

COMMANDER SEVENTH FLEET



WELCOME ABOARD PACKAGE



USS BLUE RIDGE (LCC-19)

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C7F CHIEF OF STAFF

Welcome to Yokosuka, Japan and congratulations on your assignment to the U.S. 7th Fleet! I am confident this will be a memorable assignment for you and an experience unlike any other; one that will be professionally challenging and personally rewarding. Your experience, training, and willingness to learn will make you an integral member of the U.S. 7th Fleet team and your contributions will enable the continued success of our Fleet and our Navy.



Yokosuka is a wonderful place for Sailors and their families to live; the local community is not only welcoming, but also supportive. Hosting approximately 24,000 active-duty military, Department of Defense civilians and family members, the Yokosuka base is only 568-acres and is located on Tokyo Bay in the Kanto Plain region of Japan. We are just a couple of hours to many beautiful areas in Japan and a short plane ride to many intriguing places such as: Korea, Vietnam, China, Thailand, Russia, Hong Kong and if your up for a longer trip, Australia. The adventures are endless and the heritage is rich, so I encourage you to take full advantage of the many sites that are unique to this part of the world.

If you arrived with your family, please rest assured that they too will enjoy all that the area has to offer. You and your family will be supported by many resources and programs to make the transition smooth and your stay in Japan memorable. There is a Command U.S. 7th Fleet Ombudsman (see letter enclosed), a Command Family Readiness Group (FRG), classes offered by Fleet and Family Services (FFSC), and many activities organized by MWR. Additionally, the following websites provide other pertinent information: www.c7f.navy.mil; www.japanbases.com; and www.cnic.navy.mil/Yokosuka/index.htm.

Once again, welcome shipmate to U.S. 7th Fleet Staff, Yokosuka, Japan; Vice ADM Swift and I look forward to meeting and serving alongside of you on behalf of our country.

Sincerely,

Capt. Paul A. Stader
C7F Chief of Staff

C7F OMBUDSMAN

Hello and welcome! I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Jamie Chevalier and I have been married to my Sailor for almost 12 years. We spent nearly 9 years in San Diego and 3 years in Biloxi, MS before we got to Japan. As your 7th Fleet Ombudsman I help the COS and Chain of Command, provide a line of communication with your family, especially when the ship is underway. I distribute a variety of information from the monthly Ombudsman meetings concerning all aspects of the base. I look forward to getting to know you all and working with you.



Hopefully we will have a quiet time here, but if you need me for anything please do not hesitate to get in touch with me. You can reach me at:

CELL: 080-1300-2419, DSN: 241-4077, or EMAIL: ombudsman.c7f@gmail.com

There are a few things that I am required to report if you tell me about them. They are:

- *All cases of child abuse and neglect
- *Alleged spouse abuse
- *Suspected/potential homicide, violence, or life-endangering situations
- *Suspected or potential suicide risks

REMEMBER OPSEC:

With social media so prevalent in our lives today please remember OPSEC. Please remember to never to post dates, times, locations or info relating to the ship arriving in any port. Even on "closed" sites it's possible for people to see your information and share it with others. It's better to be safe than sorry. When in doubt, don't post!

When sending care packages, as long as it is not a priority mailing box, you can mail it for free. You can also send cards and letters without stamps through the MPS service.

Here is our Ship's Address:

Sailor Name
COMSEVENTHFLT
Unit 25104
FPO AP 96601-6003

7th Fleet on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/7thfleet>
Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka: <https://www.facebook.com/cfayokosuka>
Yokosuka MWR: <https://www.facebook.com/yokosuka.mwr.entertainment>
Fleet and Family Support Center: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/FFSC-Yokosuka-Japan/146358918737022>

C7F FAMILY READINESS GROUP

Welcome Aboard Commander Seventh Fleet!
(AKA: COMSEVENTHFLEET and C7F)

We are your Family Readiness Group and are available to help you out anytime before and during your deployment at C7F. If you should need any assistance or general information, we will be happy to help your family out.

Your first weeks here will be very busy with the check in process, AOB/ICR (Area Orientation Brief and Inter-Cultural Relations) class, and housing brief. We make every effort to stop by Navy Lodge and say hello during this time to ensure everything is going well with your family and to help answer any questions that you may have. If we have not contacted you within the first week please contact us. We do have “crash kits” available, free of charge, if your HHG has not arrived yet and you have been assigned housing.

We conduct monthly FRG meetings, outings and fundraisers. Our meeting day will shift around a little bit to accommodate the ship’s activity and/or other activities and outings. Please sign up with our email below to get the current updates and reminders. We would love for you to attend a function and meet your new C7F family when you arrive. If you should need a ride, please contact us for arrangements.

To ensure your family gets the most up to date information, while you are out to sea, from the Chain of Command at C7F and CFAY Base it is very important that you sign them up on the Ombudsman email distribution list as well. ombudsman.c7f@gmail.com

We hope you have a happy, safe and uneventful trip to Japan! We look forward to meeting you and your family soon!

Very Respectfully,

YOUR C7F FRG
FRG Email: c7ffrg@gmail.com

TELEPHONE DIALING INFORMATION

You will receive a telephone book if you get a DSN line.

BEFORE YOU GET HERE:

Calling from the U.S. (for other countries, replace 011 with correct international access #)

- 241 prefixes: 011-81-46-896-XXXX
- 243 prefixes: 011-81-46-816-XXXX
- 246 prefixes: 011-81-46-806-XXXX
- Cell phones start with 090: 011-81-90-XXXX-XXXX
- Cell phones start with 080: 011-81-80-XXXX-XXXX

Important: *The Time Difference*

Yokosuka, Japan is 13 hours ahead of EST during daylight savings months (otherwise 14 hours ahead of EST). Please note the time before calling someone in Japan.

AFTER YOU ARRIVE:

Calling within Japan/From cell phones:

- For 241 prefixes: 046-896-XXXX
- For 243 prefixes: 046-816-XXXX
- For 246 prefixes: 046-806-XXXX
- For Negishi: 045-281-XXXX

To Dial the Base Operator:

From an on base phone: 0

From a cell phone: 046-816-1110

TO CALL THE US:

88 + 00 + 11 + AREA CODE + NUMBER

To call the U.S., you can purchase a NEX EZ-Call Calling Card for \$20 (100 minutes) from vending machines at the Navy Lodge, NEX by Food Court, or the Laundromat. You can call using your cell phone, inquire with your provider.

THINGS I WISH SOMEONE WOULD HAVE TOLD ME!

INVEST IN GOOD WALKING SHOES

- As with any move, some cash reserves will be needed for housing and transportation when you arrive in Yokosuka. Move-in costs for the Yokosuka off-base area are running the equivalent of four months rent. They are broken down as first month's rent, security deposit, agent's fee and landlord's bonus. The Navy reimburses directly for the agent's fee and landlord's bonus, and you can draw advance pay to cover the first month's rent and security deposit. The Yokosuka Housing Center can assist you with any of your questions.
- Geographic Bachelors may have some issues during their time of transition away from families and into your new command. It is important that your pay is not stopped at the local command. Budgeting properly can help alleviate any fluctuation in pay and allowances you may experience or any unforeseen expenses while your pay is corrected.
- Emergency Travel- When a family experiences any sort of a crisis; they should first contact the Quarterdeck DSN: 315-243-6600 and Commercial: (808) 653-6600 ext. 4150. There is someone available 24 hours a day/7days a week. Depending on the nature of the emergency, the Quarterdeck will mobilize the appropriate staff members and departments to provide assistance.
- If you are traveling with pets there will be a lot to do prior your PCS here. See Pet care in Japan and do your research on the instructions / websites listed for more detailed information about vet vaccinations, quarantine, and international microchips.
- The Community Readiness Center (CRC) is where you take Area Orientation Brief/Inter Cultural Relations (AOB/ICR) Class. This is a mandatory class for all dependants 18 and over. This class is one week long (Mon-Fri 7:45am to 3:30pm). Childcare needs to be arranged ahead of time, please see Things to do first number 9. Also located in the CRC building are Church Services offices, Library, FAST office, Boy and Girl Scouts offices, Small Hobby shop, and much more. The Fleet and Family Support Center is on the fourth floor. For more information- please call 243-3372. Walk the floors and take a look around.
- Reserve you reservations at Navy Lodge early, they book up fast 1-800-628-9466 or DSN 315-243-6708. Some rooms have a kitchenette and some have only a mini fridge and microwave, be specific. Depending on the amount of dependants you are traveling with you may qualify for two rooms.

