

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Japanese Customs & Courtesies

Etiquette.....	2
Hotel Stays.....	4
Transportation.....	5

References

Japan's Four Main Islands.....	8
Location List in Kanji	9
Hiragana and Katakana	10
Japanese Bath and Toilet.....	13
Chopsticks.....	14
National Holidays & Seasonal Events.....	15
How to Navigate Train System.....	16
Area Info around Yokota AB.....	17
Do's and Don'ts.....	18
Useful Websites.....	20
Japanese Calendar & People's Age.....	20
Number, Time, Date and Week.....	20

JAPANESE CUSTOMS & COURTESIES

Etiquette

Every culture has its own rules regarding etiquette. In Japan, some of these rules are straightforward while others are more subtle. One of the basic concepts of Japanese society is **to maintain harmonious society by respecting how others would feel**. A subtle aspect of this concept is that Japanese often do not present their true feelings (**honne**) to avoid conflicts. The appearances they would present are called **tatemae** and are considered good manners. A clear example is that Japanese often postpone what they want to do in order to support what others need to do. When you get lost, many Japanese are willing to take you to the right place regardless of their destination. If you ask language support to your Japanese friends, most likely they will coordinate their schedule to help you right away. However, it is very important that you remember that it could have happened out of their **tatemae**. Please make sure you don't take too much advantage of their kindness and always show your appreciation – maybe with a small gift or by buying lunch. If your appointment with a Japanese friend was set up to help your personal needs, never be late or cancel it because it would look very rude.

Japanese people tend not to point out mistakes made by foreign nationals for fear of embarrassing them. At the same time, they don't expect foreign nationals to adhere strictly to these rules as guests. However, if they feel you are truly included to their community, they may start to correct you out of kindness. Making an effort to be polite and to show at least some understanding of local customs can make your life easier wherever you are.

Meeting for the first time

When Japanese people meet for the first time, they say '**Hajime-mashite**' which comes from the word **hajimeru**, to begin. They'll also give their name using the word 'desu' - '**Tanaka desu**' - or 'to moshimasu' in a formal situation - '**Tanaka to moshimasu**'. Usually they'll bow if the situation is formal or just give a nod of the head otherwise. Bowing is a bit complex - the degree of bowing depends on the formality of the situation and the relationship between the people. But foreign nationals are not expected to worry about this unless greeting the Emperor or on some such rare occasion. Business people exchange **meishi** (business cards.) Please review the guideline below for the manner.

Business Card Exchanges Guidelines:

Cards are exchanged at the beginning of a meeting; make sure you have enough available for everyone.

1. It is best to stand up when exchanging cards.
2. Facing your counterpart, bow slightly and hand your card (with the Japanese side pointing up and present it for your counterpart's reading) with both hands. The same rule applies when receiving a card from someone else.
3. Make time to review your counterpart's card carefully. You might want to speak his/her name and position to be sure of correct pronunciation. If the meaning of his/her job position is in any way unclear, it would not hurt to ask for an explanation. Basically, you want to show interest in and respect to the other party.
4. **DO NOT** shove the card into your back trouser pocket!! Meishi needs to be handled nicely because it represents the person.

If you are meeting in passing, then you may just carefully place the card in a shirt pocket or in a wallet or notebook. If you are seated at a meeting, place the card gently on the table in front of you. Look at it often during the meeting in order to refer correctly to your counterpart's name and position. If you are meeting more than one person and have received multiple cards, arrange them neatly in front of you.

Visiting someone's home

If you have been invited to someone's home, it is polite to bring a gift, usually an inexpensive food item, which should be wrapped. In Japanese, the visitor says '**Tsumaranai mono desu ga**', meaning 'This is nothing much but...', similar to the English 'This is just a little something for you.' Every Japanese home has a **genkan** (hallway). It consists of two divided area - lower tiled floor right inside the door is where you take off your shoes (but never make a step without shoes) and the upper wooden floor where you should walk without shoes or with slippers on. Often, if you use the toilet, you'll have to change slippers again. (If you see slippers or sandals at toilets of some hospitals or other offices, you should use those. It is a custom for sanitary reasons.) It is quite common for Japanese people to say '**Kondo asobi ni kite kudasai**', or 'Please come around to my place sometime' to someone they barely know, but you should be careful. This is often said just out of politeness and there would be a lot of embarrassment if you actually turned up unannounced. It depends on the relationship, but generally this 'invitation' should be taken with a grain of salt.

Temiyage and Omiyage

In order to thank someone, e.g. for an invitation, one often presents a gift (temiyage) such as sweets or drinks. Similarly, when a Japanese person returns from a trip, he or she is supposed to bring home souvenirs (omiyage) to friends, co-workers and relatives.

Eating

Most restaurants provide a hot towel for cleaning your hands before eating - very civilized! Before eating, it is customary to say '**Itadaki-masu**' ("I gratefully receive") before eating, and '**Gochiso-sama (deshita)**' ("Thank you for the meal") after finishing the meal to show appreciation to anybody related to the food such as farmers, cooks, servers, god, nature or even to the food itself. It depends on the food, of course, but **hashi** (chopsticks) are the most widely used implements for eating. It's not impolite to ask for a knife and fork or spoon if you have trouble with chopsticks. Some restaurants may not have them but those serving Western food always do. Chopsticks should not be used for anything other than putting food in your mouth. They certainly shouldn't be used for pointing to someone or moving dishes around the table. And they should not be stuck into a bowl of rice - this is only done at a funeral! There will sometimes be a **hashi-oki**, or small object to rest the chopsticks on. When eating noodles, such as soba or ramen, it is okay to slurp loudly. In fact, they say it improves the flavor! After a meal, it is polite to say, 'gochiso-sama' which is another appreciation word. Many restaurants in Japan display plastic or wax replicas of their dishes at the entrance. They usually look very similar to the real dishes.



