

AJET

CONNECT

News & Events, Arts & Culture, Lifestyle, Community

TOKYO ORIENTATION 2015

HOW TO KEEP YOUR COOL

NETWORKING WITH YOUR PEERS AND BEYOND

WHERE TO BE IN TOKYO

FROM MIRIN TO MISO, THE GROCERY GUIDE

ELOQUENT ENKAI ETIQUETTE



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Magazine Written by the International
Community in Japan**

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[150506]



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Rajeev Rahela
Head Editor
2nd-year Gifu ALT

WELCOME TO THE CONNECT MAGAZINE, and welcome to Japan! I'm Rajeev Rahela, a second year JET participant in Gifu and the Head Editor for Connect Magazine. You are now in possession of a community run publication highlighting the JET Programme and Japan. In this special printed edition of Connect, developed solely for your arrival here, we've sourced information to help you make the best of your time in Tokyo before you go to your prefectures and your new homes. But the information doesn't stop there; we have content to assist you in your first week of settling in and how you can get involved in local, national, and Connect, communities.

Use this issue as a reference for the JET Programme Post-Arival Orientation (p.8), to scratch your Tokyo itch (p.12), to familiarise yourself with the local area (p.10), as a fan for the scorching summer (p.27), and to learn the mystical art form of using a konbini (p.14)...

I wish you a successful time here in Japan, filled with achievements and awesome times. The Connect team will be alongside you on your journey and will continue delivering content that's valuable, consistent, and wonderful! Good luck in your endeavours here, or as the Japanese say: *Ganbare!*



LETTER FROM THE AJET CHAIR

Sterling Diesel
National AJET Chair
3rd-year Nagasaki ALT

COME ON AND SLAM, AND WELCOME TO JAPAN! I'm Sterling Diesel, your AJET National Council Chair. I work as one of your intermediaries between CLAIR and the three ministries that oversee the JET Programme. If it weren't for AJET, your Contracting Organisation would be your highest form of personal contact with the "head honchos!" I also aid our council in creating events, discounts, scholarships, and professional development opportunities to help you have an enriching experience as a JET participant.

My continuing mission is to unify communities under the purposes of learning and living to our utmost potential. I hope that by this time next year, everyone involved in the JET Programme will be able to reflect on the deep connections they've made with people in Japan from nations other than their own, and how they've furthered cultural and linguistic understanding. Let's do our best together!

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This edition, and all past editions of AJET Connect, can be found online at AJET.net here. Read Connect online and follow us on [ISSUU](#).

HOW DOES AJET WORK?

HELLO!
I'M YOU.
A JET!



YOU

One JET participant of over 4,000!

PREFECTURAL AJET

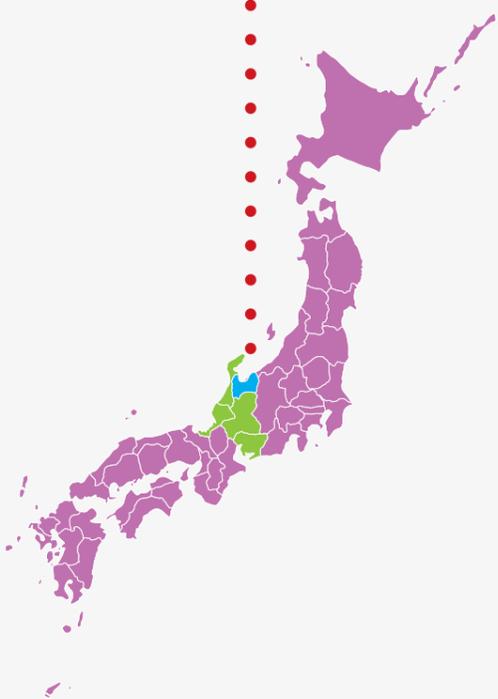
Your local group of JETs. Organizes events and trips. Provides information and resources specific to your prefecture.