- The summer is hot and humid here! It can be very rainy in June and September. Sunglasses, umbrellas and a good backpack are very useful! Also buy rain boots, the selection here goes fast.
- Everything to do with vehicles is in one building. Located right next to Navy Lodge. Vehicle Registration Office, insurance, driving test, car rentals, etc...
- Although you are stationed overseas, your "FPO AP" address is still considered a U.S. address. Depending on how you ship, priority or regular mail, expect anywhere from 2 to 8 weeks delivery. Many companies will ship to FPO addresses; you just have to research it. A little benefit that many don't know about is the privilege of mailing things for free to other FPO addresses. Inquire at the base post office about "MPS'ing" letters and packages to and from other military bases. This could be useful if you have friends stationed elsewhere or you are planning to travel to distant bases.
- Moving into an off-base house and not used to wood floors? Consider buying lots of felt or cork furniture pads from the "100-yen store" (equivalent to U.S. Dollar Stores) In advance of your furniture delivery and placing them where you want your heavy furniture items to be placed. Also, felt pads on chairs are also a good idea. If the house has a "tatami" room, ask the rental agent for ideas on how to place furniture without damaging the grass mats. Carpet squares can be purchased at local home improvement stores.
- If you move into a house before your household goods arrive, there is loaner furniture (beds, sofas, and so on) available for free through the housing office. Smaller items such as linens, dishes, pots and pans can be borrowed from the Community Center for a fee. The C7F FRG can provide Crash kits for free as well. Both the housing office and the self- help office have items such as refrigerators, microwaves and dehumidifiers that can be borrowed for the duration of your tour. Self -help also has equipment, tools, and some supplies available for maintaining your residence.
- About electricity: Electrical power in off-base houses is approximately 30-50 amps at 100 volts/50 cycles. On-base houses are about the same. Japan's electricity is lower than American, it is not dangerous to try using your electrical appliances without transformers. If they don't function properly, then use them with transformers which can be borrowed from Self- Help. Off-base, the wall outlets will accommodate American plugs except for 3-prong plugs. It is a good idea to use battery operated alarm clocks.
- Some people use the Internet and a service such as Skype (www.skype.com). To phone the U.S., Vonage (VOIP) lines are also available through Americable. If you live on base, you can sign up for a DSN phone plan through the Base Communications Office 243-5847.
- You can use a digital video recorder in Japan and one may come in handy if you watch sports. Many U.S. games are on TV during the night if they are live. (***Note: that TiVo and Replay TV devices and services do not work in Japan, even as a manual digital recorder.***) However, Americable does provide a similar box if you are on base for an

additional fee. Japanese DVD's are not compatible with American DVD players. However you should be able to watch them on your computer.

- NETFLIX (mail order video rental) will work here and though mail may take longer, you can still enjoy “home” delivery of movies and TV shows on DVD here in Japan. Go to audibles.com to download audio books for a fee.

TAKING THE NARITA SHUTTLE BUS

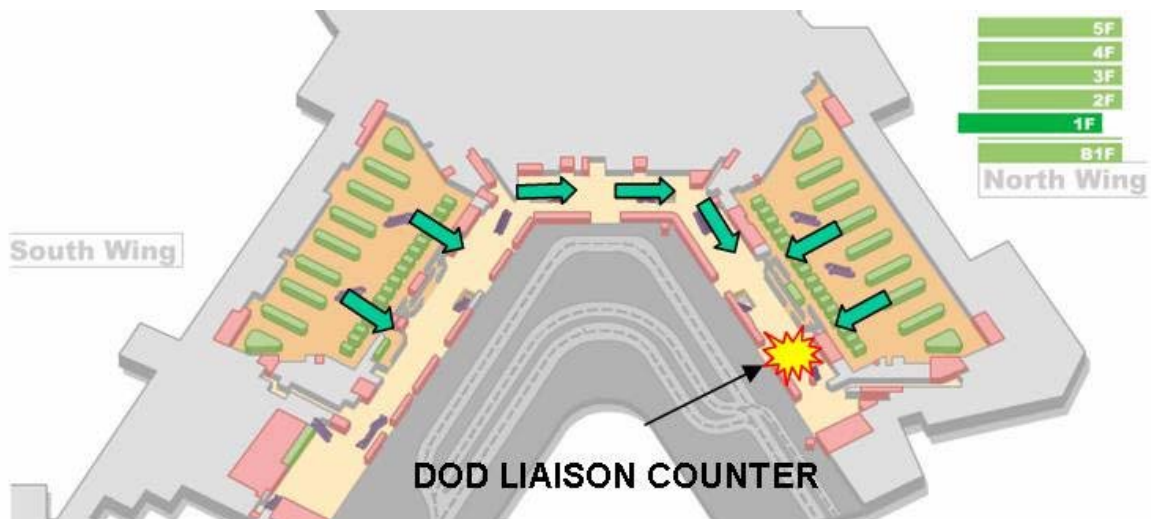
1. Yokosuka City is located about 30 miles southwest of Japan's capital city, Tokyo, on the east coast of the main island, Honshu. If you are on official travel, be sure to have several copies of your orders with you for verification purposes at the DoD Liaison Counter

2. The mission of the Narita Shuttle Bus is to provide bus transportation for official travelers who need transportation to and from Narita International Airport to Yokosuka Naval Base. The bus runs three times a day to meet the needs of most official government travelers, family members and some guests.

3. When you arrive you need to determine if you are at **Terminal One** or **Terminal Two**.

If you are at Terminal Two, depart Customs and go outside to bus stop 8 or 18. Then, take a *free* shuttle bus to Terminal One. At Terminal One, get off at the second stop (street level). Enter the terminal and the DoD Counter will be located across from the flight arrival exit beside Meiji Milk and Café shop.

4. If you are at Terminal One, follow the signs inside the terminal to the Arriving Passenger area. You must take a left whether you are coming from the North or South Wing. Keep your eye on the desks to your right. You will see a sign that says DoD Liaison. This desk should be located almost to the very end of the walkway. Wait at the counter until an agent arrives and present your orders and military ID to them. They will reserve a seat on the bust for you and instructs you from there. You sponsor can also sign you up for bus transportation by phone at DSN (315) 243-7777/2287, Fax (315) 243-9594, or via email at cfay_bus@fe.navy.mil.



5. You can also sign up for the shuttle yourself. From off base, the number is 046-816-7777/2287; from the U.S., 011-81-46-816-7777/2287. The CFAY Bus office is located on the first floor of the PSD building (1555). Office hours are 0730-1700 on regular weekdays, and 0900-1430 on weekends and holidays. Lastly, you can also register on the CFAY Shuttle website ahead of schedule at: <https://www.cnic.navy.mil/Narita/index.htm>.

6. **Please note** that you must provide a copy of your orders upon check-in at the Narita Airport DoD Liaison Counter. Without copies of your orders, you will be designated space available, and seats are assigned categorically on a first come first serve basis.

7. Shuttle Bus personnel will conduct an initial roll call one hour prior to bus departure time. All travelers **MUST** be present during this roll call to obtain a boarding pass, and passengers who fail to muster may have their seat assignments given to other travelers.

7. Some new personnel arrive via the Air Mobility Command (AMC) at Yokota Air Force Base (AFB). AMC flights from the U.S. arrive at Yokota Base several days a week. Navy buses are assigned to transport passengers to Yokosuka Naval Base whenever an inbound flight is scheduled.

8. There is no Navy liaison office in the Yokota AMC passenger terminal. The Army/Air Force liaison or the Terminal Information Counter can provide additional information and assistance if needed.

9. **Please Note.** Pets are not allowed aboard the Navy shuttle busses. If you are arriving with your pet(s), you will need to coordinate with your sponsor for alternate transportation. The Family Assistance Support Team office (243-5770) can also assist with making travel arrangements for pets.

