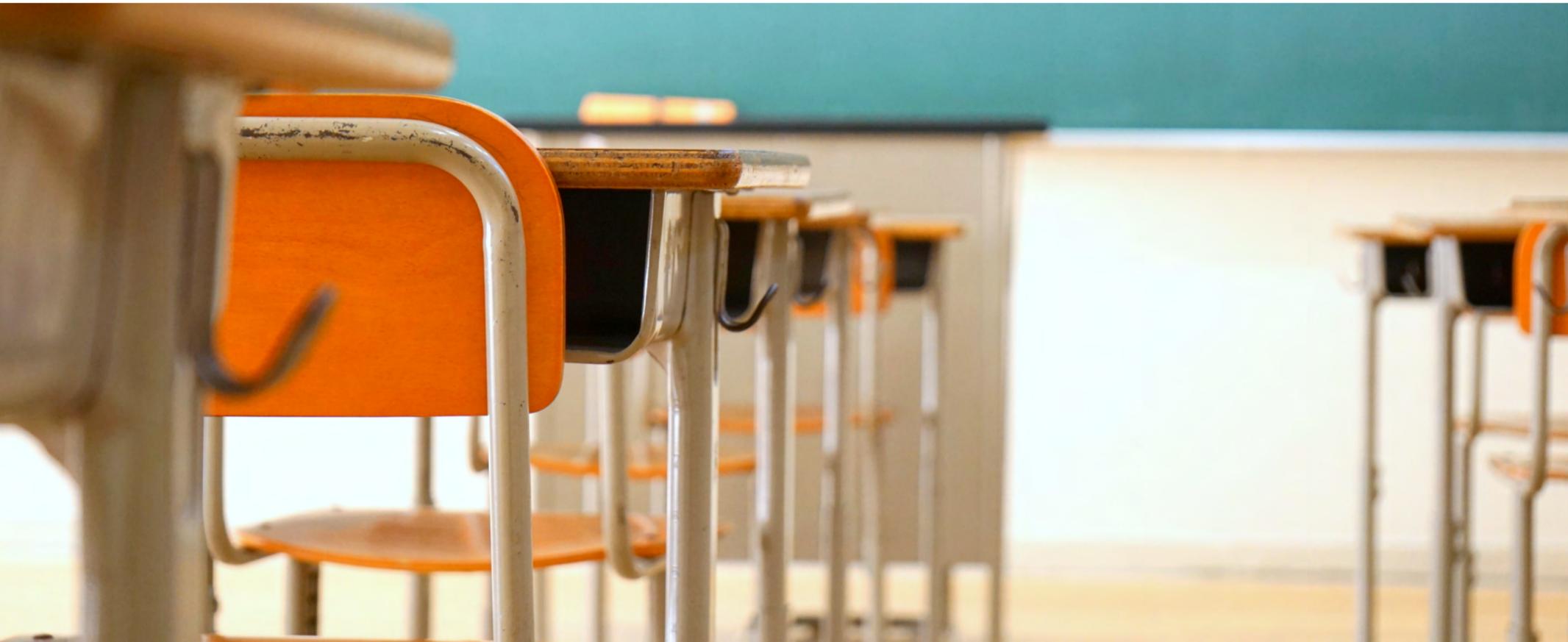
[St. Mary's International School](#)

[The British School in Tokyo](#)

[Nishimachi International School](#)

[Saint Maur International School](#)

[Tokyo International School](#)



[Schools for children with learning differences](#)

Childcare

Japan has a well-developed daycare system. There are daycare centers (hoikuen), both private and public, all across Tokyo.

For the most part, they are not English-speaking, so enrolling in them can be challenging. Also, daycare centers tend to be competitive and prioritize children from families with two working parents, so it is recommended that you apply to more than one to increase the chance of your child being accepted.

That being said, some foreigners prefer to send their young children to Japanese daycare centers as it is comparatively less expensive and they can immerse them in Japanese language from a young age.



Public daycare centers

The local government operates public daycare centers with uniform standards of childcare policies and facility environment. Some parents may feel the daycare hours are short and have an overall lack of flexibility. Standard hours are from 7:00-18:00 but some daycares may offer overtime hours for an additional cost.

Private daycare centers

Private daycare centers decide their childcare policies independently. Each also has its own unique programs and policies, A key benefit of these facilities is their flexibility, both in hours and meals.



[Daycares In Japan - How To Enroll, Costs, And Types Of Child Care](#)

[English-speaking Childcare in Tokyo](#)

Finding a Nanny

Japan does not have a traditional culture of informal babysitting as is common in some parts of the West (especially the United States), where you can pay someone you know to come watch your kids while you are out for the evening. That being said, there are a number of companies that provide English-speaking nanny services.

Carefinder

[Your trusted source for finding babysitters and online tutors](#)

Baby Sitting & Nanny Services

[Directory of Babysitting & Nanny Services in Tokyo](#)



For those on a high-skilled visa it is also possible to bring a live-in personal helper from your home country or abroad. There are certain requirements that need to be met such as having at least one child who is under 13. For the full list of requirements and procedures please visit the link below.

How to Bring a Personal Helper With You to Japan

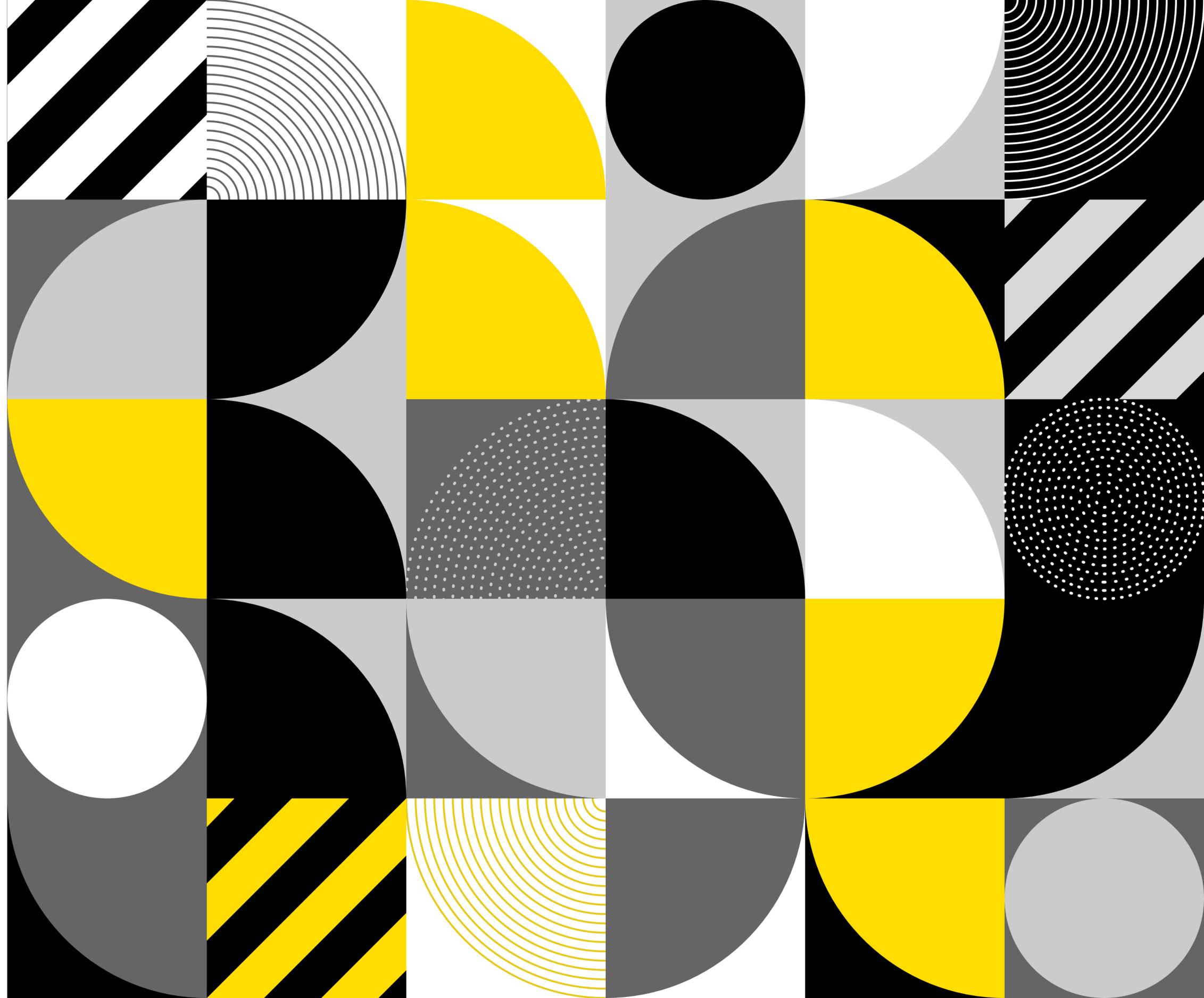
[Maid/Housekeeper/Personal Helper Visa](#)

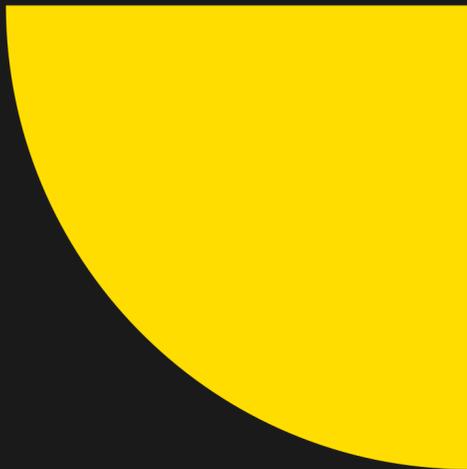
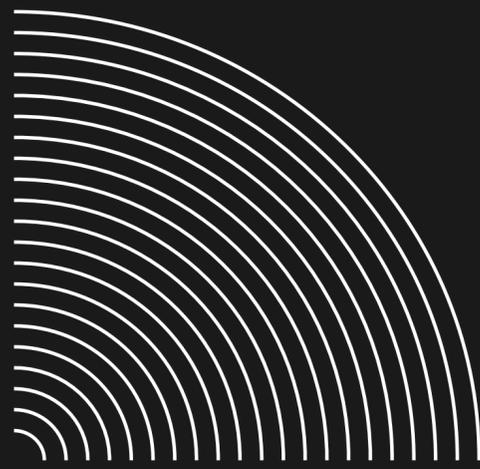
Safety & Natural Disasters

Your Guide

A handy guide to staying safe
and responding to emergencies
in Japan

 **woven** by TOYOTA





Introduction

With one of the lowest crime rates of all developed nations, Japan is an extremely safe country. In comparison to other major world cities, Tokyo has few incidences of confrontational violence, even at night.

Cultural norms, legal restrictions, and strict enforcement of illegal possession of firearms, weapons, and drugs have resulted in traffic accidents becoming the biggest threat to physical safety.

However, Japan's relative safety does not mean you should discard the precautions you would normally take at home. This playbook outlines some key considerations on personal safety in Tokyo.

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Personal Safety

Walking at night time

Tokyo is generally a safe city to walk around, even late at night. Most visitors and foreign residents experience minimal, if any, hassle. You should nevertheless maintain a certain degree of street sense and awareness of what is going on around you, particularly if you are a woman walking alone later in the evening.

Visiting entertainment zones

Shinjuku's entertainment and red-light district of Kabukicho has many cabaret clubs, drinking establishments, and entertainment venues. After dusk, a lot of people come to the area to enjoy the nightlife and things can get a little rowdy at times. Some venues have CCTV and the police make their rounds, but you should keep aware of your surroundings and try to avoid dangerous situations.



Areas around Roppongi and Shibuya stations can also become somewhat rowdy in the late evenings and while strangers might not cause you any harm, it's advisable to be aware of your surroundings at all times.

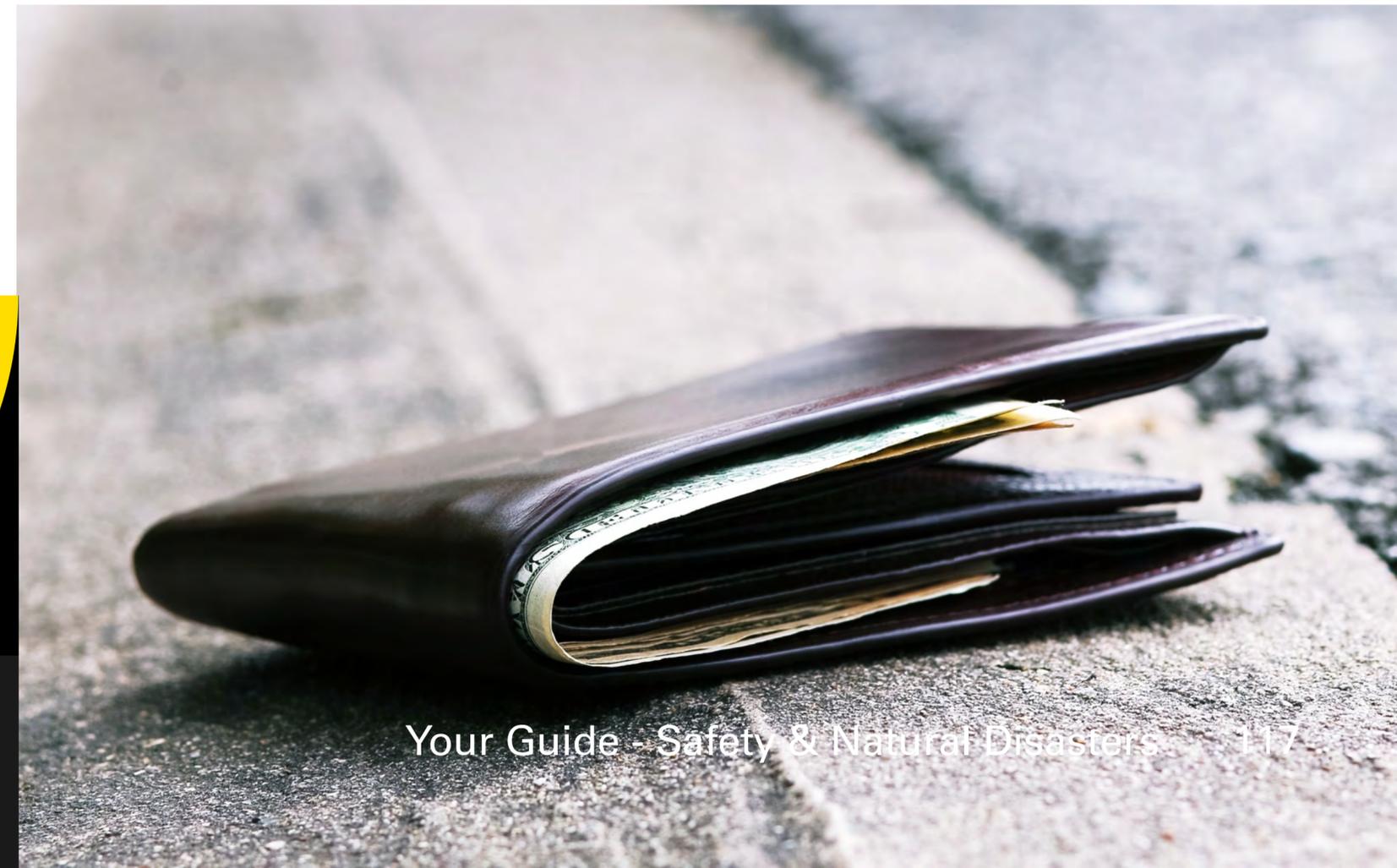
Theft & pickpocketing

Be wary in busy locations and entertainment areas of placing your bag down unattended at a seat or in a restaurant, for example while using the restroom or ordering at the counter. While you may notice that many people will use a personal item to reserve a seat or table, it is safest not to.

