STUDY IN JAPAN
A GUIDE FOR U.S. STUDENTS
Getting Started

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps as a child, you were interested in manga and anime. Maybe you read Japanese folktales or fell in love with the expressive haiku. Perhaps you are studying robotics, engineering, sustainable energy practices, or automobile manufacturing. Regardless of your first introduction to Japanese innovation and culture, when it comes to learning more, you will find that there is no substitute for the personal and professional growth provided by living and studying in Japan. According to the Open Doors Data collected by the Institute of International Education, the number of U.S. students studying abroad in Japan has been increasing since 2011, with about 7,500 U.S. students studying abroad in Japan during the 2016-2017 academic year. Through this informational packet, the Japan Information & Culture Center (JICC), Embassy of Japan hopes to answer a few of those pressing study abroad questions and to get you ready for your next adventure – Japan.
GENERAL OVERVIEW & REQUIREMENTS

The Japanese school system begins with six years of elementary education, then three years of junior-high-school education, and finally three years of high-school education. After high school, Japanese students may either enter the workforce or continue on to a vocational school or institutes of higher education. While Japanese schools typically begin in April and end in March, some universities may start in the fall and mimic the American academic year for international students studying abroad. For U.S. students looking to study in Japan, there are U.S.-Japan exchange programs, private Japanese Language Institutes, and specialized programs for undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate students.

In order to attend an institute of higher education, applicants must generally be at least 18 years of age and have completed 12 years of schooling. Most higher education institutes conduct classes entirely in Japanese, but in recent years more institutes have begun to offer select courses and even complete programs in English. In order to take classes in Japanese, the applicant may be asked to complete a preparatory education course or show proficiency in Japanese.

CHOOSING A PROGRAM

For U.S. students looking to study in Japan, there are five major types of study abroad programs, from high-school to graduate programs. Determining which one is right for you is essential. This section describes these five major types of study abroad programs and contains resources to help you start on your journey.

★ JAPANESE LANGUAGE ABILITY MAY BE REQUIRED
**HIGH SCHOOL EXCHANGE & STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS**

U.S. students are encouraged to participate in programs through their high school. Inquire with your school’s guidance counselor or homeroom teacher to see if your school offers exchange programs.

If your high school does not offer study abroad or exchange programs to Japan, there are many private programs for high school students wishing to study in Japan. These programs are typically paired with a homestay where students are able to live with a Japanese family in order to gain a better understanding of life in Japan. These kinds of immersive programs improve Japanese language ability and expose students to everyday life in Japan. Application timelines and program requirements vary. Research the different programs and requirements ahead of time to make sure your application is submitted in a timely manner. Visit the resources below to get you started.

- **AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF JAPANESE**  
  www.aatj.org/studyabroad/High-School-Programs

- **GOABROAD.COM**  
  www.goabroad.com/highschool-study-abroad/search/japan/highschool-programs-abroad-1

- **GO OVERSEAS**  
  www.gooverseas.com/high-school-abroad/japan

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**UNIVERSITY EXCHANGE & STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS**

U.S. students are encouraged to participate in exchange programs through their home university. Program lengths range from summer and semester to academic year. These exchange programs may have credit and tuition exchange, allowing peace of mind for students worried about the transfer of academic credit from an overseas institution. The home university may also offer support such as detailed instructions on visa procedures or choosing classes. Classes at the Japanese university may be in English or Japanese, depending on the arrangement with your home university. Application timelines and program requirements vary. Research your school’s different programs and requirements ahead of time to make sure your application is submitted in a timely manner.

If your school does not offer an exchange program, the American Association of Teachers of Japanese provides a short list of university study abroad programs offered by U.S. and Japanese institutions and independent organizations that may admit non-affiliated or independent university students. Visit the resources below to get you started.

- **JAPAN STUDENT SERVICES ORGANIZATION**  
  www.jasso.go.jp/en/study_j/search/daijokokensaku.html

- **AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF JAPANESE**  
  www.aatj.org/studyabroad/College-and-University-Programs-US
JAPANESE LANGUAGE INSTITUTES & PREPARATORY JAPANESE LANGUAGE PROGRAMS OFFERED AT PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES & JUNIOR COLLEGES

There are over 250 official Japanese Language Institutes located throughout Japan. The institutes are specifically designed to improve a student’s Japanese language proficiency through either a short-term or long-term program. Students are able to pick from a number of institutions located throughout Japan. Private universities and junior colleges may also offer competitive language courses for students wishing to improve their Japanese language ability, with the purpose of direct enrolling into a Japanese higher education institute.

Application timelines and program requirements vary. Research the different programs and requirements ahead of time to make sure your application is submitted in a timely manner. Visit the resources below to get you started.

DIRECT ENROLL TO UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS & SPECIAL TRAINING COLLEGES IN JAPAN

U.S. students may apply directly to Japanese undergraduate universities and colleges. These two- or four-year programs are immersive, with students directly incorporated into the Japanese higher education system. In addition, students will receive a certificate or degree from the university. The majority of universities in Japan conduct classes in Japanese, but more universities are offering bilingual Japanese-English programs and programs in English. If necessary, you may need to prove your Japanese language proficiency.

Application timelines and program requirements vary. Check out Japan Study Support’s list of universities with online applications (www.jpss.jp/en/feature/webapplication/) or request application documents from the university directly. Research the different program and requirements ahead of time to make sure your application is submitted in a timely manner.