You can ask the bus to drop you off at the Navy Lodge, if you have your family with you, and then go back to check into the command or Transient Personnel Unit (CFAY TPU) if the USS BLUE RIDGE is underway. Make sure that your orders is endorsed with the proper date for TLA entitlement purposes.

THINGS TO DO FIRST

When you first arrive, things may seem overwhelming. You have to deal with jet lag and moving into a hotel for an unknown amount of time. Don't worry—it all gets organized soon enough.

1. **Make several copies of your orders and Dependent Entry Approval (DEA). Bring them with you wherever you go for at least 2 weeks because you will have to provide the copies to everyone!! 10 copies is a good start.** Also know your sponsor's work phone number as soon as possible. Carry the telephone pocket guide with you, call ahead to ensure you have all the documents required. ****(Refer to the Telephone Dialing Information Section when calling from a cell phone)****

2. Take your (and all of your accompanying dependants) passport to the NAVTO Passport Office located on the first deck of PSD, to get your passport stamped with the multiple re-entry stamp. This should be done within 14 days of your arrival. They are closed on Wed.

3. Stop by the DBIDS (Defense Biometric ID System) office at the main gate and register yourself and all eligible family members ID cards, this must be completed. Registration is required for scanner-based access to all military installations in Japan. Call DBIDS office at 243-5125, if you have any questions. The FAST office 243-5770 can also register you in DBIDS system they are located on the second deck of the community readiness center. They hold a "record" available in emergencies that can be helpful to your family. **All I.D.s must be valid and NOT expired in order to be placed into the DBIDS system.**

4. Get cell phones. You need a way for people to get in touch with you and cell phones are the easiest way. (See —Telephone Dialing Information Section for general instructions.) Soft Bank is offered at the NEX can do prepaid there. AU is offered down Blue Street, in the Mikasa walkthrough mall. DoCoMo is also a popular choice, further down blue street turn left after the train station and walk a couple blocks. Your American cell phone will not work in Japan so ensure you provide your local/current mobile carrier a copy of your orders to cancel your service or to set up a date for your service to end if you plan to utilize your cell phone while traveling to Japan. It is also a good idea to ask people how many minutes they generally use for reference when signing up for a plan. The plans are a little more expensive than the U.S. and offer less monthly minutes.

5. Figure out your living arrangements. (See —Living Arrangement section.) The housing office offers two different briefs. The first brief is at 8:30 daily except for the first Wednesday. of the month for information about living off-base. There is another brief at 2:00 daily for information about living on-base. Depending on your choice of off base or on base housing the brief is mandatory. Check with housing as sometimes times/procedures change.

6. The active duty member will have to accompany you to check-in with the quarterdeck at the Naval Hospital. DSN: 315-243-7144. They are located in the lobby of the hospital. Dental is located on the second deck. We do have pediatric dentists here.

7. Get a car, if needed. (See —Driving Test section.)

8. Arriving with Pets – See pet care in Japan section on page

9. If you have children, call the Child Development Center (CDC-241-4101 or 241-3219) and make sure your reservations are set up during the week of AOB/ICR class. (See —Childcare in Japan section.) You are able to reserve a spot 30 days in advance for childcare. The cost of childcare at specific locations is covered by vouchers you will receive each day at AOB/ICR. (Your sponsor/department will sign you up for the AOB/ICR class and inform you of the date and location.)

10. Register children in school. Before departing the U.S., contact your child's school to get transcripts, immunization and physical records.

- Sullivans Kdg- 5th grade
243-7336/7329 <http://www.sullivans-es.pac.dodea.edu>
- Yokosuka Middle School 6th-8th grade
243-5165 <http://www.yokosuka-ms.pac.dodea.edu>
- Kinnick High School
243-7392 <http://www.kinnick-hs.pac.dodea.edu>
- Ikego Elementary School Kdg.-3rd
246-8320 <http://www.ikego-es.pac.dodea.edu>
- Byrd Elementary (Negishi) Kdg-5th
242-4815 <http://www.byrd-es.pac.dodea.edu>

11. Set up your banking in Japan.

- **Navy Federal**: 243-3333 (ATM will issue dollars only) Located on Clemet Street across from Kasano park/McDonalds
- **Community Bank**: 243-4585 (ATMs will issue Yen or US Dollars) Located at the Narita shuttle drop off/PSD Building
- **ATM Locations-on base**
 - Community Bank ATM – outside PSD building facing McDonalds
 - Community Bank ATM- Autoport
 - Community Bank-Drive Through ATM (behind Base Security, next to SRF parking garage)
 - Community Bank ATM at the entrance of the main gate, by club alliance on off base side
 - Community and NFCU ATM's – waterside between docks for Blue Ridge and GW
 - NFCU- outside Commissary
- **Getting yen off-base**
 - Post offices can do money exchange
 - You can open up a Japanese bank account also
- **Dollars can be exchanged for yen at the following base locations:**
 - Club Alliance
 - CPO Club
 - Chili's Cash cage

There are many ways to get around Yokosuka while waiting to purchase a car: Walking, your sponsor, base taxi (243-4444), and base bus. The buses run every 50 minutes or so. Ask at the Navy Lodge or Front Desk CBEQ (Bldg 33) for a bus schedule.

The information listed in this section does not cover every area in your adjustment to Yokosuka, but they are the ones that often impact on the family or the ones that are easily overlooked.

CHILD CARE IN JAPAN

The Navy's Child Care Centers have won awards for their merit. They are well run and provide excellent care. All the centers are accredited through the National Association. for the Education of the Young Child.

- **CDC: 241-3219** *Located down the street from the Navy Lodge.* All CDC's now provide the same services. Childcare for children not yet in 1st grade. They charge \$4.00 per hour per child. They take reservations up to 30 days in advance. (For full time care Dual active duty has 1st priority.) You must attend an orientation before using the center and you will need to provide your child's immunization records. (exceptions are made for AOB/ICR) They offer a preschool program for children age 3 by September 1st and age 4 by September 1st. Preschool is on a sliding scale, call for more information.
- **ANNEX CDC: 241-4101** *This center is located at the old Community Center.*
- **Ikego and Negishi CDCs:** (Ikego Phone: 246-8060; Negishi Phone: 242-4316)
- **Family Child Care:** These certified home-care providers offer child care for all ages in their homes. Fulltime fees are based on Total Family Income. Parents visit the CRC office (located on the 2nd floor of the MWR bldg. - office 201B) for registration/referral information. They need to attend an orientation, provide an LES, and child's immunization.

PRESCHOOLS

Off-base Preschools are called kindergartens

Seika Kindergarten (will accept as early as 2 years)

This preschool is about a 5-10 minute drive from Yokosuka. It does provide a bus (Choo-Choo train) for pick-up/drop-off for children on Yokosuka base. There is an English speaking person (Yuhko Sugai) available on Mon.-Wed.-Fri. to answer questions. (0468-22-0018)
Communication from the school is in English.

Mikasa Kindergarten (will accept 3yr olds and above)

This preschool is located right outside Womble Gate. You must have a Japanese sponsor to enroll, so the school can contact them in the event of an emergency and for communication purposes. Communication from the school is only in Japanese.

Mikuni Kindergarten (3yrs and above) This preschool is about a 10 minute drive from base-close to Hayama. It does provide bus transportation for pick-up/drop-off to base.

Kamakura Yochien (3yrs. and above) This preschool is in a good location for people who live in the Kamakura or Ikego areas. It has bus service for those living off-base, but it does not pick up on Ikego base. You would need to have a Japanese friend help you with registration and the occasional meeting. The school has after school care until 4:30. The phone number is 046-725-2391.

PET CARE IN JAPAN

Arriving with Pets

Pet Import Regulations and Restrictions have changed for SOFA personnel (that's us), effective 6 June 2005. The ONLY OFFICIAL pet import information pertinent to SOFA personnel is provided online by US Army Japan District Veterinary Command at:
www.usarj.army.mil/organization/vet/index.htm.

Pets can not ride on the official Navy buses to Yokosuka, not even in the baggage compartment. Contact your Sponsor for an assist, or contact the Bus Transportation Liaison at cfaybus@cfay.navy.mil or by phone at 011-81-46-816-7777 (international) 315-243-7777 (DSN from the US). The bus liaison needs several days, and a copy of your orders, to facilitate a transportation assist for pets.