Although pick-pocketing is somewhat less common in Tokyo than in other large cities around the world, it is best to be on guard and keep valuables away from easy access.

Lost & found

Despite the prevalence of certain forms of crime, honesty is policy for the general population when it comes to lost and found in Japan. Tokyo's citizens hand in billions of yen in lost cash each year, often waiving their right to receive a finder's reward.



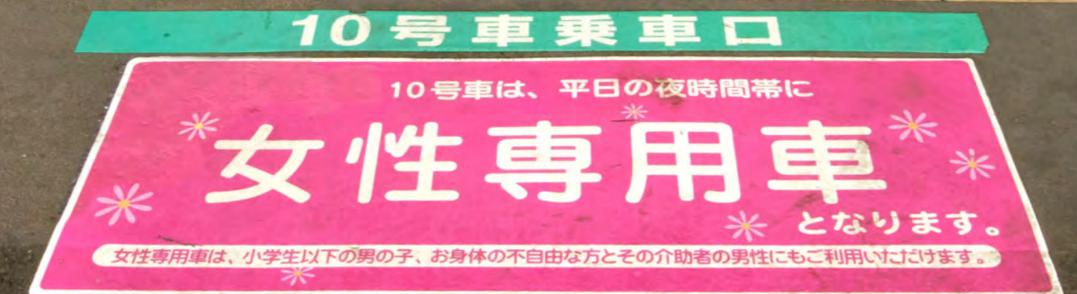
Women's safety

Generally speaking, Tokyo is very safe for women.

However, you should be aware that both groping (chikan-kōi) and unauthorized, inappropriate photography and filming (tōsatsu) can happen on trains, particularly during rush hour.

Several train lines have introduced pink-stickered women-only cars (josei-senyousha) during morning rush hour, aimed at women worried about unwanted physical contact.

These women-only cars are clearly marked and are usually the first or last carriage of the train.



The following link provides an overview of key cities in Japan and their relative safety rating.

How Safe is Tokyo?

[Japan: Safety by City](#)

Emergency Services

Japan is a safe and modern country with various emergency services. Being prepared and knowing how to access those emergency services can make all the difference in a crisis.

Police

Police in Japan are based out of police stations (keisatsu-sho) and police kiosks (kōban). Kōban operate 24/7 by officers working in shifts, and handle such tasks as lost & found incidents, giving directions, automobile accidents, and criminal cases. Police officers or patrolmen are called omawarisan and patrol the neighborhood on white bicycles or motorbikes.

To call the police dial 110.

[Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department \(in English\)](#)

Fire department and ambulance service

In Japan, you dial 119 in the case of an emergency. This number will connect you either with the fire department or the staff responsible for sending an ambulance to your location.

Although there are a few operators who speak English, you should be prepared to explain your situation in Japanese. It is advisable to speak slowly and specify first if you need an ambulance (kyuu-kyuu desu – “it’s an emergency”) or wish to report a fire (kaji desu – “it’s a fire”).

Tokyo Fire Department:

[Fire Service in Tokyo](#)

Medical emergencies overview:

[Medical Emergencies in Tokyo: How to Communicate in Japanese](#)

Natural Disasters

Natural disasters such as typhoons, floods, tsunamis and earthquakes are common in Japan.

In Tokyo, it is likely that you will experience a typhoon and an earthquake during your time here. Although Tokyo is generally well prepared for such events and has strict building codes to withstand earthquakes and underground flood-stopping barriers, it is prudent to be always ready in the event of a disaster so it is easier to safeguard you and your family against injury.

Below are links to comprehensive information on emergency services, guidance in the event of a natural disaster, emergency number lists, evacuation shelter sites in Tokyo, Japanese earthquake insurance, and natural disaster workshops.

Emergency & Disaster Prevention in Japan

[Information on Earthquakes, typhoons, where to evacuate, and more](#)

Disaster Preparedness Workshops

[Wanavi Japan](#)



Natural disaster preparation & kits

As natural disasters (particularly earthquakes) are relatively common in Japan, it is commonplace for citizens to have dedicated home preparation kits. While primarily for earthquakes, the kits are also useful for other disasters such as typhoons and floods.

Earthquake Preparation

[Basic Facts and Disaster Prevention](#)

[Directory of emergency numbers & services \(English\)](#)

[List of Emergency telephone numbers in Tokyo](#)

Image: Tokyo Area Flood Map

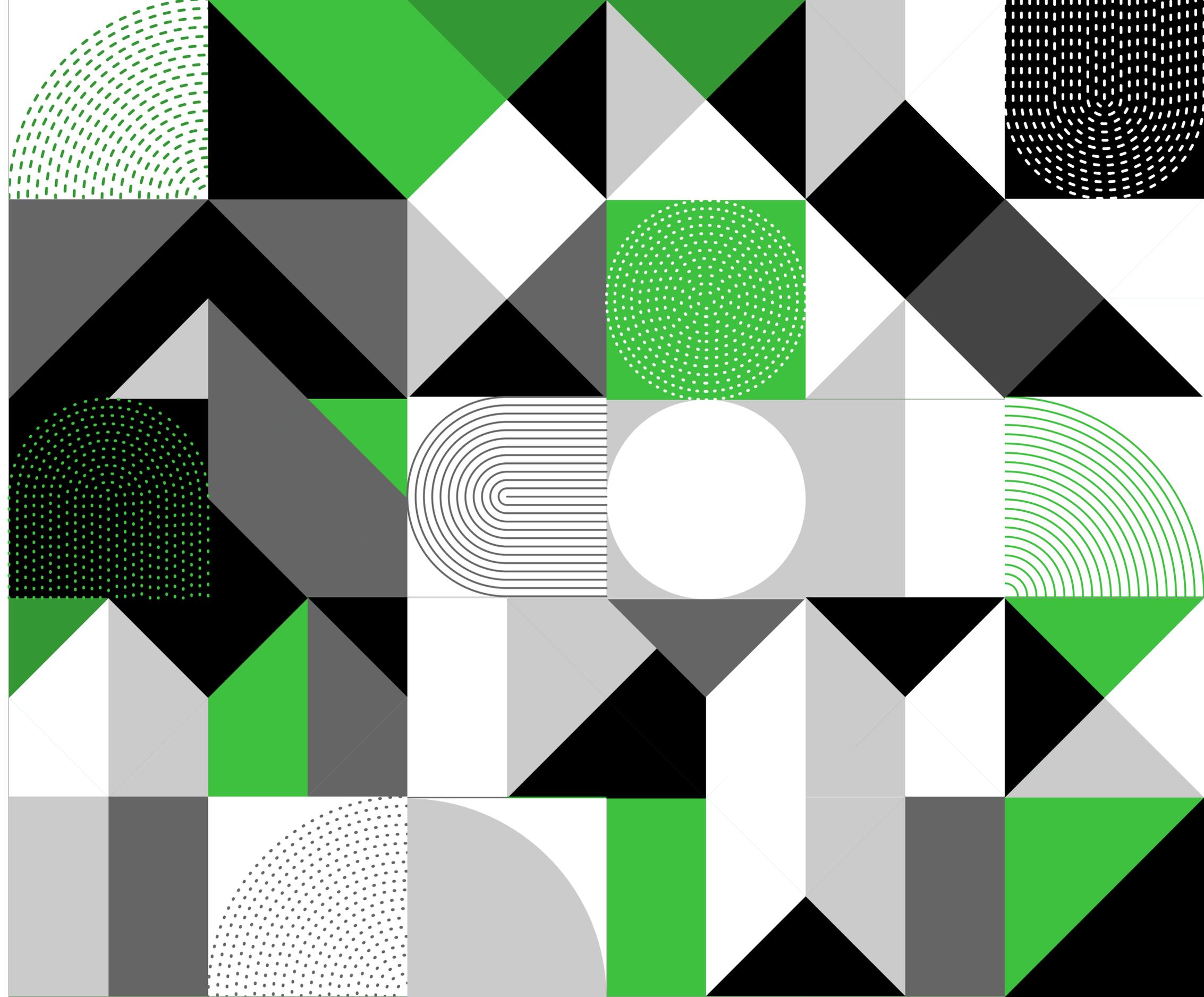
[Ground elevations in the lowlands of Tokyo](#)

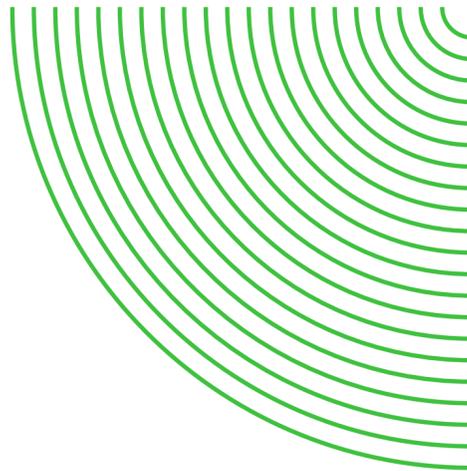
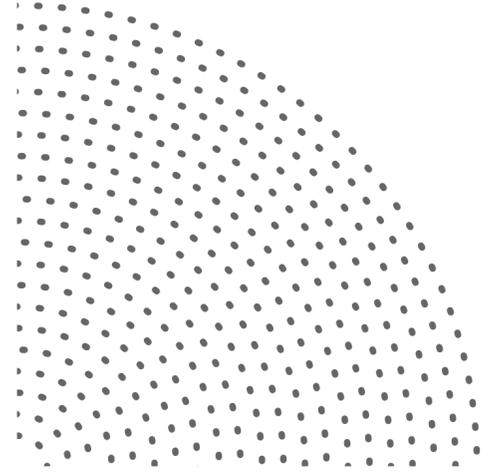


Shopping

Your Guide

A handy guide to department stores, supermarkets and retail stores in Japan





Introduction

Tokyo offers a wealth of shopping venues from low-end 100 yen shops to luxury brands.

Japan is renowned for carrying high-quality goods no matter the item, and there are plenty of options to choose from regardless of your budget.

This playbook will cover everything from where you can source food items to electronics to home goods and beyond.

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Groceries

You can source both local and international food products at a wide variety of places including local grocery stores, international grocery stores, natural foods stores, farmers markets, department stores, 24/7 convenience stores, and online.

In general, grocery stores and convenience stores can be found at local train stations, allowing you to do your shopping within a 5-10 minute walk of your home. Grocery stores that carry international food products tend to be located at major stations or in international neighborhoods, and are easily accessible, even if one is not at your local station.

Alcohol is sold at just about every convenience, drug, and grocery store in Tokyo, but there are also designated liquor shops with both local and imported wines as well as sake.

Here are some popular international grocery stores where you can find imported food products (such as wine and cheese) and home goods (these stores also offer delivery services by telephone and online):

American grocery store and household products

National Azabu

International foods and household products

Nissin World Delicatessen

Costco*

Costco

*located outside Tokyo in Kawasaki

Here are some grocery stores that carry natural food products, supplements, and items suitable for people who are vegan or have dietary needs such as gluten intolerance:

[Bio C'Bon](#)

French organic foods store that carries many European bio products

[Picard Frozen](#)

French frozen foods

[Natural House](#)

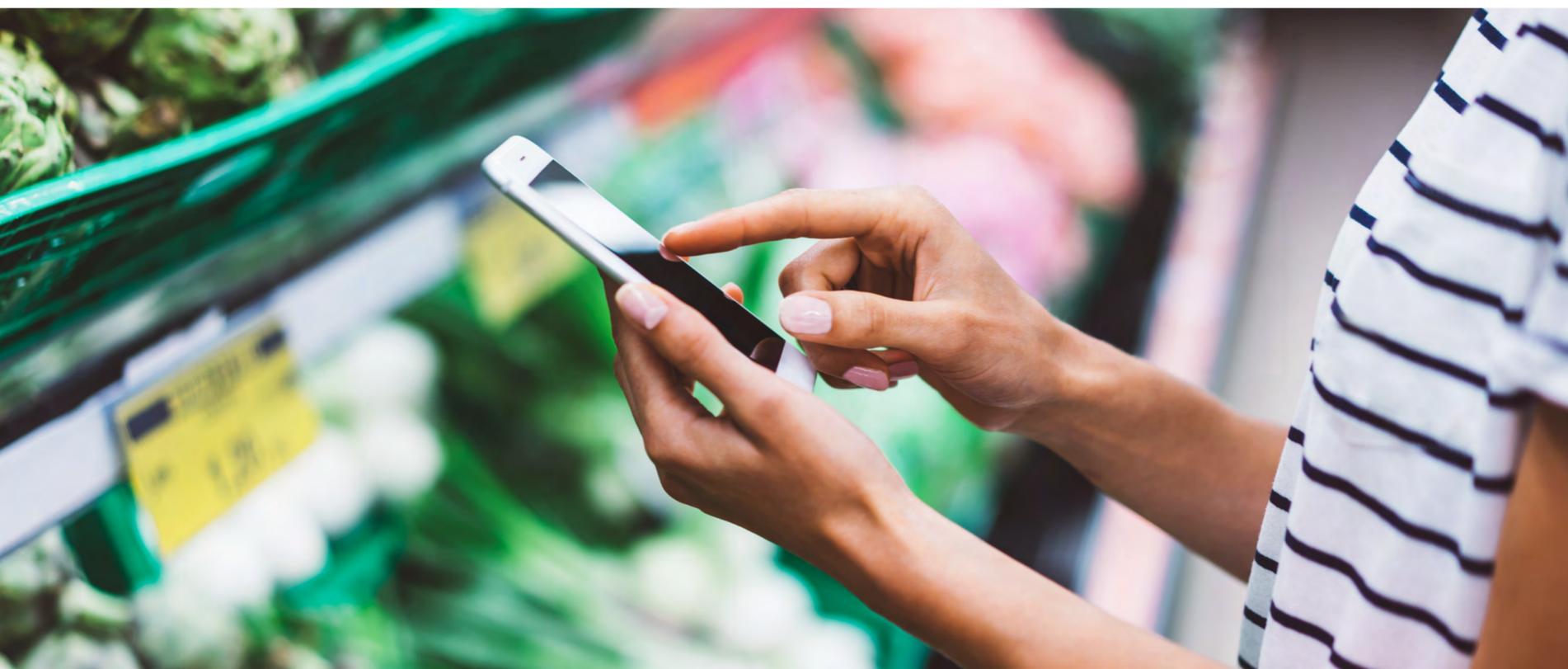
Organic foods store with local and imported products

[Natural Mart](#)

Organic and vegan products

While not quite as popular as it is in Western countries, there are online grocery stores in Tokyo. Here is a full list of them:

[Online Grocery Shopping in Japan](#)



Markets (farmers & general)

Many neighborhoods have specialty markets such as fish markets, fruit and vegetable stands, butcher shops, and bakeries. You may find that butcher shops in Japan offer different cuts and kinds of meat, and Japanese cuts typically contain a higher fat content and come from different parts of the animal.