Show window displaying food replicas



A restaurant with meal ticket vending machines



A restaurant with traditional low tables

When you enter a restaurant, you will be greeted with the expression "irasshaimase" ("welcome"), as it is usual in any Japanese store. Waiters and waitresses are generally trained to be extremely efficient, polite and attentive, and will usually immediately lead you to your table. If they don't, you can assume that it is okay to sit at any table.

While a majority of restaurants in Japan are equipped exclusively with Western style tables and chairs, restaurants with low traditional tables and customers sitting on cushions on the floor, are also common. Some restaurants feature both styles side by side. In case of a traditional Japanese interior, you are usually required to take off your shoes before stepping onto the seating area or even at the restaurant's entrance.

After you sit down, a glass of water or tea will be served for free and later refilled. You also receive a wet towel (oshibori) for cleaning your hands. If chopsticks are not already set, you can usually find some in a box on the table. Most often, they are wooden chopsticks that need to be separated into two before usage.

It is common in private households and in certain restaurants (e.g. izakaya or Chinese restaurants) to share several dishes of food at the table rather than serving each person an individual dish. When eating from shared dishes, move some food from the shared plates onto your own with the opposite end of your chopsticks or with serving chopsticks that may be provided for that purpose. At restaurants that serve set menus, bowl dishes (e.g. domburi or noodle soups) or Western style dishes, on the other hand, each person usually orders and eats one separate dish.

When you are ready to order, you can call waiter/waitress by saying, "Sumimasen" or excuse me. In some restaurants, you may find a button at the table to make a bell sound to call them. If you can't catch the waiters attention, look around the table to find the button!

Paying

The bill will be given to you upside-down when you receive the meal or after you finish eating. In most restaurants, you are supposed to bring your bill to the cashier near the exit when leaving in order to pay. Some restaurants, especially cheaper ones, have different systems for ordering and paying. At some stores, you may be required to pay right after ordering, while in others, you are supposed to buy meal tickets at a vending machine near the store's entrance and to hand them over to the staff in order to receive a meal. In restaurants in Japan, you are not expected to tip. When leaving, it is polite to say "gochisosama deshita" ("thank you for the meal").

Money

The **yen** (en) was established as the official unit of currency in 1871. The name **en** was used because it means round, as opposed to the oblong shape of previous coinage. Most yen coins reflect their value with a western number so they are easily recognized. The exception is the 5 yen coin, which is similar to the 50 yen with a center hole but has no western number.

There is a 5 percent **sales tax** (shohizei) levied on most products.

Drinking

The Japanese are a quiet and reserved people, except when they're drunk - and most of them get drunk pretty easily. Going drinking with friends or coworkers is almost a ritual in Japan. It is considered the best way to break down barriers and cement relationships and behavior can get pretty rowdy. But all is forgiven and forgotten the next day. It is polite to pour other people's drinks and then hold your own glass while your host or friend fills it. Having other people constantly filling your glass can lead to a lot of alcohol disappearing very quickly! The Japanese toast is '**Kampai**' (literally 'dry glass'). At "izakaya," local pubs where you usually drink and share dishes with your friends, it is common to divide the bill regardless of how much you ate or drank. Most **bars** (with the exception of Western-style pubs) have a tab system. The bill is paid when you leave.

In public

Don't talk loudly in public because it would interrupt others.

When you visit a local home or office, they often serve you green tea with no question. This custom is based on the Japanese common idea that most people like green tea. If you don't want it, the best manner is to say, thank you, and leave it. If you brought your own drink, best to explain that you have your own before you drink it.

If you find nobody would sit next to you on the train, it's not because they don't like you but because they are worried that you may talk to them in foreign language. As for English, everybody in Japan studies it at junior high school for three years. They feel it shameful that they are not good at speaking English. On the other hand, many people would understand English if you write it, especially in block letters.

Bathing

Japan has a long history of communal bathing and a visit to one of its thousands of **onsen** (hot springs) can be a highlight of any trip. As in the bathroom in a private home, you wash yourself outside the bath before getting into the hot water to soak. It is not uncommon for people to scrub each other's backs. Traditional **Sento** (public bath houses) are not very common nowadays. Instead, you will find "Super Sento" or "Kenko (Healthy) land" which usually has several different baths, massage room, rest area and restaurant. The entrance fee can be from 700 yen to 1,800 yen depending on its location and facility. Most of them offer a little discount if you become a member. You should bring your own toiletries and put your shoes and clothes in the lockers provided. Sento and onsen are almost always separated by sex these days but mixed bathing can still be found in a few places.

General

Japanese people don't usually use handkerchiefs for blowing their nose. It's very common to see packs of tissues being given out on the street. They're free because they contain advertisements. Eating on the street is considered impolite but has become more common.

Hotel Stays

Traditional Inns, **ryokan**, usually have Japanese-style architecture and serve Japanese food. Rooms have **tatami** (reed mats) floors, and **futons** for bedding. They usually have a shared bathing facility but no shower in your room unless you upgrade your room. Most rooms have a private toilet nowadays. Most ryokan do not have western-style rooms. Rates per person, including two meals, vary from 7,000 up to 60,000 and are usually based on two or more people sharing a room. Check-in is around 4pm and check-out around 10am. A service charge of 10 percent is usually added. Western style hotels are also very common in Japan. The rate is usually charged per person and children may be charged as well. Reasonable hotels are often called business hotels. They are usually located close to the train station and provide a tiny room with a bed or two and a tiny bathroom.