The FAST office (DSN 315 243-5770) located in the Community Readiness Center on the 2nd Deck will provide transportation services for service members (and their families) with PETS and military officers O6 and above to and from Narita, Yokota, and Haneda airports. The attached Base Support Vehicles & Equipment (BSV&E) form must be filled out and sent to the FAST office with copies of the PCS orders and flight itinerary, this needs to be completed and submitted to FAST within 30 days or less of PCS transfer date. This service is not free so the service member must be on cost orders.

Yokosuka Kennel

Pets can not stay at the Navy Lodge. Contact the NEX Kennel for a reservation for pet boarding. The number is 011-81-46-816-4530 (from the US). The NEX Kennel is open 0900-1500, Monday-Friday.

Camp Zama Pet Kennel

Some people board their pets at the Army's pet kennel located on Camp Zama. Relatively close to the Navy's Atsugi base, Camp Zama is a 1.5 to 2 hour drive north of Yokosuka depending on traffic. The Camp Zama kennel is operated by MWR. Camp Zama will accept Navy pets during their quarantine period, however Army has first priority. Navy pets may stay there when their owners go on leave. Call DSN 263-5915 for information. Also see (<http://www.mwrjapan.jp.pac.army.mil/crd/or/pet.aspx>).

Off-Base Kennels

Off Base Kennels are available and the Yokosuka Vet on base has a listing if you choose to utilize an off base kennel.

Pet Supplies

In addition to the products available on base, many pet supplies are available in Japanese stores such as *Living*, located south of the base on Highway 16. A U.S. mail order supplier that will ship to FPO addresses is (www.drsofostersmith.com).

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

For an informative overview of the housing situation in Yokosuka Visit the Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka at: <http://www.cnfc.navy.mil/Yokosuka>
All the housing information is located in the Fleet and Family Readiness section.

On-base Living Options:

Yokosuka Base:

- High-rise towers with 2 and 3 bedroom apartments (no dogs)
- Townhouses with 3 and 4 bedrooms (dogs and cats allowed)

Ikego Housing Annex: @ 20-30 min drive:

- High-rise towers with 3 bedroom apartments (no dogs)
- Townhouses with 3 and 4 bedrooms (dogs and cats allowed)

Negeshi Housing Annex: @ a 45min-1 hour drive

- Townhouses with 3 and 4 bedrooms (dogs and cats allowed)

You must qualify by rank and number in family. Check with the Housing Office for lots of information including projected waiting times and unit floor plans.

http://housing.cnfc.navy.mil/on_base_housing.htm

Off-base Living Options:

- Individual houses
- Japanese mansions (apartments)

Whether you and your family choose to live on base or off base, there are many people in your department who can answer questions you may have about either living arrangement. Both offer different opportunities and are enjoyable living experiences.

For an explanation about dealing with rental agents, up-front costs, and many other details, see websites below:



--Example of an off-base house in Mabari Kaigan

http://housing.cnfc.navy.mil/off_base_housing.htm

www.japanbases.com/housing (forum with links to a few realtors)

www.Kencorp.com (realtor)

Initial Steps to Finding Off-base Housing:

1. Begin by looking through the binders full of listings for houses or apartments that are available. They are located in the Housing Office and are separated by neighborhood. There is a binder listing rentals that accept pets. If you find some housing listings you'd like to see in person, the housing office will call the agent to arrange a meeting. They will make three appointments at a time for you.

3. Find a rental agent through your sponsor or the Housing Office. Many people recommend using multiple agents so that you can see many different places. This is because it doesn't work like a U.S. real estate agent, who will show you all that is available —on the market. In Japan, each agent will only show you his or her own rental properties!

Things to Determine Before Talking with a Rental Agent:

1. Know the amount of your Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA), which is based on rank/rate. Take into consideration the current Yen exchange rate.

2. Do you want a Japanese-style or Western-style house? (Do you want an American oven or refrigerator in your house, tatami rooms, etc.?)

3. How close do you want to be to base? (See the —Online Maps of Japan section for a means of viewing alternative travel routes from a specific house to base and to measure distance.)

4. What transportation will you use to get to base? Train / Cars? If you have school age children, before you sign, the lease, check with the DODDS Student Transportation Office at DSN 243-9564/9566 to find the nearest school bus stop. You will have to visit their office and bring a copy of the rental unit floor plan & map that you will receive from your rental agent.

Note: Not all homes have space to park two vehicles. Your parking area may be tiny! Many people use the train, a scooter, or bicycle as a second form of transportation.

6. Do you have a dog or cat? This is somewhat limiting. Only townhouses in base housing allow dogs, and many houses off base do not allow pets. But with a little time and luck, you should be able to find an off-base house that allows pets and even one with a small fenced yard. **With negotiation**, some landlords will agree to accept pets. Keep in mind that your pet deposit will have to come out of pocket for your pet and it is equivalent to one months rent.

VEHICLE BUYING / REGISTERING

*****In Japan, we drive on the OPPOSITE side of the road*****

You will get a MANDATORY Driving in Japan brief during AOB/ICR. Once you pass the written driver's license exam offered during AOB/ICR, you can sign up with the Transportation Office to take your road test and get your license as soon as possible. If you wish to study ahead of time see the driver's manual listed at the following website.

<http://www.cnic.navy.mil/Yokosuka/OperationsAndManagement/Safety/DriversLicense/index.htm>

You cannot buy a car until you get a Driver's License.

You will need a copy of your orders and a copy of your Dependant Entry Approval message when taking your driving portion of the licensing test. A valid American Drivers License is required prior to attaining a Japanese license.

****For any questions about the following process, contact the (VRO) Vehicle Registration Office (Phone: 243-5011)****

Buying a Car: The car cost can be anywhere from \$500 to \$6,000

1. When purchasing a car, please take into considerations that when living and touring off-base many of the streets are very narrow. You need to decide if a small car or large car would best fit your particular living situation.
2. Before buying a car talk to VRO and learn about JCI, a bi-annual safety inspection/ mandatory insurance, and about obtaining additional insurance and the road tax that is due in April. You get a better deal the farther away the expiration date is for the JCI, because you will have to pay less money up front.
3. You can buy from the "Lemon Lot" located next to commissary. The sellers on this lot can be a good source of information on the registration process.
4. Bulletin boards located downstairs in the Towers is a popular place to find cars for sale.
5. There are also used car dealerships located off-base.
6. Sites with information on vehicles and other items for sale are:
www.yokosuka4sale.com and www.japanbases.com
DISCLAIMER: These sites are not endorsed by the United States Navy.

Registering a Car:

Note: Cars must be registered in the sponsor's name. If anyone other than the sponsor—even a spouse—is arranging the registration, a Power of Attorney (POA) is needed. One can be obtained at the PSD Legal Office (Phone: 243-5141)

1. Obtain a valid Japanese driver's license (USFJ Form 4). Only one vehicle per license holder is allowed.
2. Find a car you like and take it and the owner with you to registration.
 - a. E-4 and below need approval from their CO and CFAY Security Officer to own a car and are only allowed 1 vehicle.
3. Parking Certificates are required. They are attained at different locations, depending on where you live.
4. Liability insurance for vehicles is required. Insurance is paid for up front! The average cost after Yen conversion is between 400-600 dollars. It is for one year, at the end of the year you have the option to pay every 6 months, but the rate will be higher. If you purchase a second car it is still one year first.
5. Once you are registered with VRO, you will have to take the title to Yokohama for filing. There are LTO runners in the Seahawk paper who will take care of this for you for a nominal fee.

TELEPHONE AND TV SERVICE

Cell Phones

“Things to Do First” covers the highlights of how to get a cell phone.

“Regular” Telephone Service:

On base: Yokosuka Telephone Customer Service 243-4600 @ 35 a month

Off Base: Housing Welcome Center web site <http://housing.cnfj.navy.mil/utilities.htm>

Read about the procedure for getting regular telephone service. Many people decide it is not worth the money and effort to do this and use cell phones only. Another option is to get telephone service from the Internet service providers J:COM or NTT. See the section “Using the Internet in Japan.”