Fish markets

[Tsukiji Outer Market](#)

Japan is also known for its world-renowned bakeries featuring authentic French pastries and breads as well as unique Japanese rolls and sweets. Shun refers to using the appropriate seasonal produce for the freshest and best-tasting ingredients.

List of the seasonal fruits, vegetables, and seafood in Japan

[Seasonal Ingredients in Japan](#)

Additionally, there are numerous weekend farmers markets held across the city. These host stalls selling fresh produce from various vendors throughout Japan, plants, and flowers, as well as food trucks and flea markets. Here are some popular and easily accessible farmers markets:

[Farmers Market @ UNU](#)

[Hills Marche](#)

[Yebisu Marché](#)



Convenience Stores

Convenience stores (konbini) that operate 24 hours a day are everywhere; you can find one on almost every block in Tokyo.

The three most popular convenience stores are 7-Eleven, FamilyMart, and Lawson. All carry the same variety of products including food, drinks, home supplies, toiletries, stationery, and batteries. In addition, convenience stores have ATMs, printers/copiers, and kiosks where you can buy tickets for concerts and so on. You can also pay your utility, phone, and tax bills, as well as mail out letters.



Convenience stores

Drug Stores

The three primary categories of items you can find in drug stores in Japan are personal hygiene products and cosmetics, home cleaning supplies, and medicine.

Most drug stores also have a pharmacy where you can fill prescriptions. While Japanese drug stores carry all of the products you would need for personal and home care, some people like to bring items such as toothpaste, laundry detergent, and medicine with them to Japan for personal comfort. You should also be aware of pharmacy operating hours as prescription windows are not 24/7.

For more information on medications and a checklist of what to bring with you to Japan, visit the Relocation playbook.

Matsumotokiyoshi

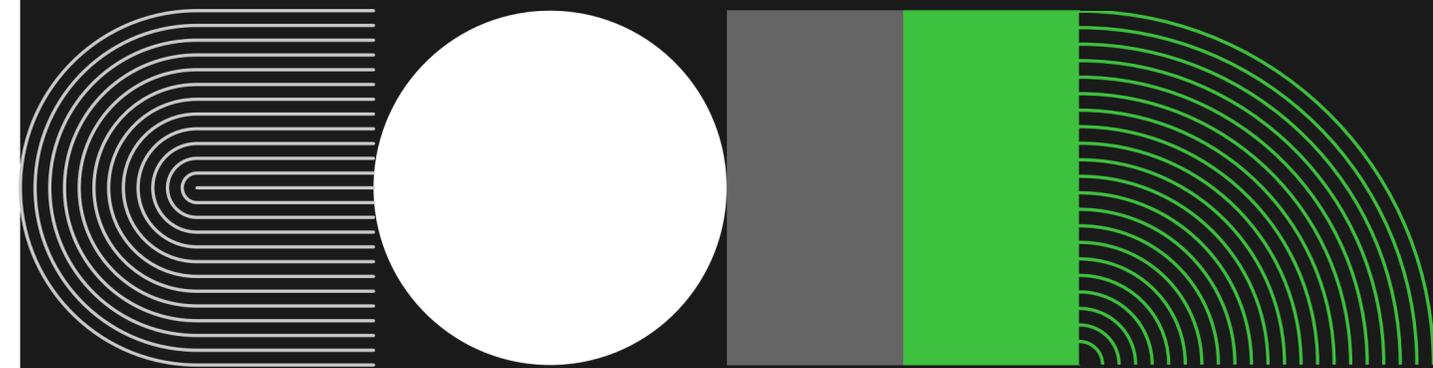
Matsumotokiyoshi is a chain drug store that is popular throughout Japan. It sells medicine, cosmetic products, and daily necessities while also offering free Wi-Fi and English-speaking services to assist foreign customers.

Here is a list of additional common drug stores

Sugiyakkyoku

Sun Drug

Tomod's



Department Stores

From prepared Japanese foods and delicacies to clothing and cosmetics, Japan's world-class department stores have it all.

They carry a similar range of products to their Western counterparts. Floors are organized; you tend to find bustling food markets, gourmet delis, and beautiful selections of sweet and savory goodies in the basement floors, women's cosmetics and accessories on the first two floors, clothing and home interiors on the upper floors, and a selection of international restaurants on the top floors. Japanese department stores carry both high-quality Japanese products and renowned international brands and labels.

Here is a list of renowned department stores in Tokyo

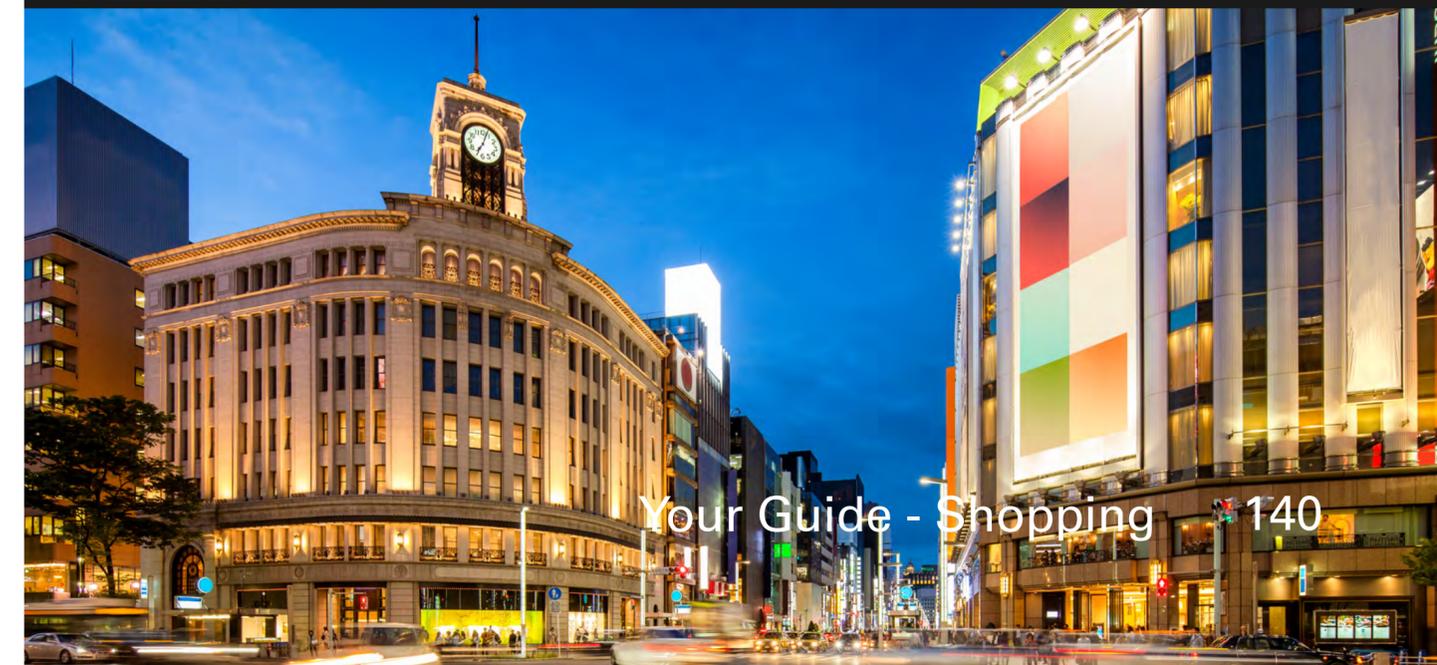
[Mitsukoshi \(Ginza\)](#)

[Isetan \(Shinjuku\)](#)

[Takashimaya \(Shinjuku\)](#)

Relevant Video

[Navigating the Levels \[Department Stores\] - #TOKYO \[Japan\]](#)



Home Goods Stores

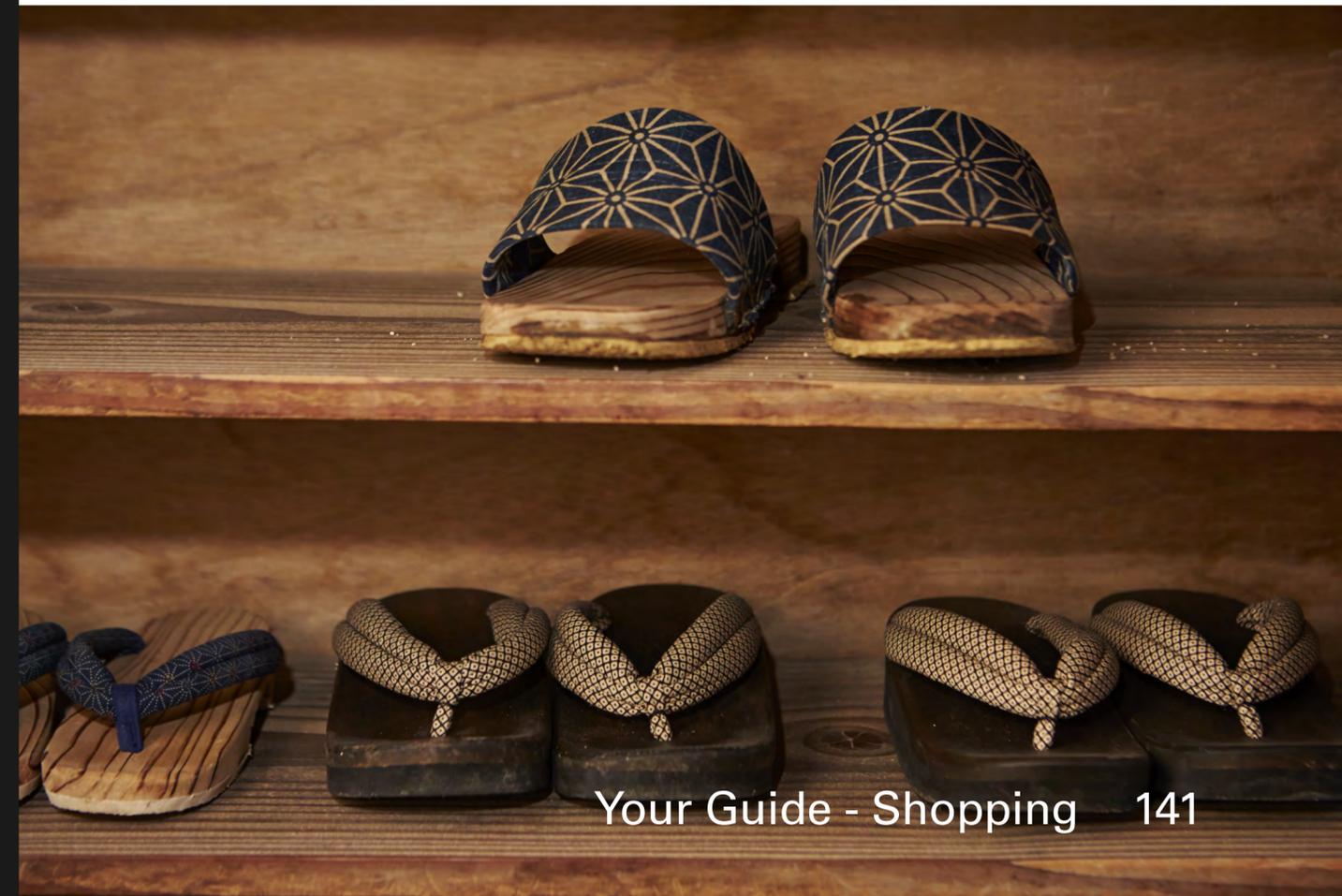
Whether you are setting up your new home or adding new furnishings to your existing one, Japanese home goods stores offer it all.

Maximizing space in Tokyo apartments is essential and these stores offer products to help you do so.