Transportation

Shinkansen

Introduced at the time of the Tokyo Olympics in 1964, the shinkansen 'bullet trains' are one of Japan's most famous symbols. They're also a great way to get around the country. The fact that there has never been a fatal shinkansen accident is also reassuring. All are operated by JR (Japan Railways), which is divided into seven companies. All the JR lines around Tokyo are under **JR East** except for the shinkansen from Tokyo to Osaka (**Tokaido** line) which is under **JR Tokai**. From Osaka, the **Tokaido** line continues as the **San-yo** line under **JR West** which goes through **Hiroshima** to Hakata in Kyushu district. Shinkansens under JR East are **Tohoku** line to Hachinohe (close to Misawa AB) and the **Joetsu** line to Niigata. JR East added the **Yamagata**, **Akita** and **Nagano** shinkansens during the 1990's. The former two branched off the Tohoku route and the latter branches off the Joetsu route.

The Tokaido route provides the best scenery, including a great view of Mt. Fuji. It is named after a road that for centuries was the main transport artery between Edo (now Tokyo) and Kyoto. As of Mar 2010, it takes about 2 ½ hours and costs 12,710 yen one-way from Tokyo station to Kyoto, old capital city. From Tokyo to Hiroshima is about 4 hours and 17,540 yen one-way. (The fares are subject to seasonal surcharges of up to 500 yen.) If you buy a package tour with hotel at travel agencies, you may get a discount price even though the train tickets may have more restrictions.

Several types of trains run on each of the routes. The names indicate the type of train and the number of stops it makes. The trains also have varying numbers of carriages so, even though the carriage numbers are indicated on the platforms, it can be a bit confusing to work out exactly where to board your train. Platform and onboard announcements are made in English as well as Japanese.

When you travel by shinkansen, you actually have to pay for the ticket and a surcharge, usually meaning that you have two 'tickets'. The surcharge is higher if you go for a **shitei-seki** (reserved seat) as opposed to a **jiyu-seki** (unreserved seat). As the trains sometimes run at over 200 percent of capacity, the shitei-seki is a good idea if you can afford it. All train reservations can be made at **JR Travel Centers** or **Midori no Mado-guchi** (Green Window) at major stations. Tickets are available one month before the departure date. At stations on Ome line, there are special ticket machine to connect you to operators. At Yokota AB, the reps at Yujo Community Center will help you fill out the ticket request form for your convenience.

For short term visitors, Rail Pass is useful as you just have to get a ticket to confirm your seat reservation. You can only buy the pass from outside of Japan, though. The Green Rail Pass also entitles you to a seat in the **Green Car**, a type of first-class section.

Japan Railways (JR)

The Japan Railways network covers the entire country, over 21,000 km of line and 20,000 services daily. The company is divided into two main companies, **JR East** and **JR West** with lots of smaller regional companies. The minimum fare is ¥130, which will usually cover one or two stops. All stations have automatic ticket vending machines. They are quite easy to use as long as you're able to read the name of your destination in Japanese. An alternative is to buy a pre-paid or rechargeable (Suica) card for ¥500 up to ¥10,000. If you regularly commute the same route, you might consider a monthly **teiki-ken** pass. Most stations have automatic ticket gates. If your ticket is not valid as far as the station you're exiting from, you'll need to use one of the fare adjustment machines or settle up with the rep at the window.

JR services are generally frequent, regular and efficient. More and more trains have digital readouts in every carriage indicating the stops in both Japanese and English. During rush hours, trains on some lines become almost unbelievably packed, especially into and out of the major cities. The train, subway and bus networks are so extensive that there is often a less crowded, if slower, alternative. The various networks are also well inter-connected, with bus terminals outside train stations, for example. You will have to buy separate tickets for each. JR stations are almost always centrally located and often have shopping centers and restaurants in the same building.

A central loop line passes around the center of both Tokyo (**Yamanote Line**) and Osaka (**Kanjo Line**), which, together with the extensive subway systems, provides convenient access to almost any spot in the city.

The trains stop running from approximately midnight to almost 5am, except on 31 Dec when they run all night.

Private Railways

There are many private railway lines serving suburban and resort areas. Usually they are shorter than JR lines; less than 100km in length. The stations are often located away from the commercial centers. Many of the lines are run by large corporations such as Seibu which also owns department stores, travel agencies and even professional baseball team. In Tokyo, most of the private lines radiate out to the suburbs from the central JR **Yamanote** loop line. The Kinki area between the Osaka-Kobe-Kyoto-Nara metropolis and Nagoya is well served by private lines. Using both private lines and JR trains means buying two or more tickets and gets pretty expensive.



A Ginza Line subway



A taxi noriba (stand)



A Tokyo metro bus

Subway

With the relatively small land area of Japan in relation to its population, subways are as much a necessity as a convenience. Subways in Tokyo, Yokohama, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka and Sapporo are operated by private companies. The main inconvenience of the subways is that, like the trains, they stop running between around midnight and almost 5am, except on New Year's Eve.

Tokyo has two subway companies, **Metro** and **Toei**. The lines are color-coded, making it easy to find the one you're looking for. Between them, the lines cover just about the whole city. The difficulty begins when you try to buy a ticket because most of the machines show the station names in kanji only. You can get around this by buying a **SUICA** or a **PASMO** rechargeable pre-paid card which automatically deducts the fare when you go through the automatic tickets gates. There are also several types of one-day tickets. The minimum fare is currently ¥160, making it a bit more expensive than the train. Some subway trains have digital readouts showing approaching station names and even which side of the train the doors will open!