~Cordless American Telephones Prohibited in Japan~ American FCC labeled cordless telephones, walkie-talkies, baby monitors and many other wireless electronic devices are prohibited in Japan because of interference. Wireless PC network equipment is not a problem.

Television Service:

On Base: Americable 241-2288 also provide high speed internet.

Off-base: residents may borrow a satellite dish, which allows them to watch Armed Forces Network (AFN) television programming. There is no monthly fee for service, but you must get permission from your landlord to install the equipment, buy an installation kit, and pay someone to do the installation (and removal) of the satellite dish.

Another option for television service off- base is to get Japanese cable television. For example, J:COM offers a bundle of services including Internet, television, and telephone - you can choose one, two or all three services. J:COM cable includes a variety of English-language stations such as CNN, Disney, Discovery, National Geographic, and the Mystery Channel. American television sets do function with the J:COM cable service.

Minimum Contract Length

When subscribing for Internet, television, or telephone service, check the minimum contract length allowed in case you are planning to move on base when housing becomes available. For example, J:COM’s minimum contract is six months.

USING THE INTERNET IN JAPAN

For those living in temporary quarters or moving into off-base residences, Internet access is an important issue. Some Internet aspects are worth mentioning:

Public Computers with Internet Access

There are a few locations on the Yokosuka Naval Base where one has access to computers which are connected to the Internet. The Base Library is one such location.

The Navy Lodge and BOQ also have small Internet computer rooms and connections available for laptops as well.

Free High-Speed Wireless Internet

There are several places in and around Yokosuka where one has access to free high-speed wireless Internet service. These locations include: Club Alliance Panther Sports Bar, CPO Club's Cove Bar, Spectrum Liberty Center, the 3rd floor of the Fleet Recreation Center, Yokosuka Library, Yokosuka Bowling Center, Green Beach Pool Deck, Negishi All Hands' club, Negishi Library, Ikego Pool Deck, Ikego Club Takemiya, Kosano Park, and Green Bay Marina, ITT/Starbucks Outdoor Area, and the Food Court across from the Benny Decker Theater.

Internet Service for Base Housing

If you live on base, you can use Americable for cable TV and Internet access (Phone: 241-2288).

Internet Service for Off-Base Housing

There are two major Internet Service Providers for off-base: J:COM and NTT East. Each offers many bundled services: Internet, television, and telephone and different Internet speeds. Your rental agent may be of help to you. Each company has English web pages. The chosen company will send an English-speaking representative to your home to write the contract and arrange installation at appointment time. The prices seem comparable to the United States. For information see (<http://www.jcom.co.jp/english.html>)

(Note) NTT offers connection to the Internet via fiber optics, which sounds tempting, but some people find the website hard to understand. J:COM's telephone service is not a traditional land line- (See the section "Telephone and Television Service" to learn about getting telephone service in Japan.) With J:COM one does get a telephone number and can use a standard American telephone set via the internet. You would have to research to determine if it is economical for making international calls.

Japanese Internet Search Engines

(Internet tip): Consider using a Japanese search engine when searching for information about the arts, antique markets, special events, shopping, travel, etc. Several popular Japanese search engines are: (<http://www.yahoo.jp>), (<http://www.google.jp>), (<http://www.excite.jp>). Even though the search pages are in Japanese, type English words in the search argument, and often enough the search will yield better results than using American search engines. Many Japanese web sites have a smattering of useful English information to see the name, location and event date of whatever you are looking for. Try it for yourself.

SHOPPING AND EATING ON BASE

Autoport Gas and Garden Center located next to Navy Lodge.

- Hours: 0630-2200 daily - Car service center, Gas station, Garden Center, Convenience Store, Video Rental

Commissary (Next to Navy Exchange)

-Hours: 0900-2000 Monday-Friday; 0900-1900 Saturday and Sunday

Navy Exchange(NEX)

-Hours: 0900-2100- located across from Starbucks and has clothing, shoes, books, toiletries, liquor, toys, electronics, etc

Beauty Shop (inside the left door of the NEX)

-Hours: 0900-1900 Monday-Friday; 0900-1800 Saturday and Sunday-

Barber Shop (inside the right door of the NEX)

-Hours: 0900-1900 Monday-Friday; 0900-1800 Saturday; 1000-1800 Sunday-

NEX Children's Store is located in front of the NEX on the 2nd floor. This store sells children's clothing and equipment from newborn to teens.

NEX Home Accents is located in front of the NEX on the 1st floor. This store sells kitchen items, household decorations, Japanese items, crystal and other nice things.

NEX Furniture store is located next to Starbucks and offers rugs & furniture for every room in your house.

NEX Depot is located next to Autoport has cooking supplies in bulk, office supplies, outdoor sheds and some electronics and tools.

Fleet Rec (In Fleet Recreation Center across from ships)

-Hours: 0900-1900 daily- A smaller Navy Exchange with mainly athletic equipment/clothing and uniform shop. There is a barber shop on the first floor - Hours: 1000-1700 daily.

Takusan Treasures Located next to Sbarros. Open Tues & Thurs 10-2 and first Saturday of month. They have many unique Japanese style gifts

Second Hand Rose The local thrift store is open Tues & Thurs 10-2 and first Saturday of the month. Located in the same building as Americable

Video Rental (Across from the NEX)

-Hours: 1000-2100 Monday-Saturday; 1000-1800 Sunday.

Laundromat (Between Commissary and Navy Exchange)

- Hours: 0700-1730 Monday-Friday; 0900-1700 Saturday - Sunday.

FOOD:

Chili's (Next to the Navy Lodge)

McDonald's (Across from Navy Federal Credit Union) Outdoor play area and drive-thru available

Taco Bell (Across from Navy Exchange) Drive-thru available

Starbucks Coffee (Across from Navy Exchange, next to ITT)

Main Street USA Food Court (Across from Benny Decker Theater) (**Delivery 241-2981**)

- Popeye's Chicken
- Seattle's Best Coffee and Cinnabon
- Long John Silver's
- A & W Root Beer
- Manchu Wok
- Subway

Café Sbarro (Attached to Main Street USA Food Court)

Open for lunch and dinner daily. Buffet available starting at 5:00 on Thursday -Sunday.

NEX Food Court (In the Navy Exchange)

- Anthony's Pizza (delivery 243-food),
- Dunkin Donuts
- Baskin & Robbins
- American Eatery

Fleet Recreation Center-

- Cinnamon St. Baker
- Mean Gene's hamburgers
- Submarine sandwich shop
- pizza

Bowling Alley- (Between Main Street USA and McDonald's)

- Mean Gene's hamburgers and pizza

Club Alliance- (Next to the main gate)

- Italian Garden
- C-Street Grill

NEARBY SHOPPING AND FOOD, OFF BASE

***Most are within easy walking distance from the gates except for the few listed at the bottom.
Get out there and explore for yourself this area has so much to offer!***

- **Daiei Shopping Mall:** The first floor has a grocery store (as do most Japanese department stores). Then there are many floors and shops, including a book store with an English section. There is a food court and restaurants are located on several floors. There is a gate (for walking only) onto base through the back side of the Daiei. It is only open weekdays from 0600-2000 and is closed on U.S. holidays.
- **100 Yen store, “Daiso”** These “dollar store” equivalents are a good place to buy knick knacks for setting up your new home in Japan –They have it all! There are 2 of these stores located across from the Daiei mall. Walk the crosswalk over Rt.16 and walk down the side street in front of Daiei with a “Mikasa” store on your left and an Italian Pizza restaurant on your right. In the rear of the office building with the pizza restaurant, go through a narrow hallway leading to an escalator/staircase. Take it to the second floor. You will see a Subway (the sandwich chain) and 2 stores across from each other that are both “Daiso” stores.
- **Blue Street:** There are multiple shops and restaurants down “Blue Street.” Look up because many buildings have shopping on several floors.
- **More’s City** is a high-rise shopping mall behind Yokosuka Chuo train station, on Blue Street, with lots of restaurants throughout several floors.