If you are ever in need of toolkits, stationery, craft supplies, home exercise gear, or any home goods products, these stores carry what you are looking for:

[Tokyu Hands](#)

[Olympic](#)



Electronics Stores

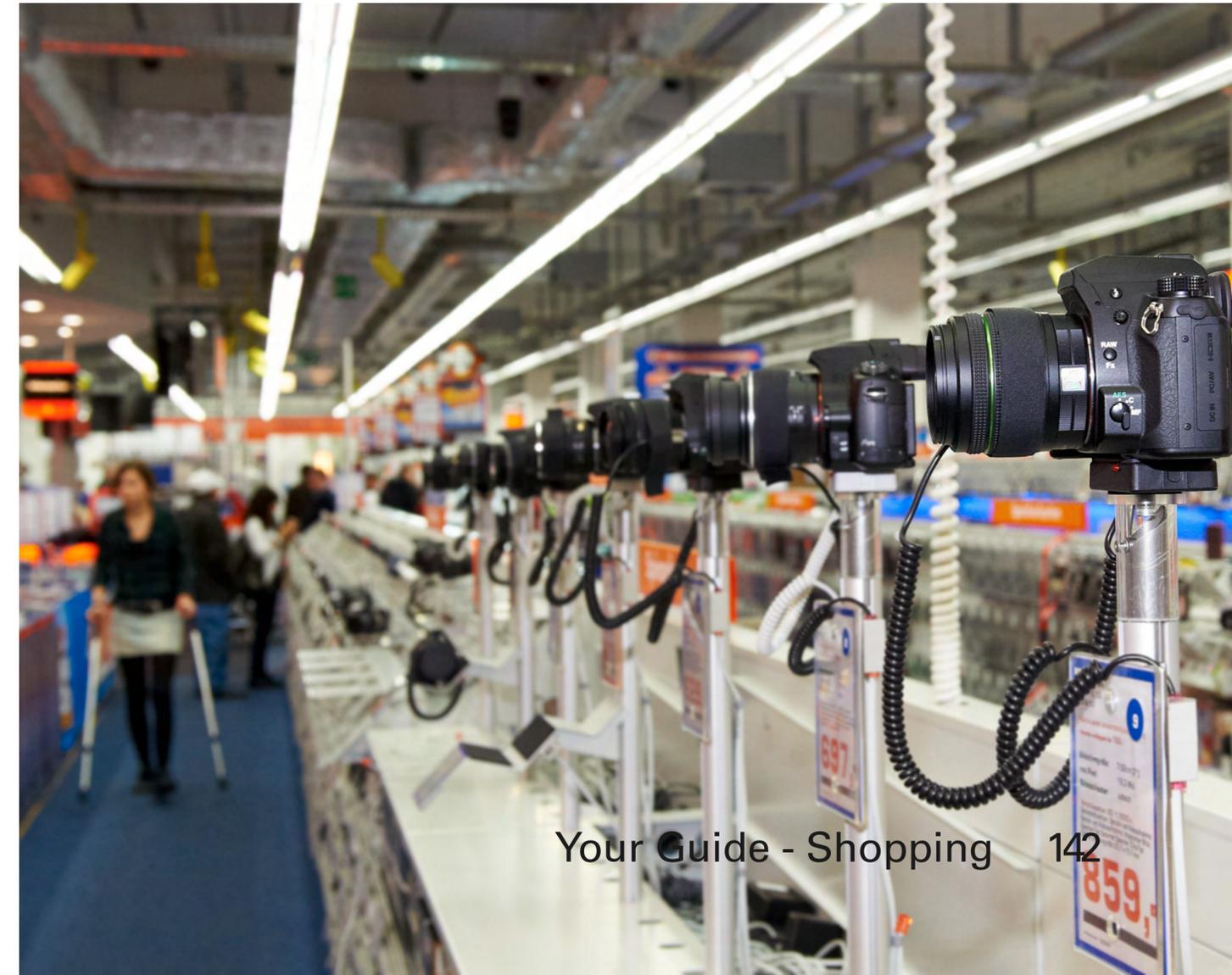
There are various electronics franchises throughout Japan that carry a wide range of products including computers, televisions, cell phones, and household appliances such as refrigerators, washing machines, and rice cookers.

These large stores also sell jewelry, alcohol, and other goods. Akihabara, Ikebukuro, and Shinjuku are hubs for electronics but there are large electronic stores throughout Tokyo especially near large train stations. To the right is a list of popular electronic stores in Japan.

[Yodobashi Camera](#)

[Bic Camera](#)

[Yamada Denki](#)



Other Noteworthy Shops

Don Quijote is a great one-stop shop for products from food and beverages to clothing to home appliances. It is also a low-cost option compared to some other home goods stores such as Tokyu Hands. Additionally, it is a great store for unique items that are not sold in most stores such as halloween costumes, party materials, and gag gifts. There are 46 branches in the 23 wards, a few of which are "Picasso" stores under the Don Quijote parent company.

[Don Quijote](#)

Amazon's Japan site features many of the same items that you would find in other countries with additional products unique to Japan. However, some global items such as imported leather or meat may be taxed or unable to ship to Japan. Amazon Japan is very convenient and boasts fast shipping times with even same-day delivery at an additional cost.

[Amazon Japan](#)



100 yen Shops

If you are looking for products of no particular brand, 100 yen shops are a great option.

Some stores are simply called "100 yen shop" while others have a name, such as the popular chain, Daiso. The range of items offered at these stores is astonishing, from food, stationery, and clothing to toys, homeware, and gardening equipment. All items are priced at ¥100 plus consumption tax (10%) unless otherwise stated.



Daiso

Vending Machines

With one vending machine (jidōhanbaiki) per an estimated 40 people, Japan has one of the world's highest densities of vending machines, and the machines have become somewhat of a phenomenon.

They sell not only cold and hot drinks but also canned soup, ice cream, and other snacks. Some machines also might carry non-food related items such as masks or neckties. A typical vending machine accepts payments in 10, 50, 100 and 500 yen coins, as well as 1,000 yen bills. When paying by cash, insert the money first before making your selection. Payment by IC cards, such as Suica, is becoming more popular.



Retail

Tokyo is well known for its shopping and fashion scenes, from high-end fashion to Harajuku streetwear.

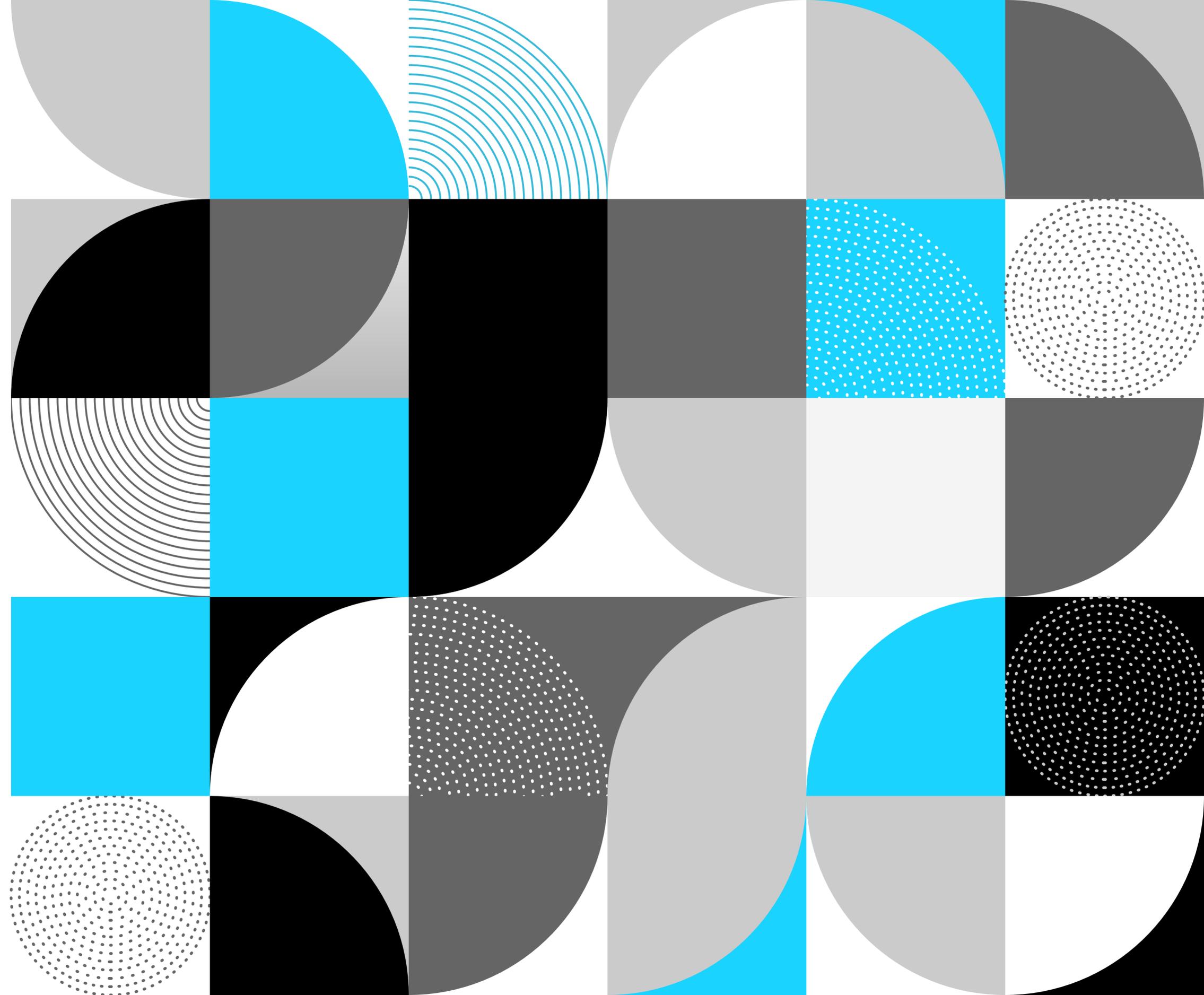
Omotesando, Roppongi Hills, and Ginza offer robust high-end fashion shops that carry both Japanese and international brands. Shibuya and Harajuku, on the other hand, are home to everyday fashion and streetwear shops. In addition to clothing, you can also find souvenir shops, lifestyle and hobby shops, and jewelry stores. Neighborhoods such as Shimokitazawa and Koenji are trendier and younger, with vintage shops and thrift stores.



Social & Support

Your Guide

A handy guide to places of worship, clubs and societies, and LGBTQ resources in Japan





Introduction

Creating connections is essential in building a home in Japan. Thankfully, Tokyo has a highly vibrant, diverse, and welcoming international community.

Whether you want to meet new people or join cultural groups related to your home country, it is possible. There are plenty of resources available to assist your integration into the largest city in the world.

As there are so many community groups it is not practical to list every one; instead we will provide a brief overview and point you to online resources that provide great coverage on the different community groups and organizations in Tokyo for further information.

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Clubs and Societies

Tokyo and Yokohama have members-only clubs for foreign residents.

Many of these clubs offer facilities including conference rooms, banquet halls, restaurants, fitness gyms, sports facilities, and libraries, as well as a diverse range of cultural, recreational, and business activities.

Overview on expat community groups in Tokyo

[Expats Community in Tokyo: Meetup Opportunities for Foreigners](#)

Embassies

There are 153 embassies in Japan and all of them are located in Tokyo. When it comes to registering a new passport, receiving a notary or support on medical and legal assistance, or other instances when you require the services of your home country, please contact the appropriate embassy. Below is a full list of the embassies in Tokyo.

Directory of Embassies in Tokyo

[Foreign Embassies in Tokyo](#)



Chamber of Commerces

While it might be assumed that chambers of commerce are only for business, many also provide a great resource to network, make new friends, and discover the culture of Japan. They tend to have strong community connections, particularly among people looking to get involved in business and social groups. The American Chamber of Commerce and British Chamber of Commerce are the largest organizations, and chambers offer joint events over the course of the year. Below you can find a full list of countries with Chambers of Commerce in Japan.

List of Chambers of Commerce in Japan

[Chambers of Commerce in Japan \(Foreign & Domestic\)](#)

Other networking organizations

Whether you are looking for friends to explore the city, activities to join based on your interests, or women's organizations, these platforms provide opportunities for you to connect.

[InterNations](#)

a global online network of expats with communities in major cities including Tokyo

[FEW Japan](#)

a collective of globally-minded, English-speaking women who motivate, inspire, and connect with one another through powerful programming, intimate gatherings, and a constant exchange of ideas.

[Meetup.com](#)

an online platform for connecting people in your city based on similar interests. It also hosts online and in-person events.

Places of Worship

The dominant religion in Japan is Shintoism, but there are many places of worship in Tokyo other than Shinto shrines.

Tokyo caters to a wide variety of major religions and faiths, and there are places that offer services in English and Japanese. Please use the link to the right to view a list of places of worship in Tokyo.



List of places of worship in Tokyo

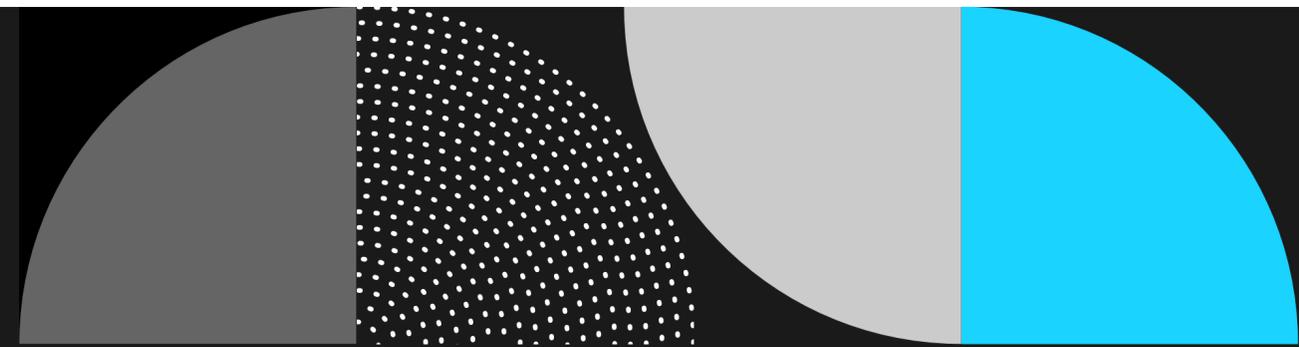
[List of Churches, Mosques and Synagogues in Tokyo](#)

LGBTQ

The LGBTQ community in Tokyo is considered one of the largest in Asia and there are resources and organizations that are accessible. Shinjuku Nichome is Tokyo's LGBTQ district, home to bars, cafes, and bookshops catered to the community.