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JAPAN STUDENT SERVICES ORGANIZATION

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROMOTION OF JAPANESE LANGUAGE EDUCATION
www.nisshinkyo.org/search/index_e.html

JAPANESE LANGUAGE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (JAPANESE)
www.jalsa.jp/

JAPANESE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE, SPORTS, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
www.mext.go.jp/en/policy/education/highered/title02/detail02/sdetail02/sdetail02/1383123.htm

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE (JAPANESE)
www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyukan_nyukanho_ho28-2.html

JAPAN STUDY SUPPORT
www.jpss.jp/en/

JAPAN STUDENT SERVICES ORGANIZATION
www.jasso.go.jp/en/study_j/search/daigakukensaku.html

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING COLLEGES JAPAN

CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE, NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (JAPANESE)
ciex.kosen-k.go.jp/menuIndex.jsp

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS OF JAPAN (JAPANESE)
www.zensenkaku.gr.jp/association/index.html
GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Many universities offer one- or two-year graduate and post-graduate programs in various disciplines. You must obtain a Master’s degree before applying for a Doctoral program. Application timelines, Japanese language requirements, cost, and areas of study vary with each program. Research the different programs and requirements ahead of time to make sure your application is submitted in a timely manner. Visit the resources below to get you started.

JAPAN STUDENT SERVICES ORGANIZATION
www.jasso.go.jp/en/study_j/search/daigakukensaku.html

JAPAN STUDY SUPPORT
www.jpss.jp/en/

TIPS!

SISTER CITY EXCHANGE PROGRAMS
Through the Sister Cities International program, there are over 400 sister cities between the United States and Japan. Sometimes these cities offer exchange programs for their citizens. You can check out the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations’ website for more information on where sister cities are located and what cities in Japan are looking to find a sister city.
www.clair.or.jp/e/exchange/index.html

SEARCHING FOR STUDY ABROAD OPPORTUNITIES
You can use College Board to search for U.S. universities with study abroad opportunities and majors in Japanese Language and other Japan-related fields. Japan-related majors such as “East Asian Studies,” “East Asian Languages, Literature, and Linguistics,” and “Japanese Studies,” may include a Japanese language component, so make sure to check with the university. Note also that while many schools do not offer a Japanese major, they may offer a minor and study abroad opportunities.
bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search

JAPAN STUDENT SERVICES ORGANIZATION’S STUDENT GUIDE TO JAPAN

STUDY IN JAPAN COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE WEBSITE
www.studyjapan.go.jp/en/toj/toj0201e.html
INTRODUCTION

If you are applying to an exchange program through your U.S. university, much of the application process will be handled by your home institution. They will provide you with the requirements and cost of your program.

If you are applying directly to a Japanese Language Institute or Japanese university, you will be responsible for completing your application and, if necessary, proving your Japanese language ability. You can request application documents directly from universities in Japan or contact the JICC to see a list of Japanese universities that have sent application documents to the Embassy of Japan in the United States. Please keep in mind that application requirements and timelines vary, so be sure to start the process well in advance.
VISA APPLICATION

If you plan to study abroad in Japan, you most likely will need to apply for a visa. This also applies to those who are traveling to Japan with a grant such as the Fulbright Grant. In order to apply for a visa, we highly recommend that the sponsor (school, academic program, professor, etc.) apply for a “Certificate of Eligibility” on your behalf with the local Immigration Office in Japan. This will streamline the visa application process. Otherwise, applications without a “Certificate of Eligibility” may take up to three months to process. You can find detailed information about the “Certificate of Eligibility” application process on the Immigration Bureau of Japan’s website: www.immi-moj.go.jp.

Once you receive the “Certificate of Eligibility,” visit the Embassy of Japan or Consulate General of Japan that has jurisdiction over your area of residence. You can find the Embassy and consulate locations and their jurisdictions on the JICC website: www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/jicc/consulate-guide.html. You will need to submit a valid passport, a visa application form, one passport-style photograph (2”x2”) attached to the application form, and an original and copy of the “Certificate of Eligibility.” Please note that the Embassy or Consulate General of Japan may require additional documentation. For more specific information, please visit the Embassy of Japan in the United States’ website: www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/english/html/travel_and_visa/visa/study-college.html.

PROVING LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Some programs and universities may require proof of language ability before enrollment. Please be sure to check with your desired program or university for their specific language requirements. Here are three tests commonly taken by students looking to enroll in a Japanese program.

日本語能力試験

JAPANESE LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TEST

Since 1984, the JLPT has been administered by the Japan Foundation and the Japan Educational Exchanges and Services to test the Japanese language proficiency of non-native speakers. The test is administered once a year in the United States in early December. There are 17 university test sites located near the following U.S. cities: Atlanta, Ann Arbor, Boston, Boulder, Chicago, Columbus, Fayetteville, Honolulu, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Philadelphia, Portland, San Francisco, Seattle, and Washington, D.C. Please see the link below for information regarding cost, registration, and preparation: www.jlpt.jp/e/index.html.
EXAMINATION FOR JAPANESE UNIVERSITY ADMISSION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The EJU was established in 2002 and is used to evaluate the Japanese language skills and other basic academic abilities needed to study in higher education institutions throughout Japan. To see which universities base their admittance of international students on the results of the EJU, please check the JASSO website. The test is administered twice a year, once in June and once in November, but there are no testing sites in the United States. Please visit the website below for more information: www.jasso.go.jp/en/eju/index.html.