Driving distance:

- **Homes, Livin and Ave** are large stores specializing in clothing, home goods, hardware, etc.. they are a short drive south of the Yokosuka base along Route 16. D2 is another store similar to Homes (or our “Home Depot”) and is located along Route 134.
- **Amerity Homes** is a furniture store importing Broyhill, Riverside, and other American made furniture. Their showroom is on Hwy 26 in Hayama, about a 20 minute drive from the front gate. Take a right hand turn out of the main gate and get in the left lane. Then take a left at Shioiri Station and follow the road through several intersections and up and down a large hill, for about 4 kilometers; when you will reach a flat stretch-start looking for a yellow building (looks like a house) on your right. There are a few parking spaces. Proprietor does not speak English, so come with Japanese friend or look up what you need to say ahead of time. He has a catalogue, and can show selections online.

STORES THAT SHIP TO APO/FPO

- Amazon (*for most things*) Ann Taylor and Ann Taylor Loft
- Baby Center Banana Republic
- Barnes & Noble Best Buy (*some electronics*)
- Campmor Drugstore.com
- Gap Gymboree
- Hanna Anderson Harry and David
- Joann's J. C. Penney
- J. Crew J. Jill
- Lands' End Linens N Things
- Lion Brand Yarn MooseJaw
- Nashbar Nordstrom
- Norm Thompson Old Navy (*\$5 shipping per order*)
- Performance Bike Petco
- REI Robeez
- Sears Sierra Trading Post
- Stride Rite Target
- The Children's Place The Right Start
- Wal-Mart Zappos

If a store does not ship to FPO/AP addresses you can use a repackaging company like <http://www.apobox.com/> which will forward your purchase for a small fee. This alternate shipping does not apply to the new regulations against lithium batteries!

FUN THINGS TO DO WITH CHILDREN ON AND OFF BASE

When you first arrive and the Lodge is your home, visit the Fleet and Family Support Office located in the Community Readiness Center (CRC) for handouts and directions. They will be happy to help you with any place that they don't have listed!

Don't hesitate to ask anyone for ideas, tips, or even a ride! We'll be happy to tell you how kid-friendly a restaurant or a location is. We have all done our own exploring with the help of others and are happy to help out!

1. Check out the Navy Lodge's Kids Playroom and wonderful outdoor play area. There is a playground across the street located behind Ume Tower.
2. Visit one of the *many* playgrounds on base. They are everywhere! There is a terrific covered playground for smaller children on the Seaside, locally called Sea Wall park, near the football fields and Purdy Fitness Center.
3. Check out the base library (<http://www.cfay.navy.mil/mwr/library.html>). It is open from 1030 to 1930 and is located in the CRC. All you need is your id card to check out books, DVDs, CDs, and more.
4. Grab lunch at McDonald's and burn some energy at the Kosano Park.
5. If you are looking for indoor fun, check out the bowling alley. They have automatic bowling bumpers for little ones and a special family program every Sunday from 1600 to 1815. Check out the website at: <http://www.cfay.navy.mil/mwr/bowling.html>. Their number is: 243-4200 / 5158.
6. Movies, movies, movies! Want to get out of the lodge? Check out the movie schedule at <http://www.cfay.navy.mil/mwr/movies.html>. The Benny Decker Theater offers kid-friendly fare and the price is right.
7. If you have young kids, try out one of the Family Fitness Classes at Purdy Fitness Center. One example is PT Tots, a gymnastics and movement class. You can also try yoga with your baby or toddler! Swimming lessons are also available for children of all ages. For more information and to sign up, go to the Purdy Fitness Center. For all of the family fitness classes, go to <http://www.cfay.navy.mil/mwr/fitness.html>.
8. If it is **YOU** that needs to burn off some energy, drop the kids off for the Child Watch program at Purdy Fitness Center while you work out! They can meet some new friends and you can get reacquainted with a sense of calm! The hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. from 9:00-12:15. Call 243-5398 to make a reservation. The cost is \$3 per 1.5 hours. Unfortunately, the program is not available during any school breaks, including summer.

9. Start learning about Japanese culture. Sign up for an origami class or Japanese dancing. Classes range in age from 3 to Adult. Stop by the Community Center for the latest schedule or go to: <http://www.cfay.navy.mil/mwr/downloads/commctr.pdf>. They also offer ballet, hip-hop, and tap dance; classical guitar; Latin dance; violin; and taiko drum classes! For moms and dads, this is a great place to start practicing your Japanese. Conversational classes are offered on a continuing basis.

10. Try a Playgroup! Go to the back pages of the “SeaHawk, our base newspaper, for current dates, times and locations. For more information and a listing of other Fleet and Family Support Center classes go to <http://www.cfay.navy.mil/FFSC%20Website/My%20Webs/calendar.htm> and click on the monthly calendar.

OUTSIDE THE BASE:

1. The local Japanese mall Daiei (pink mall right next to base) has an indoor play area on the second floor that is great for children under 5.

2. Check out Mikasa Park. It is very easy to get to, take a left out of Womble gate and walk for about ¼ of a mile. The sidewalk leads right into the gate. Mikasa Park has a small play area for children, the Mikasa ship which is open for tours and the Light Sound Water Park with a musical fountain show every couple of hours. For more info go to: <http://www.cfay.navy.mil/FFSC%20Website/My%20Webs/Mikasa%20Park.pdf>

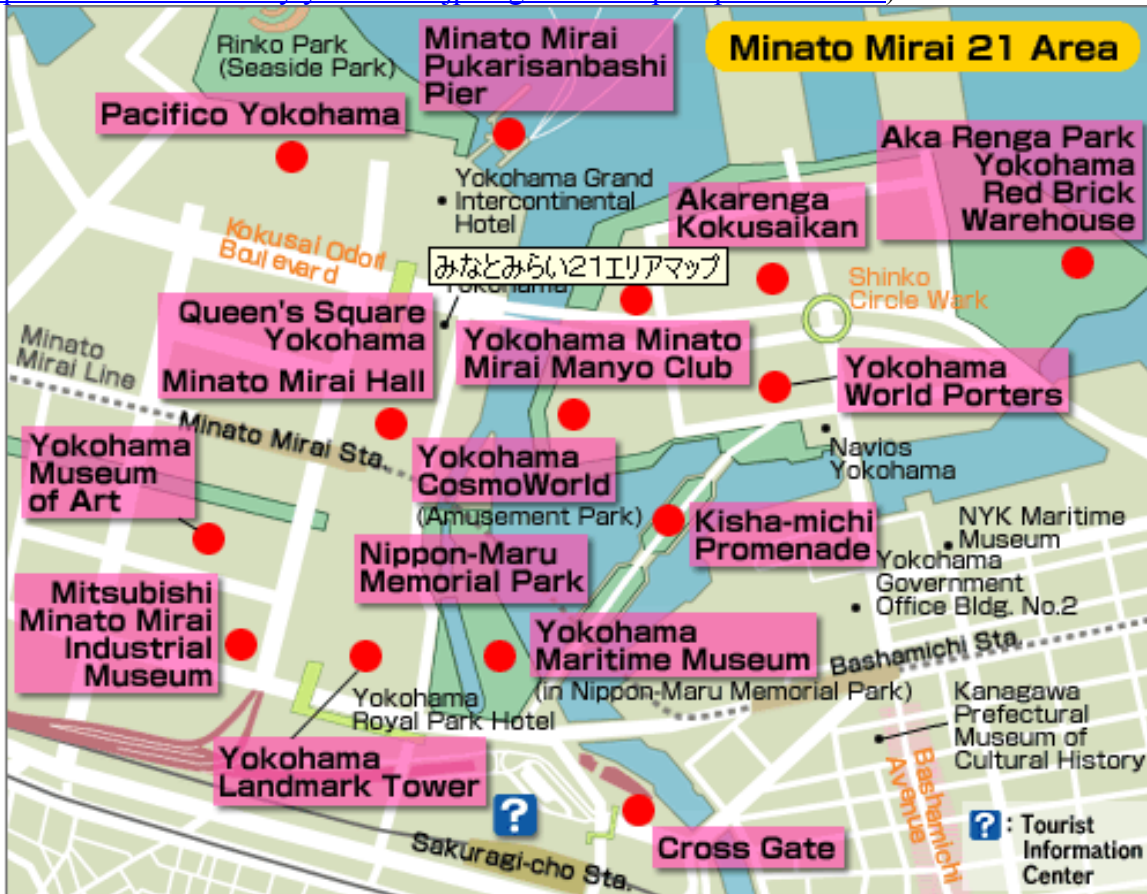
3. Check out the “Fun Things to Do” Brochure from the Fleet and Family Support Center (<http://www.cfay.navy.mil/FFSC%20Website/My%20Webs/Fun%20thing%20to%20do%20with%20kids.pdf>). This is a **GREAT** reference document! Some of the trips are easier than others but it is a good place to start if you have some time and are looking for something to do!