Yoyogi Park hosts a pride parade in the spring which you can find more information about here

[Tokyo Rainbow Pride](#)



LGBTQ Legal Partnership & Visas

Japan is the only G-7 country that has not legalized same-sex marriage. For couples who are legally married outside of Japan, spouses can receive a Designated Activities visa (instead of a Spouse visa). The visa does not include a work permit, but spouses can apply for a special work permit that allows up to 28 hours of work per week (which is the same amount allotted for a Spouse visa).

There are benefits that foreign residents can receive in recognition of same-sex marriage that are not available to natives. As of 2021, there are 12 wards in Tokyo that legally issue same-sex union certificates (pātonāshippu sensei seido). Minato-ku and Shibuya-ku are common neighborhoods that we recommended in the Housing playbook for foreign residents which are included in those 12 wards. Additionally, the ward Adachi-ku started recognizing biological and adopted children of same-sex partners as family members in April of 2021.

While this legal union is not the same as same-sex marriage, it does offer benefits in civil matters such as housing, hospital visitation rights, and child care centers. If you have a same-sex marriage certificate from abroad that is translated into Japanese, you may be able to receive the benefits of a legal marriage when presented to your ward office. Note that this certificate is only available to same-sex couples with two non-Japanese partners. For more information on LGBTQ rights and a full list of prefectures and wards that offer same-sex unions, please visit the links below:

Wikipedia

[LGBT rights in Japan](#)

Wikipedia

[Recognition of same-sex unions in Japan](#)

LGBTQ-friendly Real Estate Agents

Despite some members of the LGBTQ community reporting difficulties or even discrimination when looking to rent or buy property in Japan, there has been significant progress in this area. With organizations such as Iris and LLAN (Lawyers for LGBT & Allies Network) renting an apartment or house has become easier for LGBTQ couples and families. Many foreign-friendly real estate agencies we recommended in the Housing playbook such as Ken. Corp and Plaza Homes also provide support for LGBTQ couples.

Real estate agencies:

[IRIS LGBT](#)

[Ken. Corp](#)

[LLAN](#)

[Plaza Homes](#)

Gender

Legal documents including residence cards will state sex as male or female and do not have an "other" option. Some foreign non-binary residents experience difficulty with gender-segregated scenarios including Japanese language nuances used differently by men and women, and visiting public onsen (hot springs) that are separated into male and female areas.

[Diversity and Inclusion - woven by toyota](#)

LGBTQ Resources

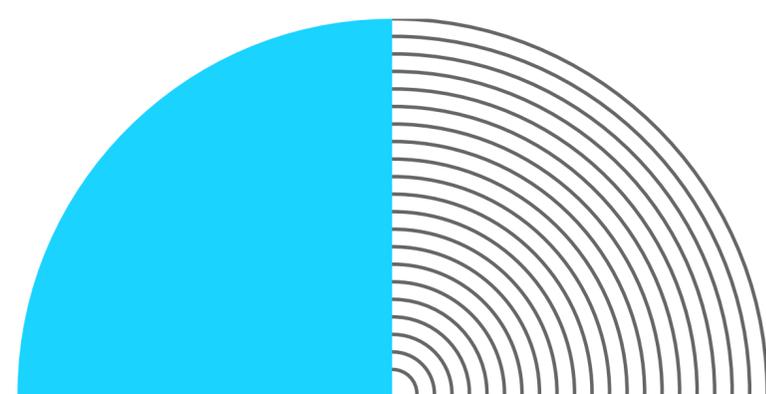
[Stonewall Japan](#)

[Pride House Tokyo](#)

[Fruits in Suits](#)

[Nijiuro Diversity](#)

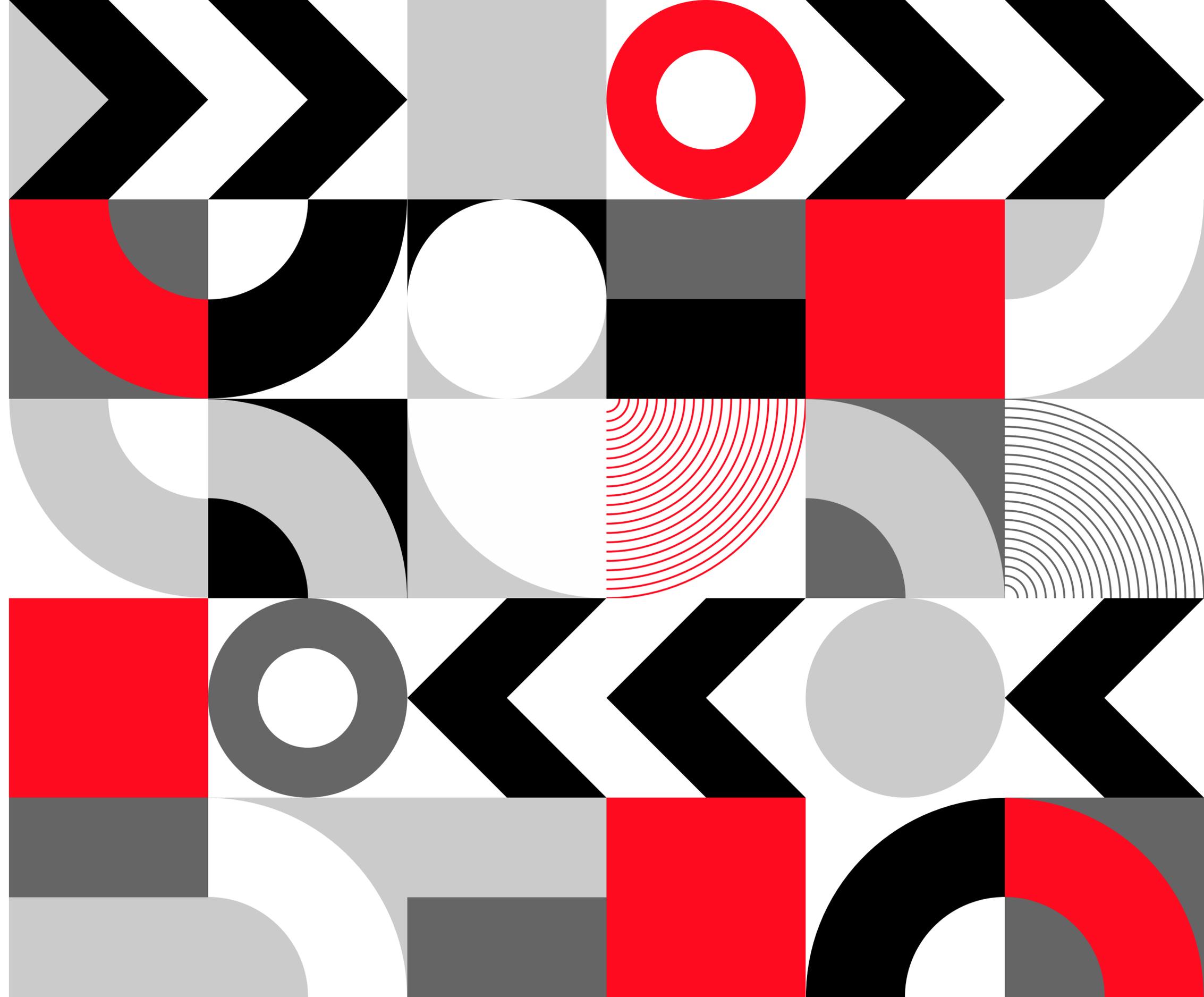
[Shirakaba Clinic](#)

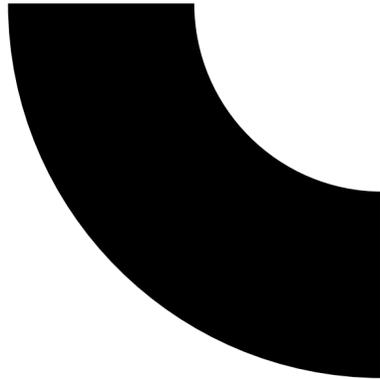


Transport

Your Guide

A handy guide to public and private transportation in Japan





Introduction

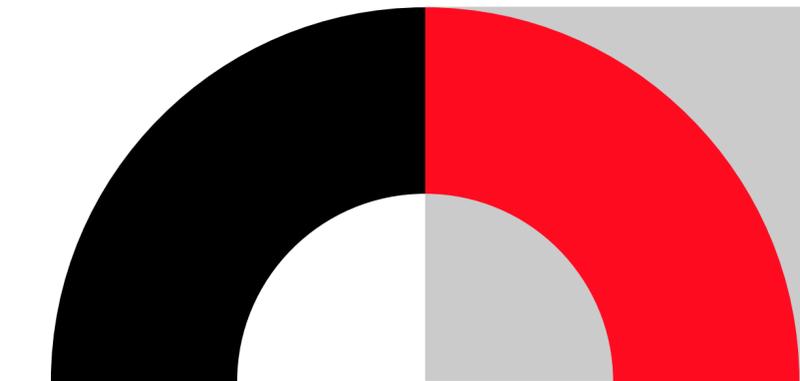
Whether you are traveling near or far, Japan is known for their high speed bullet trains (shinkansen) and extremely punctual public transportation systems.

Often it is also quicker, cheaper, and more convenient than driving. It can be a joy to use, though it can be crowded at peak hours. Even with the millions of passengers using the system each day, it is a timely, safe, and convenient way to get around.

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Trains

Trains in Tokyo operate both underground and above ground. Tokyo is a huge sprawling city but it's served by one of the world's best public transport systems. The following is an overview of the rail systems operating in Tokyo and how to get around.



The 2 Subway Systems in Tokyo: Tokyo Metro and Toei

They are pretty well interlinked, so you do not really have to worry about which one you are on.

The only time you really have to think about it is when purchasing an individual ticket. To avoid thinking about this, we recommend either buying a subway pass or prepaid card (for details on both, see below).

 Tokyo Metro

 Toei Subway System

JR Trains in Tokyo

Several overland train lines also run through, around, and to/from Tokyo. These two lines might be used most frequently by foreign workers and expats:

 JR Yamanote Line

JR Yamanote Line: Commonly known as the JR Loop Line or Loop Line, this line runs around central Tokyo and connects most of the major hubs (the main exceptions are Roppongi and Akasaka).

 JR Chuo Line

JR Chuo Line: This line cuts across Tokyo, running roughly east to west. It is useful for moving from Shinjuku Station to Tokyo Station.

To ride JR trains in Tokyo, you can buy an individual ticket, use a Tokyo Combination Ticket, or use a prepaid IC card like Suica or Pasma.

JR East [East Japan Railway Company](#)

Download

This resource provides a detailed map of the Tokyo train system:

[Major railway and Subway Route Map: Metropolitan Area](#)

Using subways and trains with a prepaid IC card (Pasmo or Suica)

By far the easiest and best way to use Tokyo's subways and trains is with a Pasmo or Suica card.

You can purchase a card at any JR or Metro station for ¥2,000, which is broken down into a ¥500 deposit for the card and ¥1,500 for travel fares. Simply swipe the card over the reader on the ticket gates when you're entering and leaving the system.

The fare will be deducted automatically from your card and the machine will show the remaining balance. The Pasmo and Suica operate in the same way, but Pasmo is sold at subway stations and Suica is sold at JR stations.



iPhone support is now available for Pasmo users and is accessible as an Apple Wallet accessory, and it even functions when your phone has run out of battery.

For details on how to buy one of these cards:

[Tokyo Smart Cards: Pasmo and Suica](#)



Commuter Passes

The monthly commuter pass (teikiken) is very popular among students and office workers in Japan as it is a discounted train and bus pass from your local station to your office. You can also use it on weekends if traveling along the same route. These passes can be purchased at JR stations at the tickets and information desk or at the electronic ticket machine located at each gate. You will need to provide the origin station, transfer station(s), and the final destination as well as your:

- Name
- Gender
- Date of birth
- Phone number



Tips for riding the subways and trains in Tokyo

- Avoid riding subways and trains during rush hour (7.30am-9.30am and 5pm-8pm) as trains are generally extremely crowded and uncomfortable, particularly in summer due to the high heat and humidity.
- Use the JR Yamanote Line to move to nearby hubs around central Tokyo.
- Use the subways to cross the city or access hubs on opposite sides of the city.
- If you are buying single tickets and cannot figure out the fare for your destination, simply buy the cheapest ticket. When you get to your destination, put the ticket in the fare adjustment machine, insert the additional fare, and use the new ticket you'll be issued to pass through the ticket gates.

Tokyo Buses

Tokyo buses are inexpensive, efficient, and can take you to locations that would otherwise require taking more than one train to reach.

The fare to ride any short or long distance within the city is typically around ¥210 and you can even use your Pasma or Suica card to pay. The downsides to taking a bus rather than a train are that buses come less frequently (perhaps 2–3 times per hour) and are subject to traffic delays. Still, Tokyo's buses are inexpensive, extensive, and efficient.



Information about Tokyo buses and routes:
[Tokyo Buses](#)

Tokyo Taxis

Tokyo's taxis are an excellent way to get around the city, especially outside of rush hour or if you have to go to a place not close to a train or subway station.

Much like other forms of Japanese public transport, taxis are very clean and well maintained with many beginning to feature amenities such as touch-screen assistance and mobile phone chargers. However, they are not cheap. Like most cities around the world, simply raising your hand to call a taxi is the norm. While many drivers do not understand English, they are helpful. Often you only need to show them the written address to get where you want to go. Note that you should not try to open the door when getting in or out of a taxi; the doors are automatic. Ride-sharing services are not yet widespread in Japan, likely due to the popularity and convenience of public transport.

Tokyo taxi fare and payment methods

- All taxis accept cash, and some taxis also accept credit cards and IC cards.
- It is not necessary to tip the driver.
- The standard base fare for taxis in Tokyo is ¥410.
- As a general rule, it will cost around ¥3,500 to cross Tokyo in a taxi (for example, from Tokyo Station to Shinjuku Station).
- If applicable, taxi drivers will often ask for your preference of toll roads or local roads when traveling longer distances.

Tokyo Airport Transfer

Here are details on the best ways to get from Narita and Haneda airports to Tokyo.

Narita Airport Transfer

Narita International Airport is about 60 kilometers, or 37 miles, northeast of Tokyo, making it less convenient to Tokyo than is Haneda. It is very expensive to take a taxi to the city. The best option is the JR N'Ex (Narita Express). This train can take you to many central stations, including Tokyo, Shinagawa, and Shinjuku.