BUSINESS JAPANESE TEST

The BJT is a proficiency test that has been measuring communicative Japanese business language skills since its development in 1996. Many Japanese businesses and schools use BJT results as part of their evaluation of international students. An account must be created in order to register for an exam and to choose a date and testing location. There is no testing site for the BJT in the United States. Please follow the link below for more information on cost, testing sites, and registration information: www.kanken.or.jp/bjt/english/.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Typically, students will be responsible for airfare to and from Japan, housing costs, and daily expenses. However, there are many scholarships available for U.S. students interested in studying in Japan. In this packet, we will provide information on Japan- and U.S.-government sponsored scholarships. For more information on other scholarships available to U.S. students, see the Tips at the end of this section.

U.S. GOVERNMENT SCHOLARSHIPS

- BENJAMIN A. GILMAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP
- CRITICAL LANGUAGE SCHOLARSHIP
- BOREN AWARDS
- U.S. FULBRIGHT U.S. STUDENT PROGRAM

JAPAN GOVERNMENT SCHOLARSHIPS

- MONBUKAGAKUSHO (MEXT) SCHOLARSHIP
- STUDENT EXCHANGE SUPPORT PROGRAM
U.S. GOVERNMENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship

The Gilman Scholarship is a grant program that focuses on providing undergraduate students with limited financial means opportunities to study or intern abroad. Award amounts will vary depending on the length of the programs, but can be up to $8,000 if paired with a critical need language such as Japanese. Please see the link below to learn more about the program: www.gilmanscholarship.org.

Critical Language Scholarship

The Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) is an intensive overseas language and cultural immersion for U.S. students studying languages deemed critical to national security and economic prosperity. This fully funded 10 – 15 week summer program provides intensive language instruction and cultural enrichment activities to students enrolled at U.S. universities or colleges. CLS only offers Japanese at the intermediate and advanced levels. See the link below to learn more about eligibility and requirements: clscholarship.org.

BoREN AWARDS

National Security Education Program

The Boren Awards aim to provide opportunities for both undergraduate and graduate students to study languages from world regions critical to U.S. interests. There are two types of funding: the scholarship which provides up to $20,000 of funding for short- to long-term study for undergraduates, and the fellowship which provides up to $30,000 for overseas study and domestic language learning for graduate students. After graduation, recipients are expected to work in the federal government for at least one year. Please see the link below for more information about program requirements: boren-awards.org.

U.S. FULBRIGHT U.S. STUDENT PROGRAM

Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA)

The Fulbright Program is the oldest and largest international educational exchange program of the ECA. It provides recent graduates and graduate students with awards to study, teach, or research in more than 140 countries. Currently, Fulbright offers Study/Research Awards in Japan to graduating seniors for 10 months and to graduate/PhD students for 12 months. These awards require an intermediate level of Japanese. To learn more about the program and requirements, see the link below: us.fulbrightonline.org.
JAPAN GOVERNMENT SCHOLARSHIPS

MONBUKAGAKUSHO (MEXT) SCHOLARSHIP

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)

Since 1954, the Japanese Government has offered four types of MEXT Scholarships each year to assist U.S. students interested in enrolling in Japanese universities. Applications must be submitted to the Embassy of Japan or the Consulate General of Japan responsible for your jurisdiction. Please see the link below for more information: www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/english/html/mext-scholarship-info.html

STUDENT EXCHANGE SUPPORT PROGRAM

Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO)

The Student Exchange Support Program provides scholarships to qualified international students who are accepted into a short-term study abroad program at a Japanese university, graduate school, junior college, college of technology, or professional training college. An abroad arrangement must be made between the Japanese university and a non-Japanese university, and the program cannot be more than one year long. For more information on the application process and guidelines for eligibility, please visit: www.jasso.go.jp/en/study_j/scholarships/scholarship/short_term.html

TIPS!

JAPAN STUDY SUPPORT’S LIST OF UNIVERSITIES WITH ONLINE APPLICATIONS


MORE INFORMATION ON SCHOLARSHIPS

For more information on other scholarships available to U.S. students, visit the links listed below to the Financial Aid page created by the American Association of Teachers of Japanese and JASSO’s list of Japanese government, local governments, and private organization sponsored scholarships.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF JAPANESE

www.aatj.org/studyabroad/financial-aid

JASSO’S LIST OF JAPANESE GOVERNMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, & PRIVATE ORGANIZATION SPONSORED SCHOLARSHIPS

From eating fresh onigiri (rice balls) at your local konbini (convenience store) to taking the subway line on your way to experience the incredible view from the top of Tokyo Sky Tree, you will always have something to do in Japan. Whether you choose to live in an apartment, with a host family, or in a dormitory, you will begin to understand why Japanese culture attracts over 3.5 million U.S. visitors each year.

The more you get involved in the community, the more Japan will start to feel like home. A great way of doing this is by participating in student organizations known as “circles,” engaging in language exchange with other students or community members, and volunteering at schools or with nonprofit organizations. There you can make friends and meet local Japanese people who will ease the transition into this new chapter of your life. This next section will focus on answering some of your questions about living in Japan.
COST OF LIVING

The average monthly cost of living for international students in Japan is JPY 82,000 or USD 719. Most of your expenses will go to tuition and housing. However, you may actually find that you spend less money on food in Japan than you do in the U.S. because there is no tipping at restaurants. Please also keep in mind that Japan is primarily a cash-based economy, and credit and debit cards are not widely accepted. You can withdraw cash from international ATMs located at most major convenience stores (called konbini), or, if you are staying long term, you can set up a Japanese bank account to withdraw from a major banking institution or post office in Japan. Please keep in mind that many Japanese bank affiliated ATMs are not open 24 hours and are generally closed on national holidays.

AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENSES

The infographic below shows the average monthly expenses of an international student per region.

Source: Lifestyle Survey of Privately Financed International Students, 2015 (JASSO)
OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

RESIDENT CARD AND “MY NUMBER”

The Resident Card serves as your primary form of identification while in Japan and should be kept on your person at all times. Please present your valid passport with visa and enrollment documents to immigration upon arrival at the port of entry and they will issue your Resident Card or a stamp notifying authorities that you will receive your Resident Card at a later date. After arriving, please notify the municipal office (市役所, shiyakusho) of your Japanese address within 14 days of your arrival date. They will update your Resident Card with your address.

After registering with your local municipal office, the municipal office will send a My Number Notification Card containing your individual 12-digit number, similar to a social security number. This number should be kept secret and may be required for official paperwork like applications for and receipt of scholarships. If your My Number Notification Card is lost or stolen, please notify the police and ask your municipal office to reissue the “My Number” card. If you change your residence, please submit the proper paperwork with your Resident Card and My Number to both your previous municipal office and the municipal office of your new residence within 14 days of moving.

HEALTH INSURANCE

If you are participating in a study program of three months or longer in Japan, you must register with the National Healthcare system at your local municipal office (市役所, shiyakusho). In general, insurance through the national plan will cover 70% of any medical bill (barring private medical treatment), and will cost around USD 40 per month. However, this cost can vary depending on income earned, so be sure to provide the necessary documentation: Resident Card, student ID, enrollment letter, income information, etc. Some institutions have their own plans which may cover more than the national insurance plan. The International Student Insurance website covers the various possibilities for health insurance, as well as some of the requirements for the application process: [www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/japan-student-insurance/health-insurance-in-japan.php](http://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/japan-student-insurance/health-insurance-in-japan.php).

PART-TIME WORK – PERMIT APPLICATION

Some students may want to improve their Japanese language skills by immersing themselves in the Japanese workforce or help with living expenses by working part-time. A Student Visa alone does not allow students to work in Japan. You will need to get a work permit by submitting the shikakugai katsudō kyoka (Permit to Engage in Activity other than that Permitted by the Status of Residence Previously Granted) at the local immigration office (入国管理局, nyūkoku kanrikyoku; 出張所, shucchōjo). For more details, please check the Immigration Bureau of Japan’s website: [www.immi-moj.go.jp/english/tetuduki/kanri/shyorui/09.html](http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/english/tetuduki/kanri/shyorui/09.html).
HOUSING

Most programs in Japan will offer different options for living arrangements. Some can place you with a homestay family, where you will be given a room in a local family’s house and live as a member of that family. Some will have dormitory living, either in dorms alongside Japanese students at that institution or in separate halls for international students. Some programs may allow you to live in your own apartment. Apartments in Japan can be expensive, requiring a guarantor, a large deposit, and sometimes a large key deposit as well. Some schools allow school officials to act as a guarantor for students who wish to rent their own apartment and join the “Comprehensive Renter’s Insurance for Foreign Students Study in Japan.”

GENKAN (玄関)

The genkan is a traditional Japanese entryway to a house, apartment, or building. One must remove one’s shoes here and change into slippers before entering the home.

CHOOSING A HOUSING OPTION

The table below lists some things to consider when deciding the housing options of homestay, dormitories, or apartments in Japan.

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<th>HOMESTAY Things to Consider</th>
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<td>Daily language practice</td>
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<td>Home cooked meals</td>
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<td>A look into Japanese family life</td>
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<td>May be subject to curfew</td>
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<td>Must be respectful of house rules</td>
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<td>Commute is variable</td>
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<th>DORMITORIES Things to Consider</th>
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<td>On or near campus</td>
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<td>Class friends are in close proximity</td>
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<td>Ability to come &amp; go as you please</td>
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<td>Cook for yourself</td>
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<td>Dorm chores</td>
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<td>May have to share a room</td>
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<th>APARTMENTS Things to Consider</th>
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<td>Being able to live on your own</td>
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<td>Freedom to come &amp; go as you please</td>
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<td>Expensive rent</td>
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<td>Key deposit may be required</td>
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<td>Japanese guarantor may be required</td>
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<td>Bills set up</td>
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<td>Commute is variable</td>
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GARBAGE & RECYCLING

Japan has six official categories for recycling. Individual cities, however, may break this down even further to make between 10 and 44 categories. Basic categories include Burnables, Non-burnables, Plastics, Hazardous, Oversized, Cans and Bottles, and Paper and Cardboard. Each city provides its residents with a garbage collection calendar and may require the use of specific disposal areas and garbage bags that can be bought at the local supermarket. Please be advised that if you do not sort your garbage properly or place it in the correct location at the correct time, your garbage may be returned to you.

GENERAL GUIDE TO GARBAGE & RECYCLING SORTING IN JAPAN

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TRANSPORTATION & TRAVEL

TRAVEL WITHIN JAPAN - PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
According to the Statistical Handbook of Japan 2018 (www.stat.go.jp/english/data/handbook/), Japan continues to shift away from private automobiles, with about 72% of all passenger transport being done by railway. This is both an effort to combat global warming and a necessity for moving large volumes of people throughout a country with limited space availability. Japan boasts one of the safest and most extensive public transportation systems in the world. Using the high-speed shinkansen trains that go up to 200 mph, passengers can travel between major cities in just a few hours. If you are traveling on a budget, book a seat on a highway bus and travel overnight to your destination of choice.