Bus

Many people spend their entire time in Japan without using buses. In the cities, the train and subways systems are so good that the buses are not often necessary. If you happen to live in the suburbs or countryside, a long walk from the nearest station, then the local bus comes into its own. Most city buses charge a flat fare (¥210 in Tokyo), making short journeys expensive and long ones cheap. Suburban and rural buses show their fares above the inside front window. You take a ticket from the machine at the (rear) entrance and pay at the machine next to the driver on your way out. The main problems with buses are that all maps and signs are in Japanese; travel on the city buses is subject to the rush-hour traffic congestion; and bus services stop even earlier than the trains.

Taxi

Taxi fares have become a little cheaper in recent years due to increased competition. But they are still expensive, usually starting at ¥700 or more for the first 2 kilometers plus an additional charge for each further 400 meters or so. Between 10pm and 5am, rates go up by 20 percent. So if you miss the last train, be prepared for an expensive trip home. The 'for hire' sign is a bit confusing - a red sign means the taxi is available while a green sign shows that it's occupied. You shouldn't open the rear passenger-side door - it is opened and closed by the driver. If you don't speak Japanese, you should have your destination written on a piece of paper. Even then, the driver will often ask you the best way to get there! There is usually a **taxi-noriba** (stand) in front of train stations but there can be a long wait at night and taxis can be very few and far between, especially when it's raining.

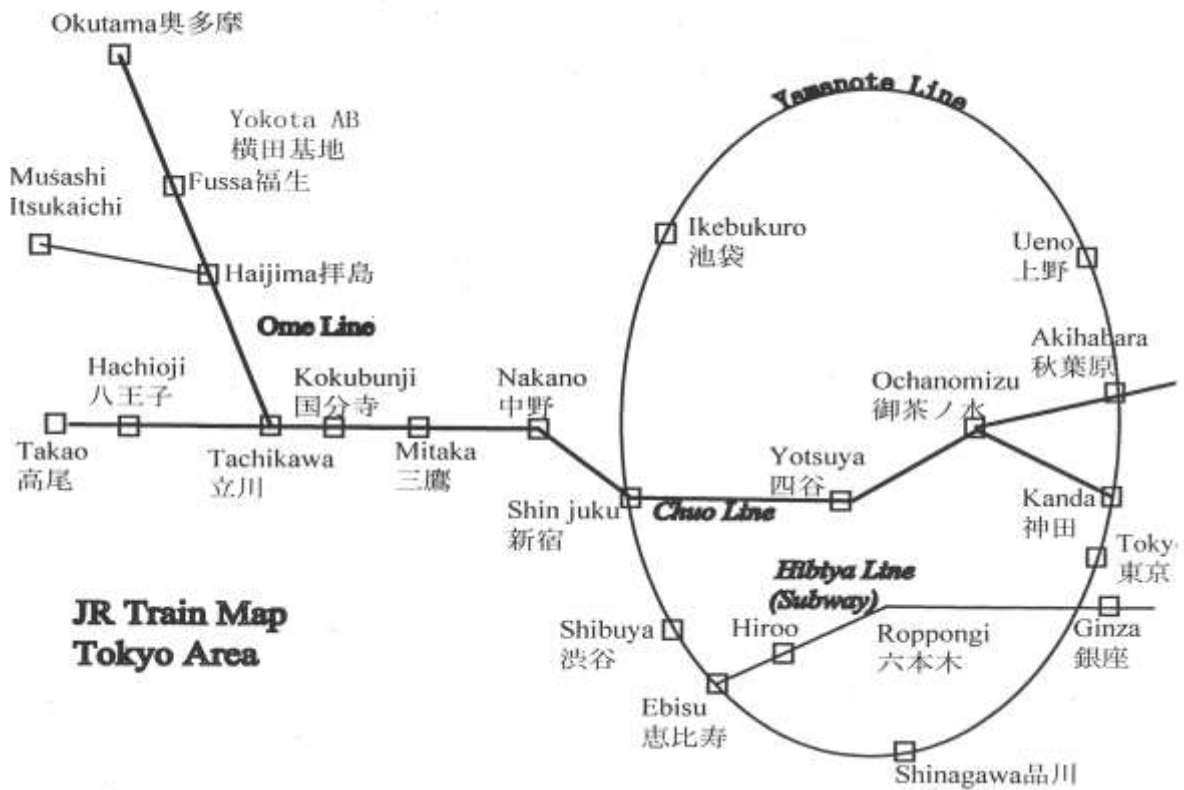
Japan's Four Main Islands



Area: 377,835km² (Japan : US = 1 : 24)
Population: 130M (Japan : US = 1 : 2.4)

Location List in Kanji

赤坂	AKASAKA	箱根	HAKONE	六本木	ROPPONGI
秋葉原	AKIHABARA	白雲山	HAKUUNZAN	両国	RYOGOKU
昭島	AKISHIMA	吉祥寺	KICHIJOJI	相模原	SAGAMIHARA
浅草	ASAKUSA	後樂園	KORAKUEN	渋谷	SHIBUYA
厚木	ATSUGI	九段下	KUDANSHITA	新宿	SHINJUKU
秩父	CHICHIBU	三鷹	MITAKA	立川	TACHIKAWA
恵比寿	EBISU	御岳	MITAKE	高尾	TAKAO
府中	FUCHU	富士山	MT. FUJI	多摩ロッジ	TAMA LODGE
富士吉田	FUJIYOSHIDA	成田	NARITA	東京	TOKYO
福生	FUSSA	日本	NIHON/NIPPON	上野	UENO
銀座	GINZA	日光	NIKKO	横浜	YOKOHAMA
御殿場	GOTENBA	御茶ノ水	OCHANOMIZU	横須賀	YOKOSUKA
八王子	HACHIOJI	小田原	ODAWARA	横田	YOKOTA
拝島	HAIJIMA	奥多摩	OKUTAMA	四谷	YOTSUYA
ニュー山王	NEW SANNO	青梅	OME	座間	ZAMA