Another option is the Keisei Skyliner, which takes you to Ueno Station, only four stops from Tokyo Station on the JR Yamanote Line. There are also Limousine Buses between Narita and various points in Tokyo.

What to do when arriving at Narita:

[Arriving at Tokyo's Narita International Airport](#)

Haneda Airport Transfer

Haneda (Tokyo International Airport) is about 14 kilometers, or 8 miles, south of central Tokyo, making it more convenient to the city than Narita Airport; Haneda is cheaper, easier, and faster.

The JR Yamanote Line and Keikyu Line run between the airport and Tokyo.

Taxis are also a good option, particularly outside of rush hour or on weekends or when traveling with a lot of luggage.

What to do when arriving at Haneda:

[Arriving at Tokyo's Haneda International Airport](#)



Driving in Japan

If you have an international driver's license and a foreign driver's license that is at least three months old and is approved by the Japanese authorities, you can hire or buy a car in Japan.

To have your foreign license approved by Japanese authorities you must have a Japanese translation of it that is prepared by an entity specified by law. These can be done through the Japanese Automobile Federation, or the embassy or consulate of the country in which the license is from.

Hiring, rather than owning, a car is becoming a cheaper option and is worth considering if you are a resident in Japan. Car hire companies can be found near major railway stations and ferry terminals in the big cities. Woven also offers a Toyota rent-a-car benefit for employees with car rentals for up to ¥100,000 per year. Cars in Japan drive on the left, with the steering wheel on the right of the vehicle.



There are few toll roads in Japan, apart from the mostly two-lane expressways, which are your best bet for getting anywhere quickly. Unless you have an ETC (Electronic Toll Collection) unit and card in your vehicle, you will need to stop at the toll barrier as you enter a Japanese expressway and take

When you exit the expressway, produce the ticket and pay the toll in cash or using a pre-paid card (different from an ETC card), which can be purchased at service areas on expressways.

Throughout Japan's road network are service areas that provide restaurants, convenience stores, gasoline pumps, overnight parking, toilets, and maps.

[Getting A Driving License In Japan](#)



Car Insurance in Japan

All drivers in Japan must have at least third party insurance.

You must carry your car insurance documentation (hoken-shomeisho) and driving license with you when driving. Fully comprehensive insurance at various levels is also available and recommended. If you do have a serious accident involving the hospitalization or death of a third party or serious damage to another vehicle or property, the claims on your insurance will be large, if not catastrophic.



Driver's License

You can drive using a foreign license with an official translation (depending on your country) or an International Driver's License during your first year of residence in Japan, but you must get a Japanese driver's license before the 2nd year.

To transfer to a Japanese driver's license, you need to submit the required documents to your Prefectural Driver's License Center.

氏名	日本花子	平成00年00月00日生
住所	〇〇市〇〇町〇丁目〇番地	
交付	令和00年00月00日 12345	
有効期限	20xx年(令和00年)00月00日まで有効	
免許の条件等	中型車は中型車(8t)に限る	
優良	優良	
番号	第 123456789000 号	
二種	令和00年00月00日	種別
他	令和00年00月00日	中型原付
二種	令和00年00月00日	---

運転免許証



〇〇県公安委員会

If the country in which your license was issued does not have a mutual agreement with the Japan Automobile Federation, you must take a Japanese driving test.

Japan Automobile Federation website (English):

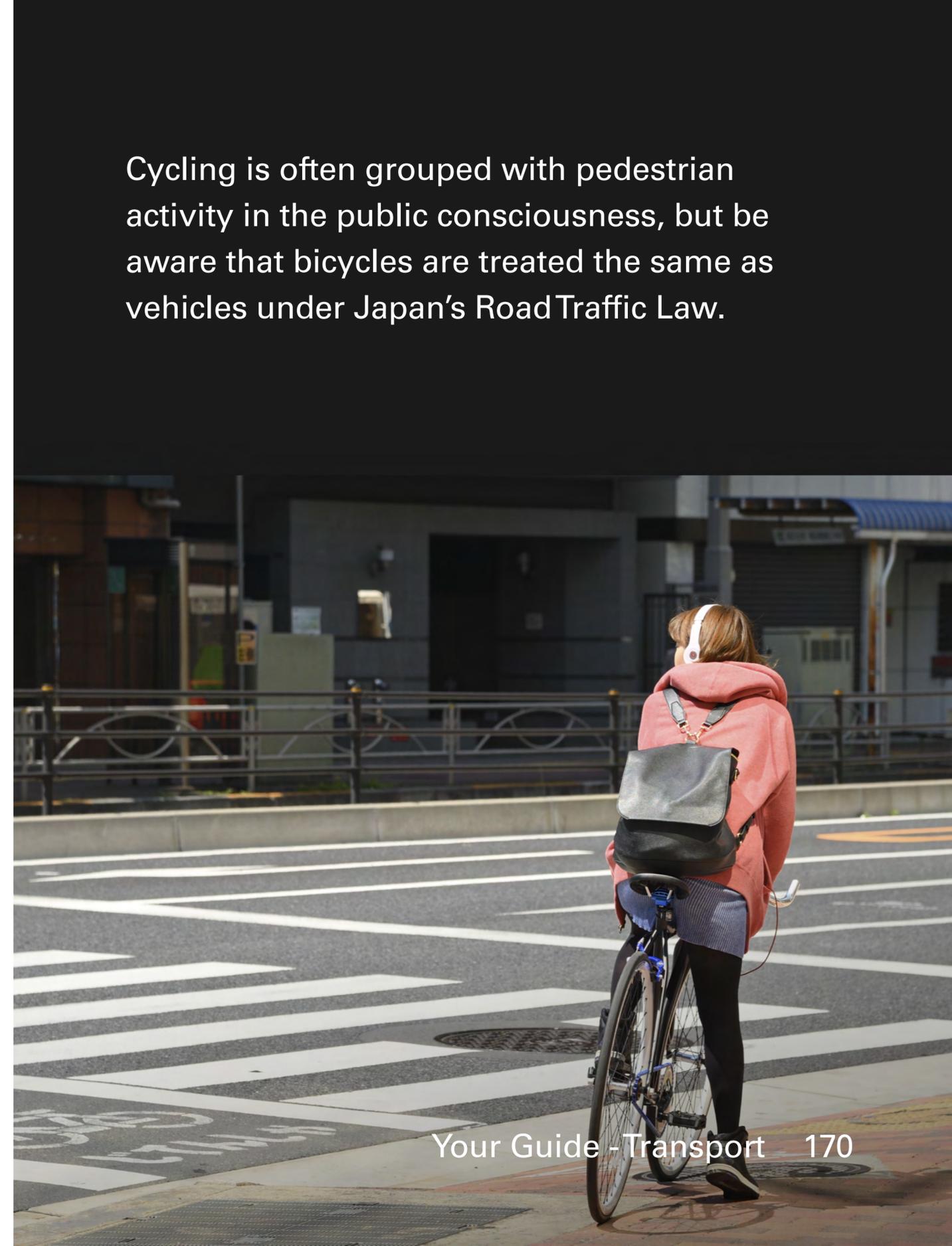
[Japan Automobile Federation \(JAF\)](#)

Riding a Bicycle in Tokyo

Bicycles, especially the ubiquitous *mama-chari* (a single-gear, often electric, bike with a basket and rack), are a convenient form of transportation in Japan.

They are ideal for running errands and making short trips in urban areas. Many people in Tokyo ride bicycles to get around the city, so there are many bicycle shops where you can purchase and register a bicycle.

Cycling is often grouped with pedestrian activity in the public consciousness, but be aware that bicycles are treated the same as vehicles under Japan's Road Traffic Law.



Bicycle parking

Bicycle parking tends to be strict in most areas of Tokyo, especially near major stations.

Free or inexpensive bicycle parking areas are available near stations and shopping areas. Those charging a fee range from hourly-based racks lining sidewalks to ticketed garage-type lots and underground automated storage systems.

Bicycles are not allowed on public transportation, but some train lines will allow foldable bicycles to be carried on in a special bike bag.

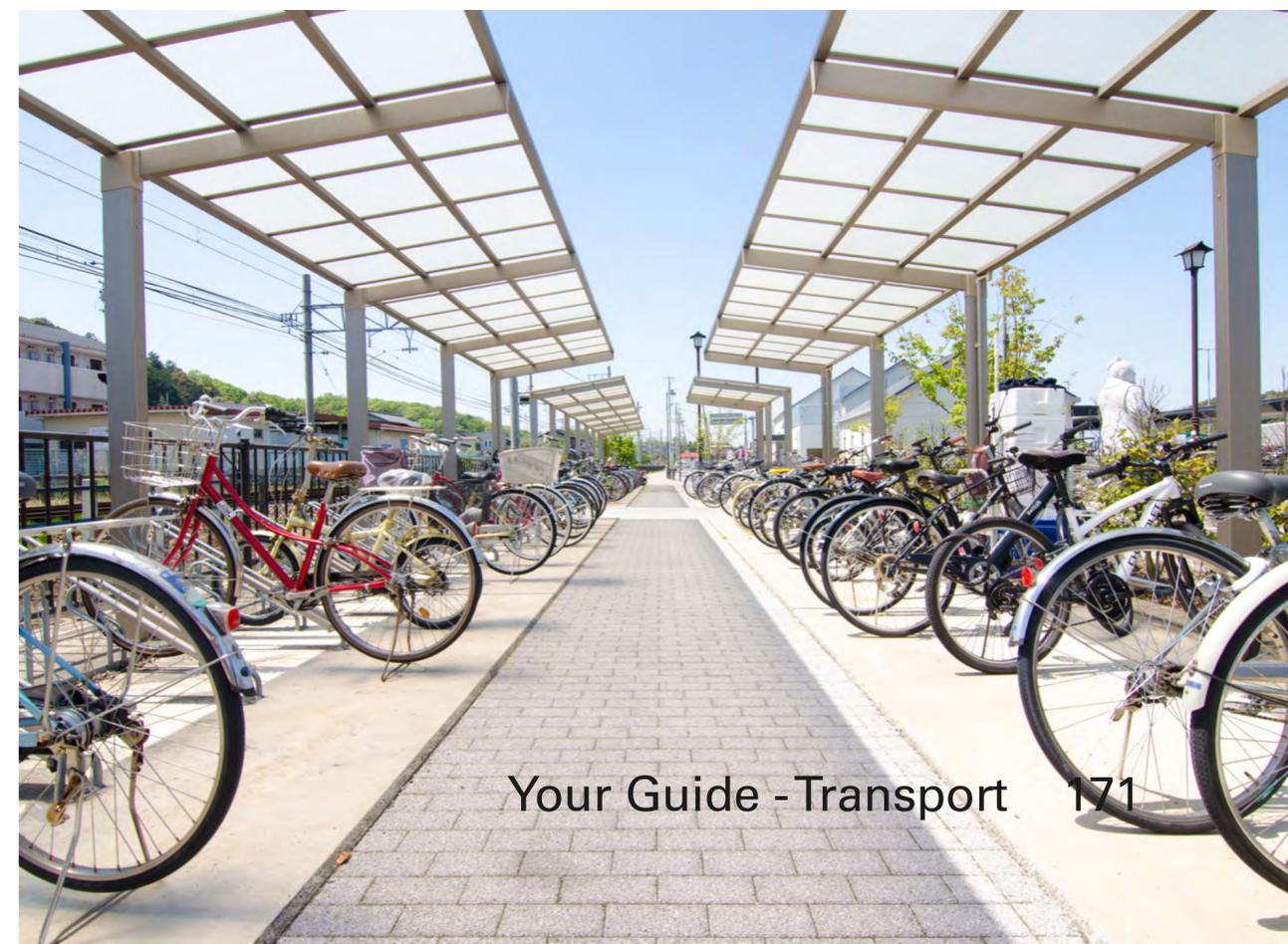
There is bicycle parking available at the woven by toyota office for a rate of ¥250/6 hours. Commuting by car is not allowed.

Bicycle licence

Bicycle registration is something you might not be used to back in your home country. After purchasing a bicycle, you are legally obligated to register your bike.

Overview on shops, license & insurance:

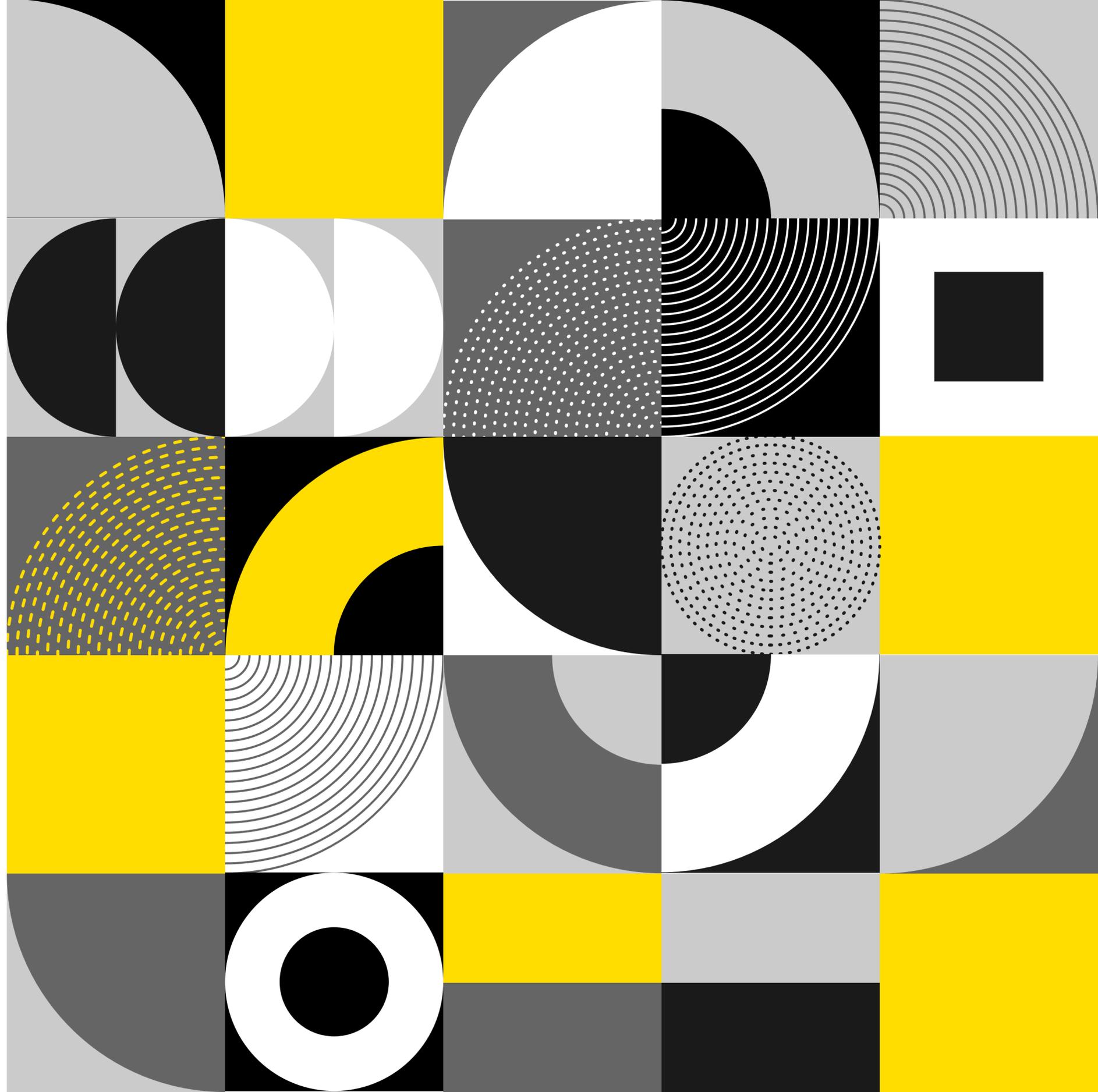
[A Beginner's Guide to Cycling in Tokyo](#)

