



The JICC is pleased to announce our 13th annual Nengajo New Year's Card Contest! 2024 will be the Year of the Dragon (辰年), so *nengajo* designs must include a Dragon, the kanji for Dragon (辰) found on the Zodiac animal calendar or *eto*, and the year 2024 (or Reiwa 6/令和六年 in the Japanese calendar). This year's contest will be divided into 3 categories: **junior (0-11)**, **youth (12-17)**, and **adult (18+)** divisions. There will be **one grand prize winner and one runner-up** from each category. In addition, **honorable mentions** will be chosen for the categories of Most Creative, Most Traditional, and JICC Staff Favorite designs. Designs will be judged by JICC and Embassy of Japan staff.

The three grand prize winning designs will be sent out to the JICC's mailing list as the official New Year's greeting. The three winners will **receive a *fukubukuro***—a customary Japanese grab-bag of goodies to celebrate the New Year. Along with the winners, runners-up and honorable mentions will be displayed on the JICC website and **in-person at the JICC's *Oshōgatsu*, or Japanese New Year, event** held in late January. For a chance to be featured on the **JICC's Instagram** stories, use the hashtag **#2024JICCNengajo**.

※**An Important Note for Teachers (先生方へのお願い):** We are grateful to the teachers who use this competition as an extra credit opportunity for their students. As interest in the JICC Nengajo Contest has grown, the JICC staff humbly request that teachers submit student entries together as a class so as to ensure compliance with competition rules, especially those regarding file formatting. Please contact us at jicc@ws.mofa.go.jp to coordinate a class submission. Of course, this is not a requirement and individual student entries will still be accepted!

To learn more about the tradition of *nengajo*, [click here](#).

For official rules and how to enter, [click here](#).

History

Oshōgatsu is a very special time in Japan. One of the most important and most celebrated Japanese holidays, preparations begin long in advance as people clean their homes from top to bottom (*ōsōji*), prepare traditional food to be eaten during the first three days of the new year (*osechi ryōri*), and write their New Year's greeting cards, or *nengajo*.

Similar to the holiday greeting cards exchanged in the West, *nengajo* are an important part of Japan's New Year festivities. By sending *nengajo* to friends, family and colleagues, the people of Japan can share their wish for a peaceful, prosperous and happy new year, as well as express their gratitude for help and kindness received in the past year in the hopes of preserving their good relations in the year ahead.

Nengajo cards are distinctively designed with special New Year's motifs. Many feature the *eto*, or zodiac animal, of the upcoming year. Traditional themes such as *kadomatsu* (decorative arrangements of pine, bamboo and sometimes plum blossoms), kites, eggplant, and the sun rising over Mount Fuji are also popular as they are considered auspicious.

Read more about the history and tradition of *nengajo* [here](#).

Rules

Deadline: Designs must be received electronically via e-mail by **5:00PM Eastern Standard Time on Tuesday, January 16th, 2024**.

Eligibility: The contest is open to the public.

Regulations: Designs must fit the traditional postcard size of 4x6 inches. Designs must also incorporate a Dragon (辰) and the kanji for Dragon that is used in the Zodiac animal calendar or *eto*, as well as the year 2024 (or Reiwa 6/令和六年 in the Japanese calendar). Designs must be the contestant's original artwork, not taken directly from any *manga*, or *anime*, a website, or other image or artwork protected by copyright. Any designs suspected of plagiarism or copyright violations will be disqualified without notice.

Submissions: Submissions must be received in digital format (see below for accepted file types). High resolution photographs and scans of non-digital artwork can be sent by e-mail to jicc@ws.mofa.go.jp. Only one (1) *nengajo* will be allowed per person. In the submission email, please include the following information in the caption:

- Name
- Age
- City, State, and Country

City, State, and Country

- **If under the age of 13: Written Parental or Guardian Consent**

Nengajo not submitted according to these guidelines may result in disqualification without notice. Personal information of minors will be restricted when published and destroyed within a month of publication. Parental or guardian consent is required for children under the age of 13. Please see our privacy policy, linked at the bottom of this page, for more information.

Accepted File Types: Submissions must be received in .jpg, .jpeg, .png, or .pdf file types. Unfortunately, .HEIC formatted images will **not** be accepted.

File Naming: When saving file, please try to name using the following convention: Example) John_S_30_DC → FirstName_LastNameInitial_Age_Location * Location can be US state or Country

Please contact us if you have any questions.

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※**Note:** You will receive a message confirming that we have received your *nengajo* submission. If you do not receive a message within 72 hours, or by the deadline, **please contact us**. We are not responsible for entries that are lost, misdirected, or transmitted late or incorrectly.

Awards: First prize winners in the **junior (0-11)**, **youth (12-17)**, and **adult (18+)** divisions will receive a JICC *fukubukuro*—a customary Japanese grab-bag of goodies to celebrate the New Year. (Please note that applicants residing outside of the US are not eligible to receive a prize, but are still encouraged to participate and may be featured on our social media and online gallery.)

Rights: As between the JICC, Embassy of Japan and the Entrant, the Entrant retains ownership of all intellectual and industrial property rights (including moral rights) in and to their Nengajo submission. As a condition of entry, Entrant grants the JICC a worldwide, transferable, royalty-free, and non-exclusive license to use, reproduce, publish, distribute, publicly perform, and publicly display the Nengajo for any purpose, including display on the JICC website and social media pages, with attribution to Entrant.

Questions & Comments: For questions, comments, and rule clarifications, please email the JICC at jicc@ws.mofa.go.jp.

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1150 18th Street NW, Suite 100 | Washington, D.C. 20036-3838
TEL: 202-238-6900 | jicc@ws.mofa.go.jp

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