4. Sign up for an MWR organized day trip through the ITT office. Try an onsen bath, take a sightseeing tour of Tokyo, or visit Tokyo Disney. Some trips are more kid-friendly than others so be sure to ask the folks at ITT if you are not sure whether it would be appropriate for your children. The complete listing of trips can be found at: <http://www.cfay.navy.mil/mwr/itt.html>. Their phone number is 241-5056 / 5057.

5. For a taste of home, head to COSTCO. Your kids can enjoy hotdogs, samples, and nice wide aisles for running around! If you don’t have a car yet, you can take the train. The Fleet and Family Support Center has both train and driving directions: (<http://www.cfay.navy.mil/FFSC%20Website/My%20Webs/COSTCOKanazawa%20Nov07.pdf>)

6. Visit the children’s museum in Yokohama. The museum’s theme is based on the Anpanman character (you just have to see it!) the entrance fee is 1000 Yen for everyone 1 years and older. The website is <http://www.yokohama-anpanman.jp/main.html> (Japanese only).

7. Visit some of the other museums in Yokohama's MM21 area. The Landmark Tower also has a Build-A-Bear, Wendy's and Cold Stone Creamery. See map below on next page.
<http://www.welcome.city.yokohama.jp/eng/tourism/spot/spot1050.html>



8. Look for other places to visit around Yokohama on their great English website:
<http://www.welcome.city.yokohama.jp/eng/tourism/index.html>

9. Ask your sponsor or any of the great USNH Yokosuka family members you will meet at the monthly Family Readiness Group gatherings! There are lots of zoos, parks, beaches, and other kid-friendly activities close by!

USEFUL WEBSITES

Base Website

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY)

www.cfay.navy.mil

<https://www.facebook.com/cfayokosuka>

7th Fleet on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/7thfleet>

Telephone Directory, U.S. Navy Bases, Japan

Can search using browser software. Helpful dialing info.

http://housing.cnfj.navy.mil/cnfj_telephone_directory.pdf

Fleet and Family Support Center:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/FFSC-Yokosuka-Japan/146358918737022>

Yokosuka MWR:

<https://www.facebook.com/yokosuka.mwr.entertainment>

Maps

On-Base Map

www.cfay.navy.mil/BaseMap/base_map.htm Maps of Japan, semi-bilingual, searchable.

(Usage explained in "Online Maps of Japan" section.)

<http://diddlefinger.com/>

Housing Information, On-Base and Off-Base

<http://housing.cnfj.navy.mil/>

Vehicle-Related Information

Driver's license information and study materials. How to purchase and register a vehicle.

Motorcycle information. <http://www.cfay.navy.mil/Traffic/index.htm>

School Information

<http://www.cfay.navy.mil/Schools/CFAYSchools.htm> (School bus transportation is an important issue for off-base residents. For info, contact the DODDS Student Transportation Office at DSN 243-9564/9566.)

Japan District Veterinary Command. (refer to this information if you plan on bringing a pet to Japan!!!!)

<http://www.usarj.army.mil/organization/vet/index.aspx>

Train Schedules and Route Planning

(These sites discussed in “Regional Train Travel” section.)

www.hyperdia.com

www.jorudan.co.jp

http://www.japanrail.com/JR_shinkansen.html

<http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e627.html>

Online Newspapers in Japan

Seahawk – Yokosuka’s base newspaper.

<http://www.cfay.navy.mil/seahawk.htm>

The Japan Times – English language newspaper.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/>

Daily Yomiuri - English language newspaper.

<http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/>

Metropolis Magazine – Japan’s No #1 Online English Magazine

<http://metropolis.co.jp/>

<http://www.facebook.com/MetropolisMagazine>

Weekly Tokyo Notice Board – Tokyo Area Living Information and Classifieds

<http://www.tokyonoticeboard.co.jp/>

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/TOKYO-NOTICE-BOARD/>

Television & Online Radio - News & Entertainment

Armed Forces Network (AFN) Satellite TV Schedule

www.myafn.net

(NPR) National Public Radio --A goldmine of “Listen Again” news and talk programs.

www.npr.org

(BBC) British Broadcasting “A huge goldmine of “Listen Again” news, book readings, play performances, etc.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/>

Information Just for Fun

City of Yokosuka Chamber of Commerce

<http://www.sukaichi.jp/ynb/>

City of Yokosuka Information

(Includes links to other cities in Kanagawa, some of which have English pages.)

www.city.yokosuka.kanagawa.jp/e/index.html

City of Kamakura Tourist Information

(Among other things, look at the Flower Calendar.)

<http://www.kamakuratoday.com/e/index.html>

Yokohama Convention & Visitors Bureau

<http://www.welcome.city.yokohama.jp/eng/tourism/>

Tokyo Convention & Visitors Bureau

http://www.tcvb.or.jp/en/index_en.htm

Tokyo Tourism Info (Among other things, look at —Self-Guided Tours in Tokyo.)

<http://www.tourism.metro.tokyo.jp/english/>

Kanagawa Prefecture Tourist Information

<http://www.kanagawa-kankou.or.jp/index-e.html>

Japan Travel and Living Guide (Excellent site. The more you use it, the better it gets.)

<http://www.japan-guide.com/>

Japan National Tourist Organization

<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/>

Japan's UNESCO World Heritage Sites

<http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2251.html>

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/jp>

Japan Telephone Directory in English

<http://english.itp.ne.jp/index.html>

Translate Names into Japanese Characters

www.japanese-name-translation.com

New Sanno Hotel

Relative Visiting? Lodging Ideas in Tokyo

Hotel for Military Personnel visiting Tokyo

www.thenewsanno.com

Hardy Barracks- Recreational Lodging in Tokyo (Great backup if New Sanno is full.)

email- hardy.barracks.reservation@zama.army.mil

DSN: (315) 229-3270

www.Japanbases.com

REGIONAL TRAIN TRAVEL: FUN AND EASY

Technology has made train travel in Japan fun and easy. Two tools that are invaluable are:

1. The PASMO train travel card. (One per person.)
2. The Hyperdia.com train route planning web site in English.

Also useful are two brochures available at Yokosuka's ITT travel office: the yellow "*Kanagawa & Tokyo Railway Guide*" and the red "*Keikyu Tourists Guide*." Much of the same information printed in these brochures can be found online as well.

- For a bilingual Keikyu Train Line map, which is useful for traveling from the Yokosuka area as far north as Tokyo, go to (http://www.keikyu.co.jp/worldwide/pdf/rosen_1.pdf).
- @ A bilingual Tokyo railway map can be found at (http://www.att-japan.net/modules/tinyd3/content/pdf/tokyo_railway.pdf).
- @ And a Tokyo subway map can be found at (http://www.att-japan.net/modules/tinyd3/content/pdf/tokyo_subway.pdf).

PASMO/SUICA

In a nut shell, PASMO/SUICA is a "smart" debit card which is easily recharged. One can zip on and off trains, subways, monorails, and buses throughout the Tokyo metropolitan area. Great fun and not too intimidating for non-Japanese readers/speakers! It has eliminated the need for paper tickets and fare calculation machines. One can scurry in and out of the automated ticket gates simply by touching the PASMO/SUICA card to the magnetic pads on top of the gates, and as you walk through you can see your card balance displayed.

Currently PASMO cards are sold at Keikyu train stations and SUICA cards are sold at JR train stations. These cards can be purchased and recharged at Keikyu and JR train ticket vending machines. The purchase price is from 1000 to 10000 yen, payable in cash. The card and change will be dispensed from the machine. A refundable deposit of 500 yen will be deducted from the initial amount of money credited to the card. PASMO/SUICA can charge at either the Keikyu or JR vending machines.