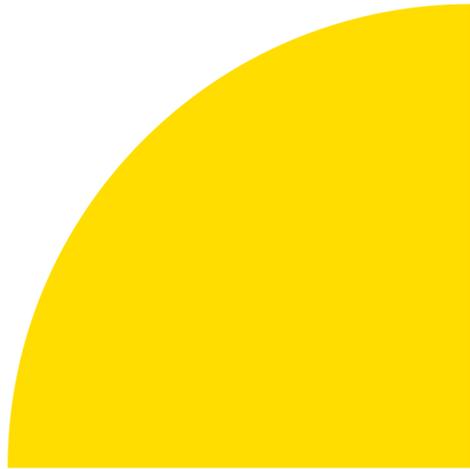


Utilities & Communication

Your Guide

A handy guide to setting up essential utilities like gas, water, and electricity in Japan





Introduction

Upon moving to Japan, some of the first things you need to do are to set up utilities, acquire a mobile phone, and familiarize yourself with the postal system.

Metered utilities in Japan include electricity (denki), gas (gasu), and water & sewerage (suidō).

If your landlord has not set them up for you, you will have to do so yourself when you move in by calling each company and providing them with your name, new address, and preferred billing method. Before moving out, you will also need to notify each company to terminate their respective utility service.

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Utilities & Home Setup

Electricity

Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) is the provider of electricity to the Kanto region, which includes Tokyo and Yokohama, as well as Yamanashi and parts of Shizuoka. We recommend that you apply over the phone before you move in, as the electricity is usually cut off if you do not register your information.

If your property has an electric boiler, you will need to contact the electric company and schedule an appointment with them. You can get the English brochure, "A Guide to Electricity," either by mail or on the website.

TEPCO

[Customer Center - Tokyo](#)

Water

The tap water in Japan has been treated and is safe for drinking. Between contracts, the water service may be cut off. If this is the case you can open it by turning the main handles counter-clockwise. Call to apply for service before you move in and inquire if you are in an area that accepts payment by credit card.

[Tokyo Metropolitan Waterworks Bureau
Customer Service Center \(23 wards only\)](#)



Gas

There are broadly two types of gas used in Japan: natural gas (toshi gasu), and liquid propane (LP Gas). Toshi gasu (literally "city gas") is the norm in urban and suburban areas, while LP Gas is used in rural areas where there is no gas mains line. You need to arrange an appointment with the gas company to open your account. While it is advisable to call in advance, it is usually possible to arrange this on the same day.

Some newer buildings may automatically shut off gas service in the event of an earthquake to prevent a gas leak. If this is the case, you may have to turn on the gas again after the earthquake.

[Tokyo Gas Customer Service](#)

Check the Tokyo Gas Emergency Procedures for what to do in the case of leaks, and earthquakes, and other emergencies.

[What to do when you smell gas](#)

Reading bills

Metered utilities include electricity (denki), gas (gasu), and water & sewerage (suidō). Utility bills can be paid automatically by credit card or bank transfer (furikomi) after filling out the appropriate application forms. Alternatively, a bill will arrive each month (every two months for water), which can be paid in cash at convenience stores, post offices, utility offices, and banks.

Tokyomate is a mail-collecting service for non-Japanese speakers that scans and translates Japanese mail, including bills, which you can then choose to have paid on your behalf.

Tokyomate

[Your Mail Made Digital](#)

Video

[Setting up and paying utilities in Tokyo](#)



Internet options

Most foreigner-targeted housing companies provide Internet as standard, whether as a line connection in your room/apartment, a shared Wi-Fi network, or a portable Wi-Fi device.

There are five common connection types for Internet in Japan.

- Fiber to the Home (FTTH)

Optical fiber transfers data at the rate of 10Mbps to 100Mbps, so it is extremely fast. Sometimes this service is limited in certain areas. Line construction work is necessary, so if you live in an apartment, you will need to get permission from the owner and the real estate agency.

- Cable Television Line (CATV)

By using Cable TV, you may be able to use the same line to connect to the Internet. Please check with the cable company to see if your area has Internet via CATV capability.

- ADSL

ADSL is a high-speed Internet that uses a fixed telephone line that can be installed quickly and economically.



Wi-Fi

The Wi-Fi environment is improving in Japan with the rapid increase of smartphone usage. Though some spots charge access fees, more and more places offer free Wi-Fi, such as airports, train stations, tourist attractions, convenience stores, cafes, and restaurants. There are also mobile applications and services to assist in finding and connecting to public networks.

Japan Connected-free Wi-Fi iOS/Android App

Offers easy search and easy connection to existing free Wi-Fi hotspots across Japan in over 130,000 locations.

[Japan Connected-free Wi-Fi](#)

Mobile phone carriers in Japan also offer packages that include home Internet service and mobile Wi-Fi. You can get a package when you apply for your mobile phone contract. For more information, continue to the section on mobile phones in Japan.

Internet service providers

[AsahiNet \(Asahi Net, Inc.\)](#)

[FUSION GOL \(Fusion Communications Corp.\)](#)

[KDDI/DION \(KDDI Corp.\)](#)

[NTT Communications Corp.](#)

[SonixNet ISP \(Assist Solutions Corp.\)](#)

Mobile Phones in Japan

Temporary mobile phone plans are available at Haneda and Narita airports at stalls like Softbank Global, and AnyFone Japan.

Japan's three main networks (SoftBank, docomo, and au) require you to sign a two-year contract, but it is possible to buy unlocked smartphones and longer-term SIM card contracts from electronics stores. The advantages of the unlocked smartphone include lower monthly charges, shorter contract terms, and potentially cheaper fees for early cancellation.

Simple prepaid phones are another option for those who are not living in Japan long enough to fulfill a two-year service contract. For more information on SIM providers and unlocked cell phones please visit the links below.

[Japan's Data and Voice SIM Providers Compared \(Long-Term Options\):](#)

[Where to Buy SIM Free \(unlocked\) Phones in Japan:](#)

When applying for a mobile phone with a two-year contract, you should bring your residence card (Zairyū Kādo) to show that you have a valid visa to be in Japan for longer than two years.

The three main mobile phone carriers, Softbank, docomo, and au, all provide 3G, 4G LTE, and increasingly 5G networks in and around Tokyo, so you should not experience service issues with any of them. However, the process of signing up to a mobile phone plan is not as straightforward as it is in many Western countries.

It is equally complicated and confusing for the Japanese. The following are some factors to be aware of:

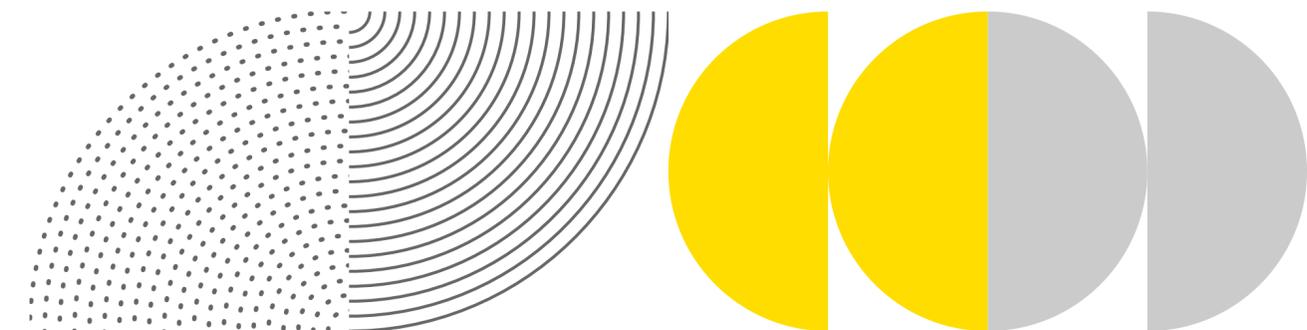
1. Mobile phone rate plans are notoriously complicated and opaque.
2. Calling plans are expensive compared to rates offered in many other countries. However as of January 1, 2021 the Japanese government has instructed all carriers to reduce their fees, which is slowly happening.
3. Major carriers require binding contracts and charge a contract termination fee.
4. There is a lot of paperwork required to sign a contract.

5. Language can be a barrier, depending on what store you visit, but the major electronic retailers, such as BIC Camera and Yodobashi Camera, provide English support, particularly in major shopping districts.

6. To apply and to pay your monthly bill, you will need a Japanese bank account or credit card.

For more information on the step by step process of obtaining a mobile phone plan, visit this resource: [Mobile Phone Process & Overview](#)

[Japanese Mobile Phones: Plans, Coverage, and Services](#)



Postal & Courier Services

The postal service in Japan is relatively inexpensive and very dependable.

There are post offices all over the country, including in many small towns and villages. The cost of posting a standard size letter of up to 25g domestically is ¥84, and for a postcard, ¥63. The Japan Post's English website is full of information on its services and prices. There are a number of commercial courier companies offering convenient and efficient services. These services can deliver suitcases to and from the airport, skis and snowboards to the ski lodge, and surfboards to the beach house, all at reasonable rates. There is also a special service called "cool-bin" for sending refrigerated and frozen goods. Many couriers allow you to select the date and time of your preferred delivery.

Domestic

[Japan Post](#)

[Yamato Transport Co., Ltd.](#)

[Sagawa Express Co., Ltd.](#)

International:

[DHL Japan, Inc.](#)

[EMS \(Japan Post\)](#)

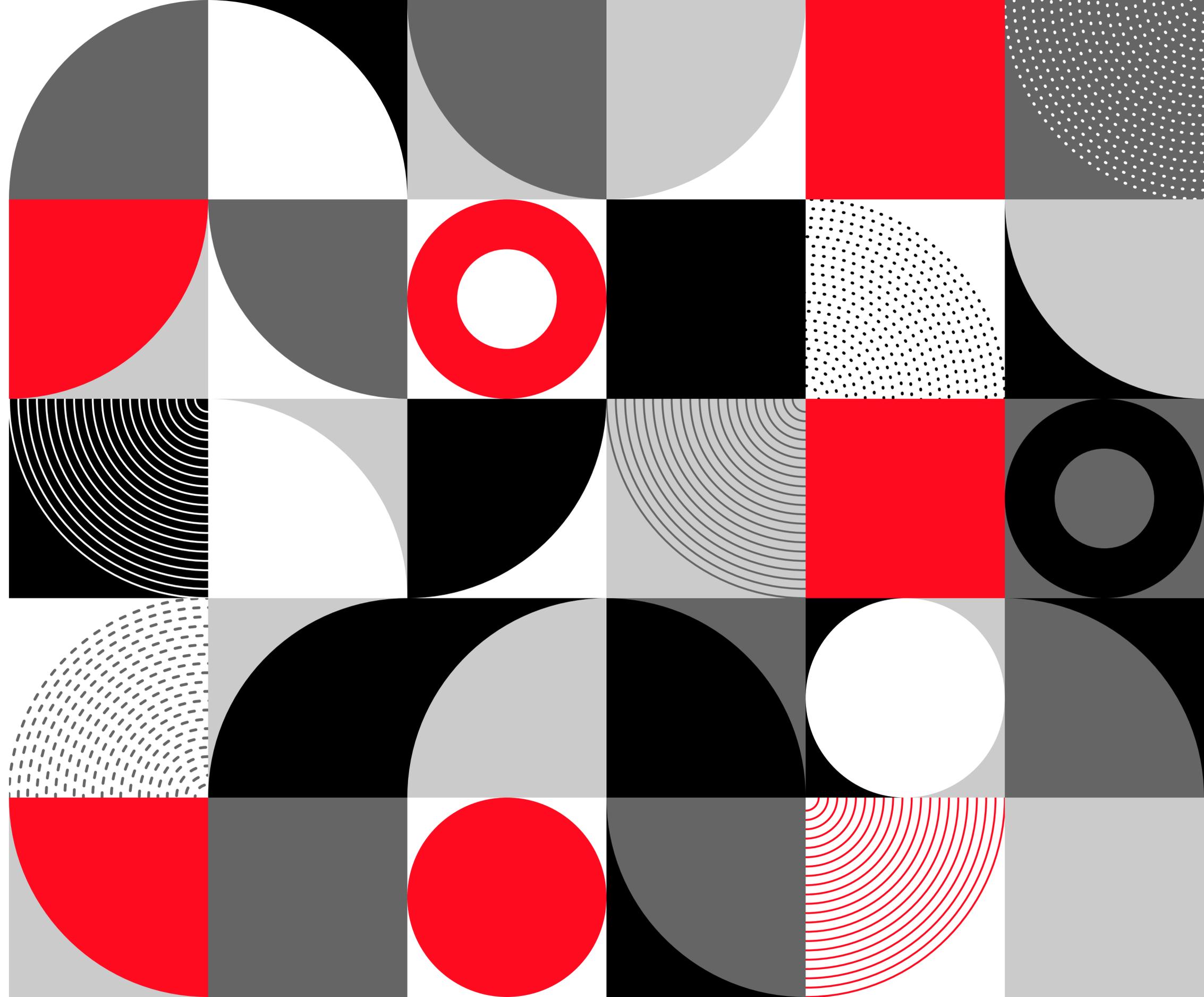
[FedEx Express](#)