AJET BLOCK

Made of 3 to 5 neighboring prefectures. Each of the 11 Blocks has an elected representative that acts as the go-between for prefectural AJET and National AJET. Along with organising big events and sharing information with their Block, they take concerns and questions to the national level.

NATIONAL AJET

A council elected by and consisting of JETs from all across Japan. The council is comprised of the 11 Block representatives, a CIR representative, a 3-person executive council, and 15 other members. These 15 appointed members fulfill specialist functions such as web management or public relations. It represents JETs directly to the JET Programme's government sponsors (MIC, MOFA, MEXT and CLAIR), provides resources like professional development opportunities and teaching materials, and helps solidify the national JET community via a country-wide network.



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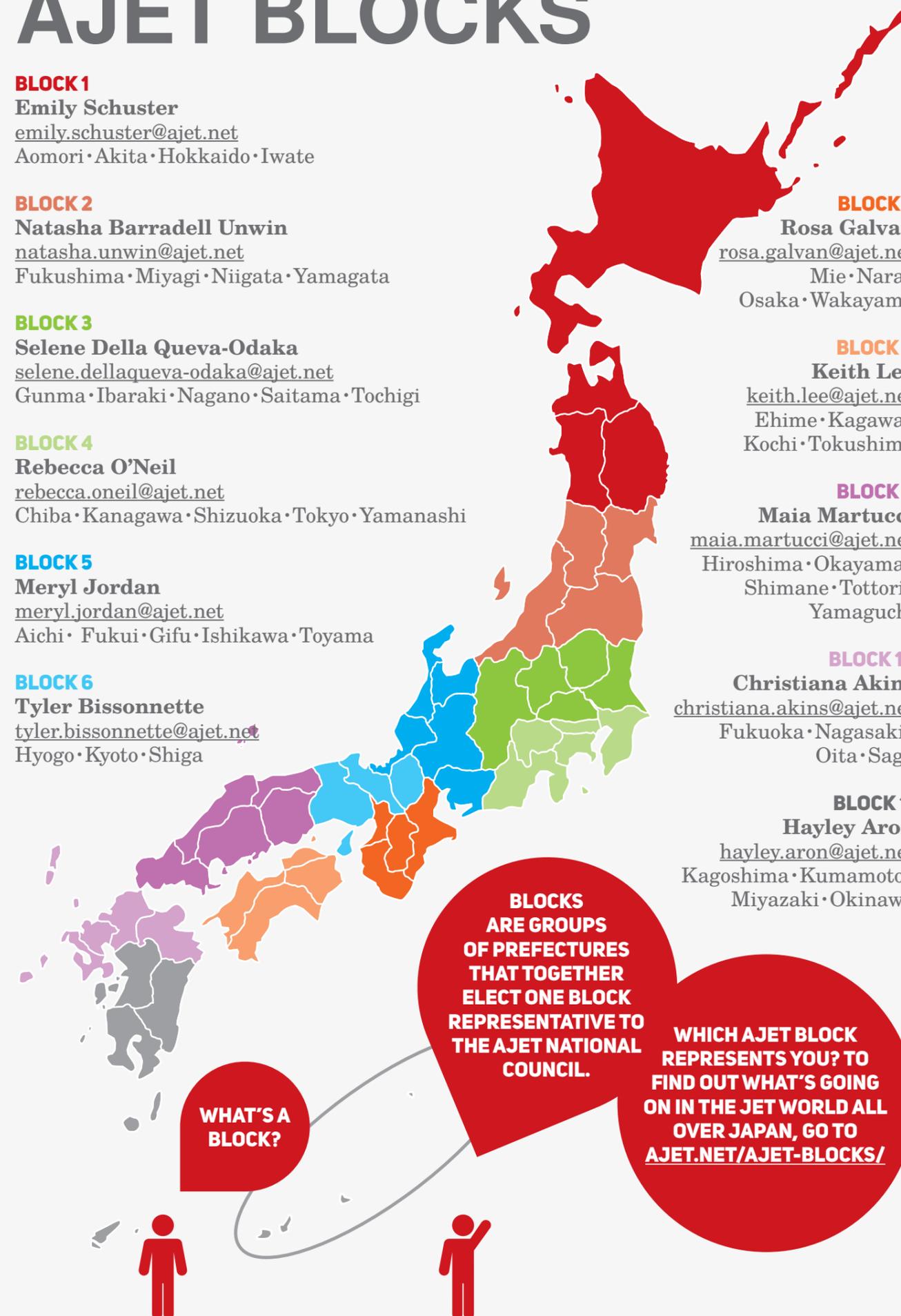
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WHAT'S A BLOCK?

