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TEACHING TUESDAY

SOCKS

JUNE 27, 2017

Socks are a major part of Japanese culture, largely because they are highly visible compared to other countries. Whether visiting homes, izakaya, or even store changing rooms, people usually take their shoes off before stepping inside. Nice socks are essential to making a good impression.

Japan's traditional socks are the tabi (足袋), which have been used for centuries. They are recognizable by the split toe design, and are still worn today when people wear traditional Japanese clothing. Modern tabi keep the split toe design, but are made with modern materials without the clasp closure. Other types of socks popular in Japan include five-toed socks, character socks, and fuzzy socks, to name a few.

The type, color, and design of your socks are often a reflection of your personality and taste. Etiquette dictates that socks should never touch the ground, no matter the type. Just as shoes are taken off before entering a house, socks are never worn outside the house without shoes on.