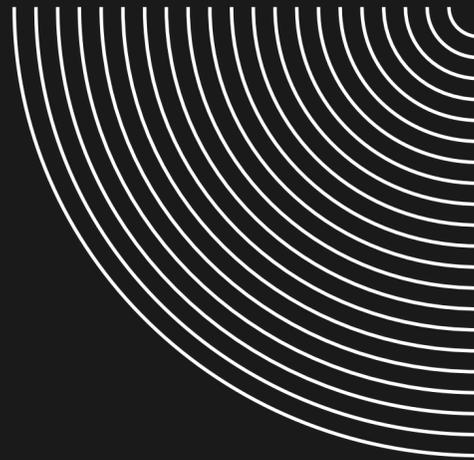
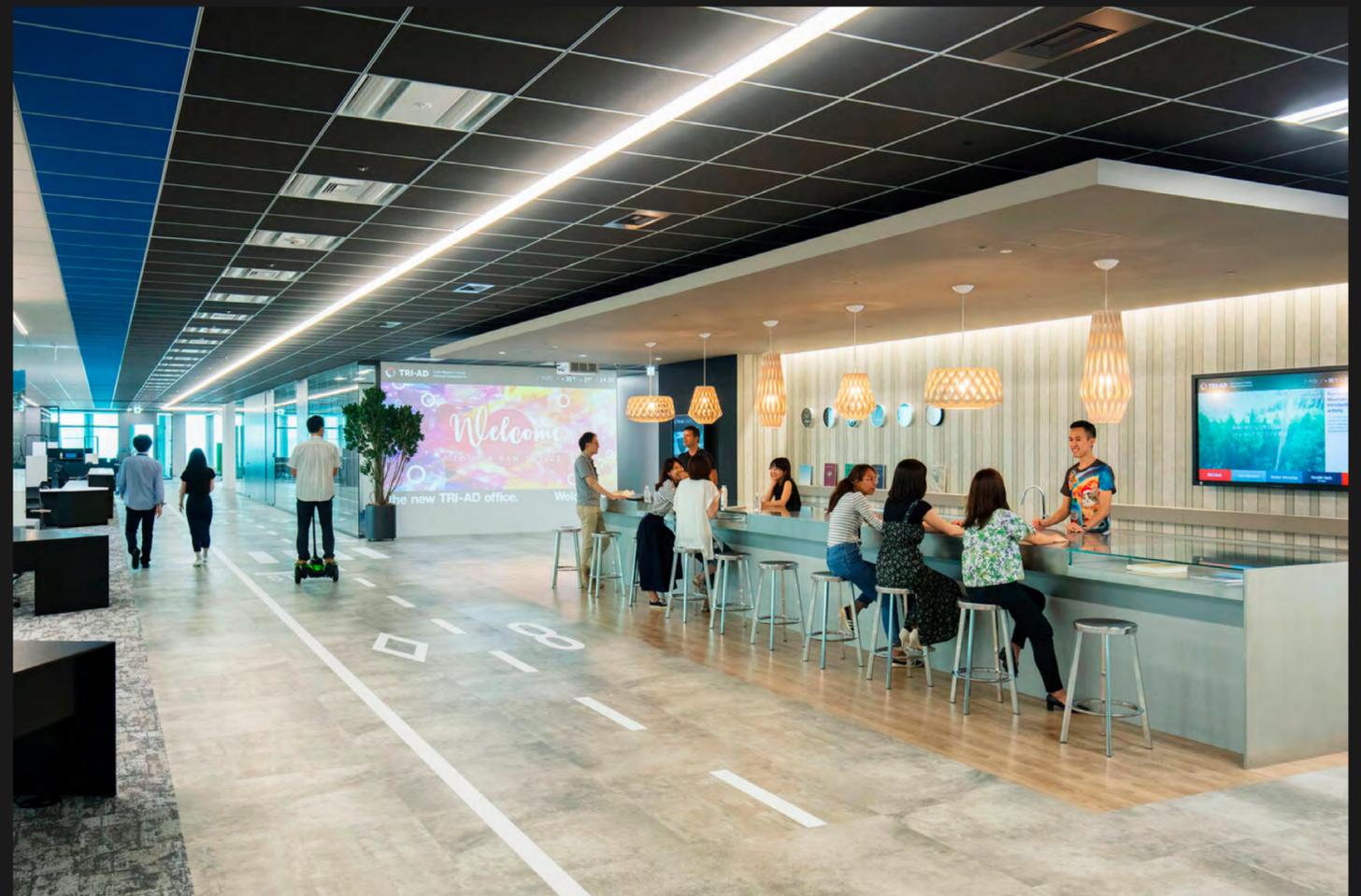
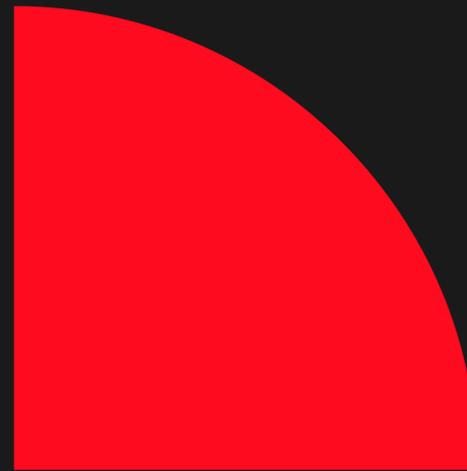
[UPS Japan](#)

Employee Benefits

Your Guide

A handy guide to health insurance, pensions and employee benefits at woven by toyota





Employee Benefits

Allowance

- Housing support up to ¥50,000 per month as long as you are a signer of the contract either you rent or own.
- Commuting

Defined Contribution (DC)

- Japanese 401K system
- Company matching

Legal Benefits

- Unemployment Insurance
- Worker's Compensation Insurance

Toyota Motor Health Insurance Society

- Annual Health Check-up
- Medical expense 30% paid by individuals. (e.g. Cost estimates for a doctor visit for flu: Approx ¥2,000)

Special Paid Leave & Congratulatory Money

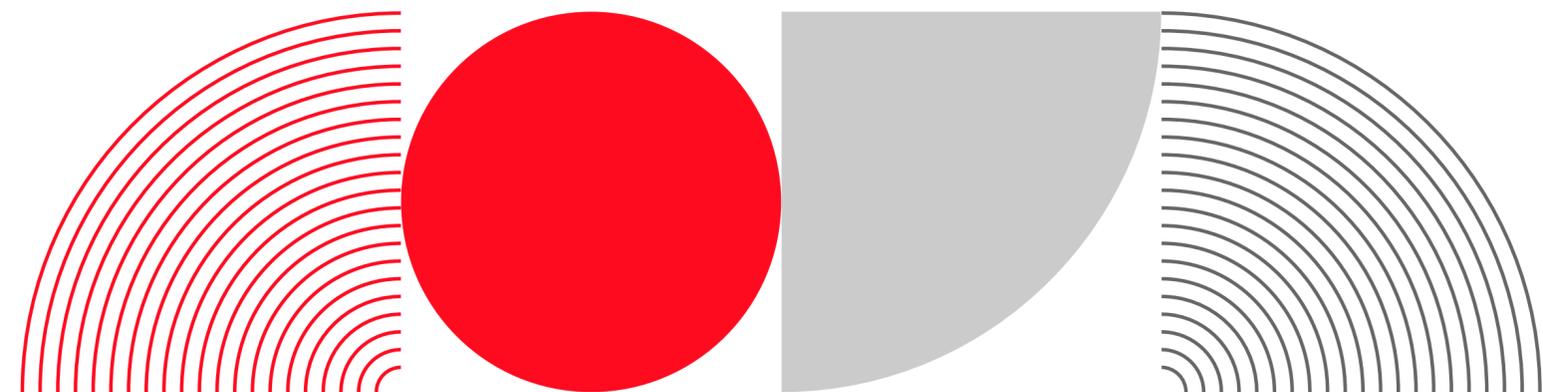
- 6 weeks before giving birth, 8 weeks after giving birth for single pregnancy
- Sick Leave: 6 days
- Condolence, Marriage, Child's wedding

Rental Car Support

- ¥100,000 per year for Toyota rental car service

Japanese Health Insurance

Refer to the following page →



Health Insurance Enrollment Scheme

Arrive in Japan and
become a resident
April 15th



Start working
May 1st



National Health Insurance

Toyota Motor Health Insurance Society

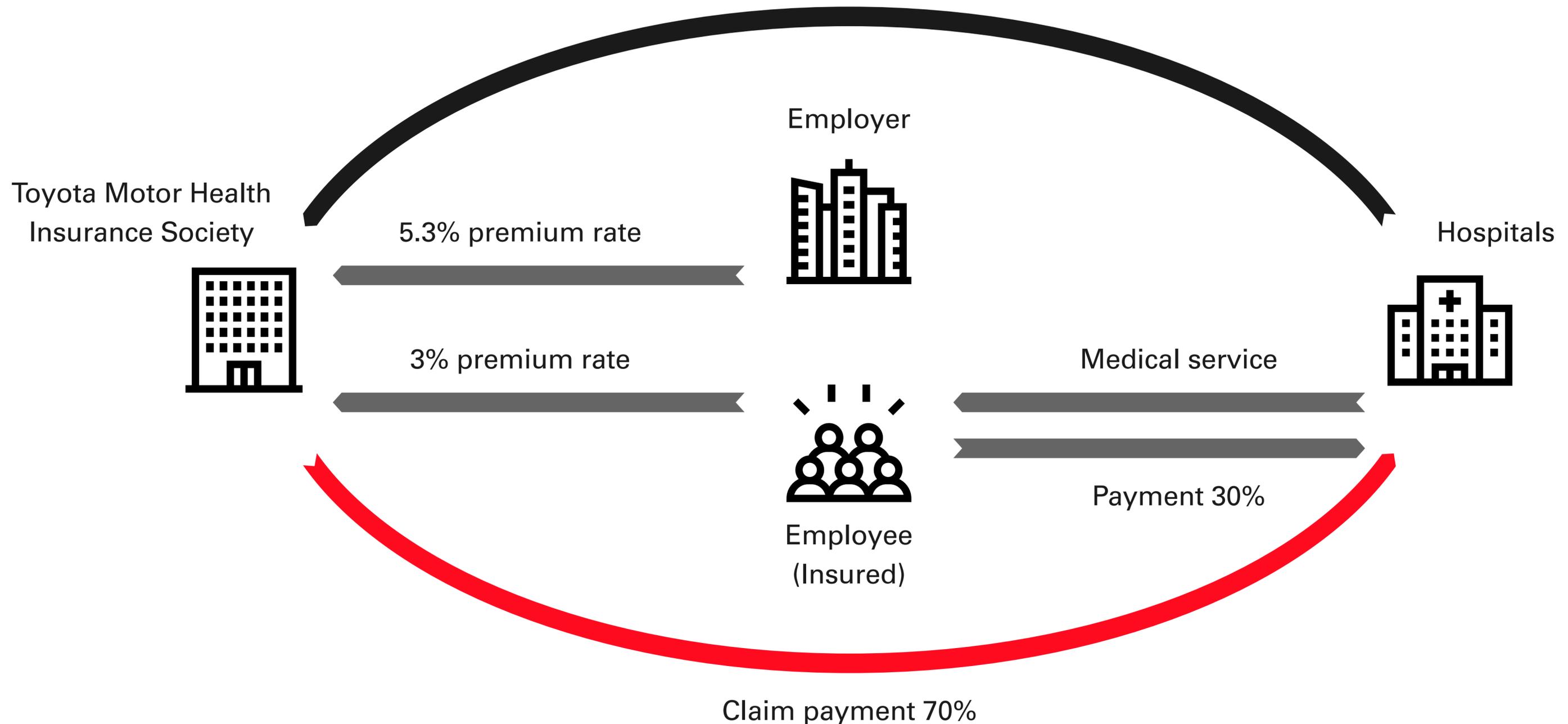
Premium
Premium All paid by
individuals

Premium
Premium 5.3% out of 8.3% paid by ER, 3% out of
8.3% paid by EE (*Refer page 6 for premium rate)

Premiums

	National Health Insurance Municipally Controlled	Toyota Motor Health Insurance Society
Who pays premium?	All paid by individuals	Employer: 5.3% Employee: 3% (Total premium rate for FY2021 is 8.3%)
How to pay premium	Pay by yourself	Deduction from monthly paycheck
How is premium decided?	Based on local tax paid	Standard Monthly Remuneration (SMR)* × Premium Rate** *SMR includes overtime payment, allowances, and standard bonus **Premium rate is decided by Toyota motor health insurance society
Premium amount when family grows	Increase	Same (no increase)

Medical Service Regime



Benefit Station

Benefit Station provides a 'life support' service, allowing its members to access certain benefits, such as discounts, when using the services of various companies.

Use it for fitness purposes on the way home from work, dining out with friends, enjoying a movie, spending leisure time with family, trips, childcare, and long-term care services!



Membership Special

You get 5,000 Benepo ('Benefit Points')* per year in January. (5,000 Benepo = ¥5,000)

*Points will be prorated according to the month you joined the company



Pensions

Base salary x 7.5% goes to the fund the company prepares for you every month. The fund will be allocated into:

- Defined Contribution (DC)
- Lump Sum Retirement Money

Example

If your base salary was ¥1,000,000 per month, the total monthly pension contribution would be ¥75,000 (defined contribution of ¥28,000* plus retirement money of ¥47,000).

*DC amount is set based on your grade/title

Employer's contribution and investment profit are tax exempt. Individual contributions will be deducted from your pre-tax salary.

If you do not join the DC, you are eligible to receive it as an advance payment for retirement and would then be subject to payroll taxation.





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