Hiragana and Katakana

Rōmaji	
Hiragana	Katakana

a	i	u	e	o
あ ア	い イ	う ウ	え エ	お オ
ka	ki	ku	ke	ko
か カ	き キ	く ク	け ケ	こ コ
sa	shi	su	se	so
さ サ	し シ	す ス	せ セ	そ ソ
ta	chi	tsu	te	to
た タ	ち チ	つ ツ	て テ	と ト
na	ni	nu	ne	no
な ナ	に ニ	ぬ ヌ	ね ネ	の ノ
ha	hi	fu	he	ho
は ハ	ひ ヒ	ふ フ	へ ヘ	ほ ホ
ma	mi	mu	me	mo
ま マ	み ミ	む ム	め メ	も モ
ya	(i)	yu	(e)	yo
や ヤ	(い) (イ)	ゆ ユ	(え) (エ)	よ ヨ
ra	ri	ru	re	ro
ら ラ	り リ	る ル	れ レ	ろ ロ
wa	(i)	(u)	(e)	wo
わ ワ	(い) (イ)	(う) (ウ)	(え) (エ)	を ヲ
n				
ん ン				

ga	gi	gu	ge	go
が ガ	ぎ ギ	ぐ グ	げ ゲ	ご ゴ
za	zi	zu	ze	zo
ざ ザ	じ ジ	ず ズ	ぜ ゼ	ぞ ゾ
da	ji	zu	de	do
だ ダ	ぢ ヂ	づ ツ	で デ	ど ド
ba	bi	bu	be	bo
ば バ	び ビ	ぶ ブ	べ ベ	ぼ ボ
pa	pi	pu	pe	po
ぱ パ	ぴ ピ	ぷ プ	ぺ ペ	ぽ ポ

kya	kyu	kyo
きゃ キャ	きゅ キュ	きょ キョ
sha	shu	sho
しゃ シャ	しゅ シュ	しょ ショ
cha	chu	cho
ちゃ チャ	ちゅ チュ	ちょ チョ
nya	nyu	nyo
にゃ ニャ	にゅ ニュ	にょ ニョ
hya	hyu	hyo
ひゃ ヒャ	ひゅ ヒュ	ひょ ヒョ
mya	myu	myo
みゃ ミャ	みゅ ミュ	みょ ミョ
rya	ryu	ryo
りゃ リャ	りゅ リュ	りょ リョ
gya	gyu	gyo
ぎゃ ギャ	ぎゅ ギュ	ぎょ ギョ
ja	ju	jo
じゃ ジャ	じゅ ジュ	じょ ジョ
bya	byu	byo
びゃ ビャ	びゅ ビュ	びょ ビョ
pya	pyu	pyo
ぴゃ ピャ	ぴゅ ピュ	ぴょ ピョ

Hiragana

Hiragana is a phonetic alphabet, as is our own alphabet. The symbols stand for sounds; they have no meaning in and of themselves.

Hiragana is the first alphabet learned by Japanese children. This enables even youngsters to be able to write the language, even though they have not mastered *Kanji* yet.

Hiragana's general use is, in conjunction with *Kanji*, to give grammar to sentences.

HIRAGANA WORDS

え き (station)
E KI

き ち (military base)
KI CHI

ひ こ う き (airplane)
HI KO (O) KI

と し (year)
TO SHI

で ん わ (telephone)
DE N WA

き っ ぷ (ticket)
KI (P) PU

Katakana

Katakana, like *Hiragana*, is a phonetic alphabet. It has the same basic sounds as *Hiragana*, but the symbols are more angular looking.

The primary use of *Katakana* is for foreign words that have been integrated into the Japanese language. It is also used in situations where speed is important. Telegrams and some official documents are written in *Katakana*.

The advantage in learning *Katakana* is that you can usually understand the word after it has been read.

KATAKANA WORDS

ア メ リ カ (station)
A ME RI KA

チ キ ン (chicken)
CHI KI N

ハ ム (ham)
HA MU

ガ ス (year)
GA SU

サ ラ ダ (telephone)
SA RA DA

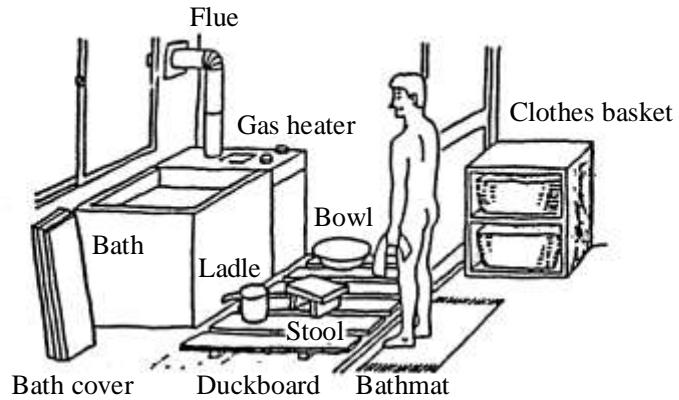
コ ー ラ (coke)
KO (O) RA

Using Japanese Bath

The Japanese bathroom 'furoba' is usually separate from the toilet and looks different from the Western bathroom. It has a tiled floor with taps low down on the wall, and sometimes a shower. The bath itself is square, and is deeper than a Western bath.