The use of IC cards makes entering onto train platforms simple and quick. The IC cards can often be used on both private and public trains, buses, and metro lines, as well as to buy goods at supporting convenience stores and vending machines. They can be refilled at the ticket vending machines located in the train station.

If undergraduate or graduate students travel 101 km or more, they are eligible to take advantage of student discount boarding passes (学割, gaku-wari [student discount] in Japanese), which allow for discounts of as much as 20% of the regular fare. Please note that non-full-time students are not eligible for this program.

TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF JAPAN – SPECIAL RE-ENTRY PERMIT
If you plan to travel outside of Japan, you will need to show your passport, Resident Card, and the Embarkation Card (available at the airport) with a checked box on “Departure with Special Re-entry Permission” to the immigration officer at the port of exit of Japan when you depart. The Special Re-entry Permit is valid for up to a year from the day of departure or until the expiration of your stay, whichever expires sooner. If you depart from Japan on a Special Re-Entry Permit, you will not be able to extend that permit while abroad. Please note that you will lose your resident status if you fail to re-enter Japan within one year of your departure. Please see the Immigration Bureau’s website for details: www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact_1/en/point_3-4.html.
CELL PHONES

Cell phones have become an integral part of our everyday lives. Cell phone networks and SIM plans are different in Japan than they are in the U.S. Many newer phones are compatible with Japanese networks and can be used in Japan. Check with your provider to ensure that your phone is compatible. Please note, Japan does not have a GSM network; therefore, any phones that are GSM-only will not work in Japan. If your phone network is GSM-only, it is possible to rent a phone once you arrive in Japan. Some companies have kiosks at the airport where you can complete the transaction.

If you want to use a Japanese SIM card, you will need to make sure your phone is unlocked. These SIM cards only work for a specified time period or a specified amount of data. Most SIM cards only offer data to short-term residents, though some major companies may offer cards with voice calling. Subscription plans typically require a two-year contract, and are not available to those who will be in Japan for a short period.

Another option that provides voice calls and data is through MVNOs. MVNOs, or mobile virtual network operators, sell both voice and data SIMs without requiring a contract. Please be aware that some of these companies will only accept a Japanese credit card for payment.

Some operators offer a prepaid phone that can be a better long-term option. However, users need to be 20 years or older to be able to open a line with a prepaid phone.

EXTENDED STAY

Students can apply to extend their stay by submitting the application form, a photograph, passport, resident card, documents certifying enrollment, and proof of funds to the local immigration office three months before the end of the Period of Stay listed on their Resident Card.

For more information on re-entry permits and extension of stay, please see the Study in Japan Guide: www.studyjapan.go.jp/en/toj/toj04e.html.

TRAIN ETIQUETTE (電車マナー)

Please be mindful of others when riding public transportation. Eating, playing music without headphones, and talking loudly while inside the train are considered rude in Japan.
POCKET WI-FI

If you are not looking to rent a phone or purchase a SIM card but still want to be connected, there are a number of portable Wi-Fi options. Known as Pocket Wi-Fi, the cost of these small portable devices vary depending on how much data you sign up for. Some Pocket Wi-Fi providers give you the option of picking up the device at the airport or it being delivered to your accommodation.

There are also apps that can be used for texting and calling. Some of these apps can provide a local number for a fee and do not require data, only an internet connection.

Free Wi-Fi is not so readily available in Japan. However, some major department stores and food chains may provide Wi-Fi as a service. In a pinch, stop by an internet café (ネットカフェ, netto café) to pay for internet service in 15-minute increments, by the hour, or multiple hours depending on the establishment you visit. These cafes are equipped with food, drinks, restrooms, and private rooms.

TIPS!

IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES

Please check the Immigration Bureau’s page for immigration procedures and information regarding your Resident Card. The Immigration Bureau of Japan also provides a list of branch locations:

www.immi-moj.go.jp/english/soshiki/index.html

REGISTERING AT LOCAL MUNICIPAL OFFICE

It is the student’s responsibility to register at their local municipal office (市役所, shiyakusho) within two weeks of taking up residence in Japan. At the time of registration, your new address will be written on your Resident Card.

LIVING IN JAPAN

For more information about living in Japan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs published a guide to living in Japan:


TEXTING AND CALLING APPS

There are apps that can be used for texting and calling. Some of these apps can provide a local number for a fee and do not require data, only an internet connection. You can also check with your current phone company. Some providers offer overseas plans.
INTRODUCTION
Out of 194 member countries providing data for the World Health Statistics Report 2018, Japan has the longest average life expectancy at birth at 84.2 years. This longevity is not possible without a governmental commitment to public health and safety. At a young age, Japanese people are educated on the importance of a natural, varied diet and proper exercise. In addition to an extensive public transportation system which encourages people to walk to and from stations and the naturally low-calorie diet based on fresh, seasonal foods, the government mandates enrollment in the National Healthcare system for anyone residing in Japan for three months or more.