BLOCKS ARE GROUPS OF PREFECTURES THAT TOGETHER ELECT ONE BLOCK REPRESENTATIVE TO THE AJET NATIONAL COUNCIL.

WHICH AJET BLOCK REPRESENTS YOU? TO FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE JET WORLD ALL OVER JAPAN, GO TO AJET.NET/AJET-BLOCKS/



ORIENTATION ACHIEVEMENTS

JENNY SANCHEZ (AOMORI) TIM SAAR (GIFU)



★ RED ★

★ Looking Good!

Complimented someone on their outfit.

★ Pushing Boundaries

Found and talked to a JET from a different country.

★ Are You Sure That's Edible?

Tried something you'd never eaten before.

★ BBFs - Breakfast Buddies Forever

Sat with someone you didn't know at breakfast.

★ You're in the Know

Followed Connect on Twitter @AJETConnect or on Facebook. Now you have access to news for you, by you, any time!

Twitter

bit.ly/CONNECTtw

Facebook

bit.ly/CONNECTfb



CIRCLE WHAT YOU'VE DONE

★★ BLUE ★★

★ E.T.-san Phone Home!

Contacted someone from home within the first 48 hours to let them know you're OK.

★ How Do I Even?

Helped a fellow JET in need. Directions, deodorant, and pens, oh my!

★ Work it, Baby

Networked with JETs outside of your prefecture with a memorable picture or new LinkedIn friendship.

★★★★ GREEN ★★★★★

★ Gochisousama deshita!

Went out for a walk around Shinjuku. Turn to [page 10](#) for a map of nearby sights.

★ It Pays to Pay Attention

Spoke to the leader of two different seminars and asked them some questions, or volunteered when asked!

★ Like a Boss

You're a shining example of a proactive JET! You went one step further and amazed your future coworkers by designing your first assignment or writing your first lesson. You got this.

YOU GOT EVERY TROPHY! WAY TO BE PRODUCTIVE! YOU'RE WELL ON YOUR WAY TO BEING AN EXPERT EXPAT.

Photo - Rebecca Scheiris

KEYS TO SUCCESS

ERICA GRAINGER (FUKUSHIMA)

You're one of those lucky few who have just arrived in hot, sticky Tokyo for Tokyo Orientation, now what? Here are some tips and tricks to help you survive the next few days and unlock the mystery that is Tokyo Orientation.

WATER

Summer in Japan is hot, humid and muggy. Your best friend is water, followed by a cool fan and staying indoors. Water is readily available outside the seminar rooms. Drink 1-2 litres of water per day!

HEALTHY DIET & SLEEP

To be in optimal shape, a healthy diet and plenty of rest are essential. Try not to be defeated by jetlag!

EXCURSION EXERTION!

Tokyo Orientation is designed to help new JETs adjust and offers practical workshops for teaching and living in Japan. It is not the time to go laze in a cat cafe or get lost in Roppongi! There's plenty of time to return to Tokyo (with cheap domestic flights from most airports), just be patient.

YES, YES, YES

In your free time, wander the corridors and meet other JETs, especially from your prefecture. Say 'yes' to new experiences and opportunities! Get out of your comfort zone and try new things.