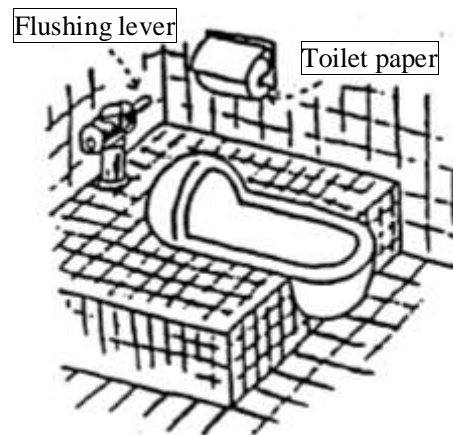
Wash and rinse yourself in the tiled area before getting into the bath. The bath is for soaking and relaxing in (that's why it's so hot), and soap, shampoo, etc, should never be used in it.

This allows bath water to be reused. If you are a guest in a Japanese home, never drain bath water without asking first.



Japanese Style Toilet

There is no shortage of public toilets in Japan, but many are not supplied with towels, and some do not have toilet paper. Hot running water is highly unusual. The Japanese habitually carry a handkerchief or tissues for drying their hands.



女
WOMEN



男
MEN

PROPER ETIQUETTE IN JAPAN

A knowledge of the manners and etiquette of a country can give much insight into that country's social system and ways of thinking. It can also help you to avoid social gaffes. Some basic Japanese table manners are introduced here.



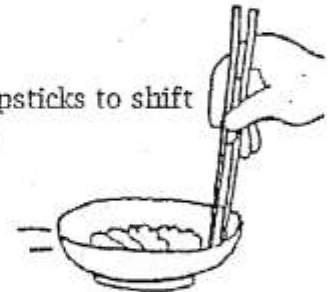
If you eat Japanese food, you will of course have to use chopsticks 'hashi'. These should be placed on the table pointing to the diner's left, with the tips resting on the chopstick rest 'hashioki'. Take the chopsticks in your right hand and transfer them to the left hand. Then take the proper grip on them with the fingers of the right hand.

The following actions are considered bad manners:

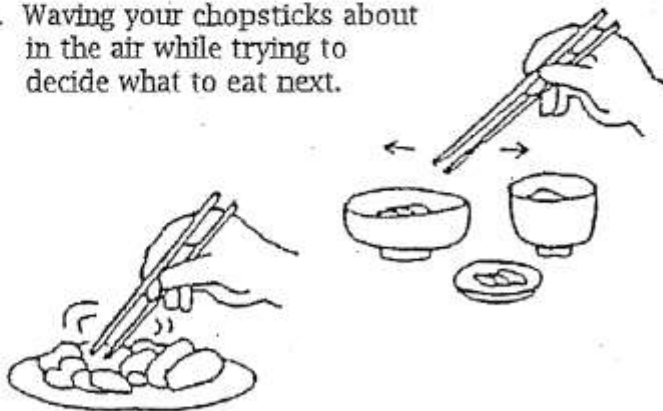
1. Spearing pieces of food with your chopsticks.



2. Using your chopsticks to shift dishes around.



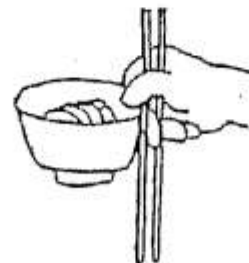
3. Waving your chopsticks about in the air while trying to decide what to eat next.



4. Rummaging about in the food looking for the tastiest morsel.



5. Picking up a dish with the hand that is holding the chopsticks.



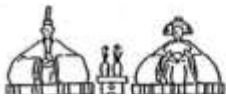
National Holidays & Seasonal Events

Jan 1	元旦	Gantan	New Year's Day
The second Mon of Jan	成人の日	Seijin-no-hi	Coming-of-Age Day
The second Monday of February	建国記念日	Kenkoku-kinenbi	National Foundation Day
Around March 21	春分の日	Shunbun-no-hi	Vernal Equinox Day
29 April	昭和の日	Shōwa-no-hi	Showa Day
3 May	憲法記念日	Kenpōkinen-bi	Constitution Day
4 May	緑の日	Midori-no-hi	Greenery Day
5 May	こどもの日	Kodomo-no-hi	Children's Day
The third Monday of July	海の日	Umi-no-hi	Marine Day
The third Monday of September	敬老の日	Keirō-no-hi	Respect-for-the-Aged Day
23 or 24 September	秋分の日	Syūbun-no-hi	Autumnal Equinox Day
The second Monday of October	体育の日	Taiku-no-hi	Sports Day
3 November	文化の日	Bunka-no-hi	Culture Day
23 November	勤労感謝の日	Kinrōkansha-no-hi	Labor Thanksgiving Day
23 December	天皇誕生日	Tennō-tanjō-bi	The Emperor's Birthday

Jan 1 – Gantan
(New Year Day)

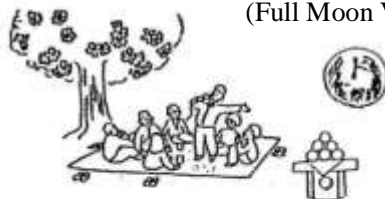


Feb 3 – Setsubun
(Bean Throwing Ceremony)

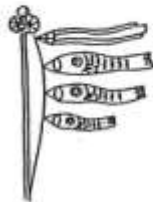


Mar 3 – Hinamatsuri
(Dolls Festival)

Oct 15 – Tsukimi
(Full Moon Viewing)



Jul 7 - Tanabata
(Star Festival)



April – Hanami
(Flower Viewing)

Nov 15 – Shichigosan
(Ceremony for 7, 5 and 3 year-old)

May 5 – Kodomo no hi
(Children's Day)



Dec 31 – Omisoka (New Year's Eve)

How to Navigate Train System

Purchase a Ticket at a Vending Machine (Short Distance)

1. Find your destination and the corresponding fare. (At Fussa station, there is a fare list to major stations in English above the vending machine. You can also research fare on-line in advance at <http://www.hyperdia.com/>)
If you are unable to find your destination and the fare, you can purchase a ticket for the lowest possible price, and pay the difference at a fare adjustment machine at the destination station.
2. Some machine have an “English” button on the top right of screen for English assistance. Insert the money into the vending machine. Most machines accept coins of 10, 50, 100 and 500 yen and bills of 1000 yen. Many machines also accept larger bills.
3. Select the number of tickets that you wish to buy. The default is one adult, so if you are traveling alone, you can skip this step. At the left end of each vending machine, you will see symbols of adults in black and children in red. If you wish to buy tickets for 2 adults and 1 child, press the button with symbols of 2 adults and 1 child. See details at “Passengers Classification.”
4. Press the button that shows the amount for your ticket.
5. Collect the ticket(s) and change.