The general steps for buying a PASMO/SUICA card from a train ticket vending machine:

1. Press "English" on the upper right-hand corner of the touch screen.
2. There are 2 columns of buttons to the left of the touch screen. Press the "Card" button near the bottom of the right column.

3. Two bars will appear on the touch screen. Press the top bar to buy a new PASMO/SUICA card.
4. Then choose the amount of yen you want to put on the card and insert the bill(s) when prompted.
5. The plastic card and change will be dispensed from the machine.

To add more money to a PASMO/SUICA card:

Repeat steps 1 and 2 above.

3. Two bars will appear on the touch screen. Press the bottom bar to add money to a previously purchased PASMO/SUICA card.
4. Insert the PASMO/SUICA card and the card balance will be displayed.
5. Choose the amount of yen you want to add to the card and insert the bill(s) when prompted.

To read more about PASMO:

(http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2359_002.html)

(<http://www.pasmo.co.jp/en/>)

(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PASMO>)

Hyperdia.com Train Route Planning Web Site Use of this web site is basically self-explanatory. Input your starting point, destination, travel date and desired departure or arrival time. The results will return several travel routes along with travel details, cost, and duration of journey per route. Sometimes it is not obvious whether one is on a subway train or a regular train, because the regional train and inner city subway blend together from the point of view of hyperdia.com. When transferring from one to another it is sometimes necessary to walk quite a distance inside a large station or perhaps even exit one station and enter an adjacent station. But English signs are available and attendants are helpful.

The first thing one needs to know in order to use this web site is the name of the train station from which their journey will begin. For those living near the Yokosuka Naval Station, the two major train stations are Yokosuka-chuo (Keikyu line) and Yokosuka (JR line). Going north to Yokohama or Tokyo, it is most efficient to travel.

On the Keikyu from the Yokosuka-chuo station. Going west to nearby Zushi or Kamakura, one would take the JR at the Yokosuka station. Travel books, web sites, and brochures usually list the nearest train station for one's travel destination. Often times they even indicate which exit number to use at the train station.

What if the train station name is unknown? If there is more than one train station with the same name, the web site will list all the station names to choose from. For example, input "Yokosuka" as the Start Point and input "Kawasaki" as the Destination and click "Search." The next page is where one chooses the travel date and time. But also notice that there is a pop-up list showing two Yokosuka stations and a pop-up list showing four Kawasaki stations. Sometimes looking at the suggested routes will offer a clue as to which is the proper station for one's journey.

Hyperdia.com is a favorite, but another route planning site is (<http://www.jorudan.co.jp/english/>).

Longer Trips on the Train

Japan has a superb, "user friendly" public transportation system. An excellent way to learn about all the public transportation options available throughout the country is to visit (<http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e627.html>). This web page has many links to assist in long-distance travel planning. It will also help in finding information about local transportation at your travel destination.

For information specifically about the bullet train ("shinkansen"), go to (http://www.japanrail.com/JR_shinkansen.html). Interestingly, Hyperdia.com will plan routes using the shinkansen but be aware that the PASMO card is not usable for these trains. Consult a travel agent for help in planning a trip and buying tickets for the shinkansen.

Child Fares

In general, infants and children under the age of 6 can board trains for free (although this may vary for long distance travel versus regional trains). For an explanation of train fares for children in Japan, see (http://www.japanrail.com/JR_ticketrules.htm).

ONLINE MAPS OF JAPAN

<http://www.diddlefinger.com> allows you to search for addresses on maps of Japan using the English language. It is useful for house hunting off-base and exploring Japan. For a full street address, such as "4-30-8 Yoshii, Yokosuka, look up the address on <http://www.diddlefinger.com> to find alternative travel routes from the house to the base including train station locations. Look at the satellite image to understand the topography of the neighborhood in this hilly area of Japan.

Knowing how to enter the Japanese addresses is a little tricky until you become more familiar, but some search examples are included below. Start by going to [diddlefinger.com](http://www.diddlefinger.com) and click "English Address Search". As one types in the parts of the address, lists pop-up to help you choose the proper location when there are similar names in different geographic areas of Japan. The search results are zoomable, semi-bilingual maps with optional satellite images. Addresses can be saved for future reference and distance calculations are also available.

To get an explanation of the symbols used on the maps, click "Glossary." Among the extremely helpful symbols shown on the maps are those for train stations, with the station name given in Japanese characters and English spelling. Click on the train station symbol to see more information about that particular location.

Other helpful symbols that appear on the [diddlefinger.com](http://www.diddlefinger.com) maps are logos for 7-Eleven stores and Family Mart stores - these convenience stores are frequently used as navigation landmarks by English-speakers here in Japan. Other familiar American business logos appear on the maps as well.

Address Search Example 1 - Finding the Base

Step 1: Type "yokosuka", then select pop-up "Yokosuka-shi, Kanagawa Prefecture"

Step 2: "not needed for this place"

Step 3: Type a few letters "yo", then select from the pop-up menu any place in Yokosuka.

Step 4: Optional Click "map this" and zoom in to find the exact neighborhood name you are interested. Such as "Kusugaura-cho," which is the base, or "Hon-cho", which is just outside the gate. Next time you do this search, input one of these names in Step 3.

Address Search Example 2 - Finding a House

Proper address: 4-38-8 Yoshii, Yokosuka (Get address from your real estate agent.)

Step 1: Type "yokosuka", then select pop-up "Yokosuka-shi, Kanagawa Prefecture"

Step 2: "not needed for this place"

Step 3: Type "yoshii", then select pop-up "Yoshii, all areas, Yokosuka-shi"

Step 4: Optional or input house number 4-30-8 Click "map this".

VACATION INFORMATION

- Transportation

NEX Car Rental—located in the building between the Autoport and Navy Lodge Call for a reservation – 243-4456 Some people feel that it is less expensive to rent a car (because tolls are included in your rental fee) than to drive their personal vehicles when picking up people from the airport.

Taxi-Van Chauffeur to airport- 243-4511

Price Narita \$150 Haneda \$90 New Sanno \$115 Van can hold max. 6 people and you share the total cost.

Narita Shuttle Bus- This bus runs 3 times a day.

Sign up for bus transportation by phone at DSN 243-7777/2287 or email

cfaybus@cfay.navy.mil. You must provide a copy of your orders by email, fax, or hand delivery. The bus office is located on the first floor of the PSD building (1555). People traveling with PCS or TAD orders will be assigned a reserve seat. All other travelers are space available and will be assigned at roll call (one hour before departure) depending on availability. Right now it is free to ride this bus, but this may change in the near future. Call 243-7777/2287 for all the latest information and see the CFAY web site for more details.

- Travel Agents

There are two great resources on base for a day trip or vacation package. ITT and UTC Travel are located in the building next to Starbucks and in the Fleet Recreation Center. Business hours are 9:00-6:00 Monday - Friday. 9:00-1:00 Saturday.

There are also many English-speaking travel agents near the base that may offer lower rates. Three agencies that are often used are JTB, IACE Travel, and H.I.S.

JTB is located adjacent to the Yokosuka-chuo train station. Standing at the base of the escalator, facing the escalator, JTB is located on your right. Business hours are 10:00-7:00 Monday - Friday and 10:00-6:00 Saturday and Sunday. Phone number is 046-824-5311

Website- www.jtb.co.jp/shop/yokosuka - (Japanese only)

JTB sells tickets for the bullet train. (Shinkansen)

IACE Travel is located on Rt. 16. Turn right out main gate. IACE is across from the Police Koban (kiosk) and next to the Volvo dealership. Business hours are 9:00-6:00 Monday –Friday. 9:00-5:00 Saturday.

Closed on Sundays and American holidays.

Phone number is 046-828-6471

Web site- www.iace.co.jp/English

H.I.S. is located near Saikaya Department Store on Blue Street.

Business hours are 10:00-6:30 Monday - Friday.

11:00-6:00 Saturday.

Phone number is 046-821-5141.

Web site- www.his-j.com/branch/04_ysk.htm