Japan is considered a safe country, and it is not uncommon to see elementary students riding on the trains by themselves. There are many kōban, or Japanese police boxes, located throughout cities as well. These kōban are equipped with...
boards and pictures to help facilitate communication between authorities and those with rudimentary Japanese ability. In Japan, gun ownership is prohibited with few exceptions. If you need to report a crime or accident, the police station can be reached by dialing 110. If you are in need of fire rescue or an ambulance, dial 119. The fire and police stations can be reached 24 hours a day, free of charge.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>110</th>
<th>POLICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>119</td>
<td>FIRE &amp; AMBULANCE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Open 24 hours a day. Free of charge.

Remember, you can always talk with your school or institute in Japan for help in a difficult situation. For more information on current statistics and safety measures, please visit Japan’s National Police Agency website: www.npa.go.jp/english/index.html. The Better Life Index by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development also provides safety statistics by country: www.oecd-betterlifeindex.org/topics/safety.

DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

Although Japanese food is considered some of the healthiest in the world, it can be difficult to find appropriate foods if you have dietary restrictions. Many major restaurants now include pictograms on their menus to help, but smaller restaurants may not have them.

GLUTEN FREE

If you are gluten-free, Legal Nomads and Celiac Travel provide a gluten-free card in Japanese on their websites. Resource links are listed below.

LEGAL NOMADS
www.legalnomads.com/gluten-free/japan#card

CELIAC TRAVEL
celiactravel.com/cards/japanese

VEGAN & VEGETARIAN

For vegans and vegetarians, HappyCow, Japan Vegan, and Vege-Navi all have resources to help you find accommodating restaurants. Additionally, Is it Vegan? Japan offers help with reading packaging. Resource links are listed below.

HAPPYCOW
happycow.net/asia/japan

JAPAN VEGAN
japanvegan.blogspot.com

VEGE-NAVI
vege-navi.jp/?_..2

IS IT VEGAN? JAPAN
isitveganjapan.com
HALAL & KOSHER

For those with halal food restrictions, JNTO provides a guide to Muslim friendly food stores as well as a travel guide. Additionally, the Jewish Community of Japan also has helpful kosher guides. Resource links are listed below.

**JNTO WELCOME GUIDE FOR MUSLIM VISITORS**  
https://muslimguide.jnto.go.jp/eng/

**JEWISH COMMUNITY OF JAPAN**  
jccjapan.or.jp/kosher-fish-in-japanese

FOOD ALLERGIES

If you have food allergies, be aware that any products containing eggs (卵, tamago), milk (乳, nyū; 乳製品, nyūseihin), wheat (小麦粉, komugiko), buckwheat (蕎麦, soba), peanuts (ピーナッツ, piinattsu; ピーナツ, piinatsu), shrimp (海老, ebi; エビ, ebi), and crab (蟹, kani; カニ, kani) will be labeled by law. The JNTO’s English Tourist’s Language Handbook includes information on how to indicate what you are allergic to. Resource links are listed below.

**JNTO’S ENGLISH TOURIST’S LANGUAGE HANDBOOK**  
www.jnto.go.jp/eng/touristhandbook/eng.pdf

ALCOHOL & SMOKING

The drinking age in Japan is 20. This means many college and university students may be able to drink in Japan before they have come of age in the U.S. There are no open-container laws in Japan, but please be mindful that it is rude to walk and drink, or walk and eat in Japan outside of parks and festival areas. Japan has a zero tolerance rule against drinking and driving which includes cars, motorcycles, and bicycles. If you are planning to drink and need to move to another location, please use public transportation, taxi cabs, or services, such as daiko, where two people will be sent to transport you and your vehicle to your desired location.

The National Police Agency created a PDF that describes the penalties for drinking and driving in Japan:  

Despite many restaurants and bars allowing smoking indoors, smoking outdoors is strictly prohibited outside of designated smoking areas. In addition, you must be 20 years old to buy cigarettes in Japan. Please note that while medical and recreational marijuana has been decriminalized in some locales in the U.S., the possession of marijuana of any form in Japan is illegal. Those caught in possession may be denied permission to land in Japan and could face deportation from Japan.
HEALTHCARE & MEDICINE

There is always a possibility that you may get sick or injured while in Japan, so it is important to understand some aspects of the Japanese health care system. Clinics and hospitals in Japan can provide general care during office hours. However, many of these institutions do not accept debit or credit cards. For emergencies, call an ambulance (119) or visit an emergency hospital. The Japan National Tourism Organization provides a search for medical institutions that can accommodate speakers of English or those with different cultural or religious needs: www.jnto.go.jp/emergency/eng/mi_guide.html.

OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATION

Some common over-the-counter drugs in the United States may not be available in Japan and dosages for available drugs may be less than you are accustomed to. Visit a drug store for common items like makeup, cleaning supplies, and cold and headache medicines. For prescriptions and stronger medicines, visit a pharmacy during daytime office hours when a practicing pharmacist is available. In a pinch, you may be able to find cold medicine and vitamin-rich supplements and drinks at convenience stores.

IMPORTING PRESCRIPTION & NON-PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Japan has a zero tolerance policy against illegal drug use and some over-the-counter drugs from the U.S., particularly those containing more than 10% of stimulant raw material, are prohibited. Narcotics and psychotropic medications are specially regulated. Depending on the type and amount of medication you bring to Japan, you may need to obtain a yakkan shōmei (a kind of import certificate) and present it to the customs officer upon arrival. The application documents for the yakkan shōmei must be submitted to the Regional Bureau of Health and Welfare closest to the arrival airport in Japan before your trip. Please check the following page for more information: www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/english/html/medication-info-japan.html.