Automatic Ticket Gates

Insert your ticket into slot. When you enter the paid fare zone, make sure you take your ticket from the slot as you leave the gate. When you exit at the destination, one-way ticket will be collected. If you insert an invalid ticket, the gate will close and an alarm will sound. If you did not pay the correct fare for your destination station, you have to pay the difference at a "Fare Adjustment" machine before leaving through the gates. If there are no such machines, you can pay the difference at the manned gate. Some automatic ticket gates are for the IC card only. Please see details under “SUICA Card.”

SUICA Card

Suica is a JR EAST prepaid IC card that allows you to ride local trains without purchasing a ticket every time. It can be used for travel on most railways, subways, and buses in Greater Tokyo, and also can be used in the Sendai, Niigata, Nagoya, Shizuoka, Kansai, Okayama, and Hiroshima areas. It can be recharged at the ticket vending machine at stations under JR East. Limited Express/Express/Green Car trains require a Limited Express ticket to be purchased in advance. SUICA cannot be used for Shinkansen trains.



You can purchase SUICA at JR East stations. At Fussa, ask the rep in the office. Initially, it costs 2,000 yen including 500 yen deposit. When you leave Japan, you can return your SUICA at a Ticket office, “Midori no Madoguchi,” which is located at major stations, such as Akishima, Tachikawa or Hachioji. You can get the 500 yen deposit back. Service fee of 210 yen will apply if you request to return remained money charged on SUICA.

*A similar IC card by other train companies in Tokyo is called a **PASMO** card. PASMO and SUICA can be used in the same area, so no need to purchase both.

Passenger's Classification

Adult – age 12 and older
Child – age 6 through 11 (half price)
Infant – age 1 through 5



Examples of children's ticket.
You can see the child's symbol
小, white out in black circle or
square.

*One paid passenger can accompany up to two infants free. If one adult accompanies more than three infants, the third and any additional infants are required to pay child's fare.

Long Distance Ticket

To purchase a long distance ticket, you need to go to a ticket counter* and provide information listed below. It is highly recommended that you write the data on a piece of paper and present it to the salesperson in order to make the purchasing process smoother. **At Yokota, Yujo Community Center has the special forms for that purpose and their reps help you fill it out.**

*Most stations in Ome line now have a special machine instead of a ticket counter with a salesperson. You can scan your request, talk to the rep over the machine and purchase long distance tickets.

Required information:

- Number of travelers
- Date of travel
- Departure Station and Destination station
- Ordinary or green car (First class)
- Preference of reserved or non-reserved seat
- Train name and number OR departure time (for reserved seat)
- Preference of smoking or non-smoking seat (for reserved seat)

Area Info around Yokota AB

Well known cities around Yokota

Not many people know names of local cities around Yokota if you are out of this area.

- On Route 16: Fussa is between Hachioji (southbound) and Kawagoe (northbound)
- On Ome line: Fussa is between Tachikawa (eastbound) and Ome (westbound)
- Tachikawa is where Ome line starts and it takes 17 minutes from Fussa by train. Most people in Tokyo recognize Tachikawa as a station on Chuo line (central line). On Chuo line, Tachikawa is between Tōkyō or Shinjuku (eastbound) and Hachioji (westbound)

Names of streets

Most streets DO NOT have names. Major streets under national government are called by numbers, such as Route 16 (16 go). Other major streets under control of local government are NOT usually called by numbers even though the signs on street show them. "Route 5" in Yokota neighborhood is under Tokyo Metropolitan government. Local nationals do NOT call or recognize it as Route 5 (5 go.) It's known as "Ome kaido."

Do's and Don'ts

Do's

Do go off-base as often as possible. Don't miss out on all the interesting things to see and do in Japan. It is an opportunity of a lifetime.

Do be considerate of other people at all times. The whole system of Japanese customs and courtesy is based on consideration for the feelings of other people.

Do try to learn as much of the Japanese language as possible. It is not nearly as difficult as you might imagine. A little language goes a long way in promoting friendship. With a little attention, you will easily master over 100 words or phrases.

Do get out and meet the Japanese people. They are very friendly and easy to get along with. You will establish some friendships which will last a lifetime.

Do try to be clean and neat in your appearance when you go off-base. The Japanese are generally very conservative in the way they dress. Clothes that are too revealing will embarrass them.

Do consider taking a small, inexpensive gift to your immediate neighbors when you move into a home off-base, depending on your neighborhood.

Do keep to the left, not only on highways, but also on sidewalks, hallways, and stairs. You will bump into people less often if you walk to the left.

Do try all kinds of Japanese food. You will be surprised at how quickly you will develop a taste for things you thought you wouldn't like.

Do pick up your bowl of miso soup and drink from the bowl. It is not considered to be ill mannered in Japan. It is permissible to slurp a hot drink, but not compulsory. When you pick up the bowl, have your thumbs placed on the top edge of the bowl.

Do learn how to use hashi (chopsticks). Some Japanese restaurants will not have silverware. Anything can be eaten with hashi and you will become very proficient with a little practice.

Do bring a handkerchief when you go off-base. There may be no paper towels at the public bathroom.

Do observe how the Japanese do things. If you don't know what to do in a particular situation, just watch what people around you are doing and follow their example. In Japan, do as the Japanese do.

Don'ts

Don't talk loudly or play music loudly on trains or in public where you will disturb people.

Don't smoke at train stations. There used to be designated smoking area but not anymore at stations around Tokyo. You will find designated smoking areas at shopping malls or smoking cars in some express trains. Many restaurants offer non-smoking seats nowadays and/or prohibit smoking during lunch hours.

Don't spank or scold your small children in public.

Don't show physical affection in public. Kissing, hugging or even holding hands in front of others is frowned upon in Japan.

Don't count your change in front of the person who gives it to you. You imply that you think the person cheated you. The Japanese are very honest and will not "short change" you.

Don't flirt with women on the trains or other public places. This will embarrass them very much. It is not the Japanese way of meeting someone of the opposite sex.

Don't eat or drink while walking on the streets, riding the trains, or in public places. It is considered to be very ill-mannered. When you buy something at a little stand, you either eat it at the stand or take it home.

Don't wear your shoes in Japanese homes. Shoes are also removed when entering some public places.

Don't soap and rinse yourself in a Japanese style bathtub. The deep hot water is for soaking and relaxing only. Wash your body thoroughly before you enter the tub so that you can keep the water clean enough for the following person. In Japanese custom, you don't change water in the tub for each person.

Don't request substitution at restaurants because it sounds greedy in Japan. You may request to remove some ingredients but the request may be refused for various reasons. If they offer substitution, you may then take it. At some casual restaurants in the business area, you may be asked to share table with others. It is custom to support each other to finish lunch within their lunch break.

Don't tip in Japan. Tipping is not expected at restaurants. Restaurants at upscale hotels or some expensive restaurants may charge you a service fee instead. There are people who tip taxi drivers by letting them keep change, although it's not so common when the economy is slow. On-base you will be expected to tip as you would in the States.

Don't give expensive gifts to the Japanese. They will feel an obligation to give you a gift of equal value.

Don't wear your uniform when you go off-base. It is not their custom to wear uniforms or work clothes when not on duty.

Don't laugh at the Japanese when they mispronounce English words. It will greatly discourage them from trying to speak English again. Your Japanese pronunciation is hilarious to them, too.

Don't be boisterous, horse around, use profanity, whistle or yell at females, or otherwise attract unfavorable attention to yourself. Remember that you may be the only American that some Japanese will see and that they will judge your country by the way you act.

Don't spit gum on the street or in public. Unfortunately, a supermarket manager in a local neighborhood said they find more gum on the floor here than any other branches in Tokyo.

Useful Websites

Train Route finder www.hyperdia.com or <http://www.jorudan.co.jp/english/>

Railway maps <http://www.jreast.co.jp/e/routemaps/index.html>
(JR East & Major railways in Metropolitan area)

Tokyo Subway map http://www.kotsu.metro.tokyo.jp/english/subway_map.html

Map of Japan http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/map/index_map.html

Japanese National Tourist Organization <http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/>

Tokyo Tourism Info <http://www.tourism.metro.tokyo.jp/index.html>

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

Japanese Calendar & People's Age

Japanese use the solar calendar. The calendar year 2010 in Japan is also called Heisei 22nd (Heisei 22 nen: 平成 22 年.) Heisei started on the day after the previous emperor passed away in January 1989, which started as the 64th year of Showa only a week before. When you refer to a date, the order is always year, month, and then day. July 25, 2010, can be written as 2010. 7. 25, H22. 7. 25 or 平 22. 7. 25

People's Age

The way of counting people's age is now exactly the same as the American way. Japanese no longer use the traditional way of counting ages where everybody becomes one year older on the New Year day.

Number, Time, Date and Week

<p>Number</p> <p>0: zero 〇</p> <p>1: ichi 一</p> <p>2: ni 二</p> <p>3: san 三</p> <p>4: yon (shi / yo) 四</p> <p>5: go 五</p> <p>6: roku 六</p> <p>7: nana (shichi) 七</p> <p>8: hachi 八</p> <p>9: kyū (ku) 九</p> <p>10: jū 十</p> <p>100: hyaku 百</p> <p>1,000: sen 千</p> <p>10,000: man 万</p>	<p>Time</p> <p>o'clock - ji 時</p> <p>minute - hun (pun) 分</p> <p>am – gozen</p> <p>pm – gogo</p> <p>9:05am - gozen ku ji go hun</p> <p>3:00pm – gogo san ji</p> <p>morning – asa</p> <p>daytime/noon – hiru</p> <p>early evening - yūgata (around 4 – 6 pm)</p> <p>nighttime/evening – yoru</p>	<p>Date</p> <p>year 2008 - 2008 nen</p> <p>January 25th - 1 gatsu 25 nichi</p> <p>**It's always year, month, and then, day. (ex. 2008.1.25)</p> <p>Week</p> <p>Sunday nichiyō(bi) 日曜(日)</p> <p>Monday getsuyō(bi) 月曜(日)</p> <p>Tuesday kayō(bi) 火曜(日)</p> <p>Wednesday suiyō(bi) 水曜(日)</p> <p>Thursday mokuyō(bi) 木曜(日)</p> <p>Friday kin yō(bi) 金曜(日)</p> <p>Saturday doyō(bi) 土曜(日)</p> <p>yesterday kinō 昨日</p> <p>today kyō 今日</p> <p>tomorrow ashita 明日</p>
--	--	---