For questions about specific medications, please refer to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare: www.mhlw.go.jp/english/policy/health-medical/pharmaceuticals/01.html. The Narcotics Control Department also has useful information on the import and export of over-the-counter drugs and medicine: www.ncd.mhlw.go.jp/en/application.html.

PRESCRIPTIONS IN JAPAN

Prescriptions written in the United States may not be available in Japan. Therefore, it is best to see a Japanese doctor if you need to refill or obtain a prescription while in Japan. After receiving a prescription, the doctor can inform you of nearby pharmacies that will fill your prescription. Prescriptions cannot be filled at drug stores.
NATURAL DISASTERS

According to the Japan Meteorological Agency, Japan received over 2,000 earthquakes in 2017. Because it is located on the Ring of Fire, Japan is prone to typhoons, earthquakes, and tsunamis, which means residents must be prepared in case of a natural disaster. Residents are encouraged to keep bottled water, nonperishable food items, and an evacuation bag stocked in case of emergency. Each city has designated evacuation shelters, many of which are located at nearby schools or community centers above sea level. The most common cause of damage after an earthquake is fire, so be sure to turn off all stoves and heaters.

Earthquakes, typhoons, and tsunamis are all potential emergency situations in Japan.

**EARTHQUAKE**
Crouch beneath a hard surface to avoid falling objects. Do not move from your surroundings unless you are in immediate danger.

**TSUNAMI**
As soon as a warning is emitted, please seek higher ground.

**TYPHOON / MONSOON**
Stock up before the storm hits and stay inside.

TIPS!

**JNTO’S GUIDEBOOK FOR WHEN YOU ARE FEELING ILL**
JNTO’s useful Guidebook For When You Are Feeling Ill lists resources for finding a medical institution for non-Japanese speakers as well as pictograms that you can point to when describing your condition to a doctor or pharmacist:

**RESOURCES REGARDING SAFETY IN YOUR AREA**
Check with your school or institute in Japan for valuable resources regarding safety and life in your area. The Japan National Tourism Organization’s Safety Tips for Travelers also provides general safety tips and information:

**SMART TRAVELER ENROLLMENT PROGRAM (STEP)**
The U.S. State Department also offers the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP), a free service that allows U.S. citizens traveling or living abroad to enroll with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate:
travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/step.html

**WEATHER UPDATES**
For updated information on earthquakes and severe weather, please see the Japan Meteorological Agency website:
www.jma.go.jp/jma/indexe.html
Additional Resources

- **STUDY IN JAPAN COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE**  
  www.studyjapan.go.jp/en/

- **JAPAN STUDENT SERVICES ORGANIZATION - STUDENT GUIDE TO JAPAN**  

- **JAPAN STUDY SUPPORT**  
  www.jpss.jp/en/

- **AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF JAPANESE**  
  www.aatj.org/studyabroad/study-in-japan

- **GATEWAY TO STUDY IN JAPAN**  
  www.g-studyinjapan.jasso.go.jp/en/

- **JAPAN GUIDE**  
  www.japan-guide.com/e/e2232.html

- **JAPAN NATIONAL TOURISM ORGANIZATION**  
  www.jnto.go.jp

- **CULCON**  
  https://culcon.jusfc.gov/resources/

- **IIE PASSPORT STUDY ABROAD**  
  https://iiepassport.org
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- HIRAGANA CHART | 57
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  Application Process
  Daily Life in Japan
  Medical Emergencies

- LANGUAGE LEARNING RESOURCES | 65
Katakana is a syllabary composed of 46 characters, and is characterized by the use of straight lines and sharp corners. It is one of the three Japanese writing systems, along with hiragana and kanji. Katakana are used mainly to write loan words (words borrowed from other languages) and non-Japanese names, as well as to denote the various sounds and cries of animals.

Hiragana is a syllabary composed of 46 characters, and is characterized by the use of curved lines and round strokes. It is one of the three Japanese writing systems, along with katakana and kanji. Hiragana are used together with kanji to write word endings and other ordinary Japanese words which are not normally written with kanji, such as adverbs, and some nouns and adjectives.
### APPLICATION PROCESS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>日本語 (かな)</th>
<th>English romaji</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>申請（しんせい）</td>
<td>Application shinsei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>入学願書（にゅうがくがんしょ）</td>
<td>Enrollment Application nyūgaku gansho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>入寮申込書（にゅうりょうもうしこみしょ）</td>
<td>Dormitory Application nyūryō mōshikomisho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>入国管理局（にゅうこくかんりきょく）</td>
<td>Immigration Bureau nyūkoku kanrikyoku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>大使館（たいしかん）</td>
<td>Embassy taishikan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>領事館（りょうじかん）</td>
<td>Consular or Visa Section ryōjikan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>旅券（りょけん）</td>
<td>Passport ryoken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>推薦書（すいせんしょ）</td>
<td>Recommendation suisensho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>在留資格認定証明書（ざいりゅうしかくにんていしょうめいしょ）</td>
<td>Certificate of Eligibility zairyū shikaku nintei shōmeisho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>入学許可書（にゅうがくきょかしょ）</td>
<td>Proof of Acceptance/Enrollment Issued by the Institution nyūgaku kyokasho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>就学理由書（しゅうがくりゆうしょ）</td>
<td>Statement of Purpose for Entering the Institution shūgaku riyūsho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>志願理由書（しがんりゆうしょ）</td>
<td>Statement of Purpose shigan riyūsho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>履歴書（りれきしょ）</td>
<td>Resume or CV rirekisho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>卒業証書（そつぎょうしょうしょ）</td>
<td>Diploma or Documents Certifying Graduation sotsugyō shōsho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>成績証明書（せいせきしょうめいしょ）</td>
<td>Transcript seiseki shōmeisho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>日本語学習証明書（にほんごがくしゅしょうめいしょ）</td>
<td>Documents Certifying Completion of Work at a Japanese Language School nihongo gakushū shōmeisho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>銀行残高証明書（ぎんこうざんかしょうめいしょ）</td>
<td>Proof of Funds ginkō zandaka shōmeisho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>日本語</td>
<td>English (romaji)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>割り勘</td>
<td>Splitting the check evenly wari-kan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>別々</td>
<td>Split the check by what each person ordered betsubetsu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>頂きます</td>
<td>I humbly receive this food / Let's eat itadakimasu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ご馳走様でした</td>
<td>Thank you for the meal go-chisōsama deshita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>サービス</td>
<td>On the house; free saabisu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>持ち帰り</td>
<td>Take out; take home mochi kaeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>お冷・お湯</td>
<td>Cold Water / Hot Water o-hiya / o-yu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>お勘定</td>
<td>Bill or Check o-kanjō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>取り皿</td>
<td>Small plate for sharing torizara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>日本語</th>
<th>English (romaji)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>試食・試着はできますか？</td>
<td>Can I try this food / clothing? shishoku / shichaku wa dekimasu ka?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>割引</td>
<td>Discount wari-biki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>すみません</td>
<td>I’m sorry; excuse me sumimasen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>失礼します</td>
<td>Excuse me shitsurei shimasu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>お邪魔します</td>
<td>Excuse me for intruding/ interrupting/disturbing (someone else’s space) o-jama shimasu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ゴミ分別</td>
<td>Trash Sorting gomi bunbetsu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>コンセント</td>
<td>Wall Outlet konsento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ペットボトル</td>
<td>Plastic Bottle petto botoru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ガスレンジ</td>
<td>Gas Stove gasu-renji</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## DAILY LIFE IN JAPAN [CONT.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>日本語 (かな)</th>
<th>English (romaji)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>新幹線</td>
<td>Bullet Train</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>しんかんせん</td>
<td>shinkansen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>特急</td>
<td>Limited Express (only major stops)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>とっきゅう</td>
<td>tokkyū</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>急行</td>
<td>Express (some stops)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>きゅうこう</td>
<td>kyūkō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>各停・ローカル</td>
<td>Local Train (every stop)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>かくてい・ろーかる</td>
<td>kakutei / rookaru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>優先席</td>
<td>Priority Seating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ゆうせんせき</td>
<td>yūsenseki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>改札</td>
<td>Ticket Gate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>かいさつ</td>
<td>kaisatsu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>乗り換え</td>
<td>Change Trains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>のりかえ</td>
<td>norikae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>学割</td>
<td>Student Discount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>がくわり</td>
<td>gaku-wari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>市役所</td>
<td>Local Municipal Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>しやくしょ</td>
<td>shiyakusho</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>日本語 (かな)</th>
<th>English (romaji)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>入国管理局</td>
<td>Bureau of Immigration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>にゅうこくかんりきょく</td>
<td>nyūkoku kanrikyoku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>出張所</td>
<td>Branch Office or Agency (Immigration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>しゅっちょうじょ</td>
<td>Shucchōjo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>日本語</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>救急車を呼んでください。  きゅうきゅうしゃをよんでください。</td>
<td>Please call an ambulance! Kyūkyūsha wo yonde kudasai.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>頭・お腹・胸 が痛いです。  あたま・おなか・むねがいたいです。</td>
<td>My head / stomach / chest hurts. Atama / o-naka / mune ga itai desu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>熱があります。  ねつがあります。</td>
<td>I have a fever. Netsu ga arimasu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(交通事故で)怪我をしました。  (こうつうじこで)けがをしました。</td>
<td>I was injured (in a traffic accident). (Kōtsūjiko de) kega wo shimashita.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>やけどをしました。  やけどをしました。</td>
<td>I burned myself. Yakedo wo shimashita.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>風邪を引きました。  かぜをひきました。</td>
<td>I have a cold. Kaze wo hikimashita.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## LANGUAGE LEARNING RESOURCES

- **NHK WORLD RADIO - EASY JAPANESE**  
  [www.nhk.or.jp/lesson/english/](http://www.nhk.or.jp/lesson/english/)

- **ERIN’S CHALLENGE**  

- **EPALS ONLINE LEARNING COMMUNITY**  
  [www.epals.com/#/connections](http://www.epals.com/#/connections)

- **JAPANESE IN ANIME & MANGA**  
  [anime-manga.jp/index_english.html](http://anime-manga.jp/index_english.html)

- **KIDS WEB JAPAN - LANGUAGE**  

- **MINATO ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORM**  
  [minato-jf.jp](http://minato-jf.jp)

- **JAPAN FOUNDATION - LEARNING MATERIALS**  
  [www.jpf.go.jp/e/project/japanese/education/resource/index.html](http://www.jpf.go.jp/e/project/japanese/education/resource/index.html)

- **JAPAN FOUNDATION LOS ANGELES**  
  [www.jflalc.org/jle-teachers-resources](http://www.jflalc.org/jle-teachers-resources)
Tag us on Instagram @japanembdc or using the hashtag #dcjicc on your study abroad photos for a chance to be featured on our Instagram!