NETWORKING

Aim to network and make new friends at every opportunity. Swap contact information such as names, email address, and Facebook details. Go on, you can do it!

CONFIDENCE IS KEY

The trick is to be quietly confident, and fake it til you make it. Everyone will be anxious, hot and sweaty, but just be yourself and relax.

Venture out and make real connections with other JETs in your spare time.



Photo - Jessica Buntrock

SHINJUKU GUIDE

PIA PETERSON (YAMAGATA)



★ HOTEL EXITS

The exit by the escalators will lead you to the JR Shinjuku station. The exit by the Bell Captain's desk will lead you to the Metropolitan Government Building and Tochomae subway station.

LUNCH & DINNER

- Slappy Cakes** is a Tokyo Orientation standby for breakfast at all hours.
Lumine EST, 7th Floor
11:00-23:00
- Din Tai Fung** is famous for dumplings and good, cheap Chinese food.
Takashima Times Square, 12th Floor
11:00-23:00
- Menya Kaijin Ramen** is called the best ramen in Shinjuku by some; not a bad introduction to the Japanese Ramen game!
Sanruku Building 3-35-7, Second Floor
Sat/Sun 11:00-23:30, M-F
Closed between 15:00-16:30
- Journal Standard Burgers** is an introduction both to Japanese fashion and food.
Journal Standard, 3rd Floor
M-F 11:00-22:30, S-S
10:30-21:30
- Ginzo Sushi** is a summer standard, a Shinjuku stand-by.
Shinjuku NS Building, 29th Floor
11:30-14:30, 17:30-23:30
- Ain Soph Journey** is a vegan and organic cafe with a small menu, but dedicated following.
Shinjuku Q Building, First floor
11:00-23:00

- La Table** is a bakery and cafe right by the station, in case you need a pick-me-up or a breather.
1-1-4 Nishishinjuku Shinjuku Tokyo
Open M, W, Th & F
11:00-20:00
 - Chaya Macrobiotic Restaurant** is a pricey, but delicious, option for foodies.
Isetan Department Store, Third Floor
11:00-22:00
 - Cochin Nivas** has Indian food with a bevvy of vegetarian dishes.
5-9-17 Nishi-Shinjuku
11:30-14:30, 17:30-21:30
(Closed Tuesdays)
- **Convenience Stores (*konbini*)** are both ubiquitous and helpful in Shinjuku—no matter what you're looking for. There is one in the bottom level of Keio Plaza (as well as some Tokyo omiyage shops).
Check out our full konbini guide for what to find, eat, and drink on pages 14-15.
 - **Starbucks** are open from 7:30-23:00 across the board, and offer free WiFi and familiarity.

SHOPPING & EXPLORING

- Shinjuku Department Stores** are where to go for restaurants and shopping. No matter what you are curious about, had to leave behind at home, or want to buy before you head out to a rural placement, you can find it here.
- Sumitomo Building**
2-6-1 Nishi Shinjuku
 - Lumine Shinjuku**
1-1-5 Nishi Shinjuku
 - Shinjuku Island Tower**
6 Chome-5-1 Nishishinjuku
 - i-Shinjuku Building**
1-19-1 Kabuki-cho, Shinjuku
 - Okadaya**
An arts and crafts supply store with a huge fabric section. Attracts all sorts of people from the Tokyo fashion scene, from designers to college students, to all seven floors.
10:00-8:30
 - Kinokuniya**
A bookstore with a wide selection of comics, magazines, and English/foreign language books.
10:00-21:00
- ## AFTER DINNER
- Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building**
The best free view of Tokyo.
7:00-23:00

WHERE SHOULD WE GO?



TOKYO ORIENTATION

SCRATCHING THE TOKYO ITCH IN SHINJUKU

JOYCE WAN (HOKKAIDO) ELENA GALINDO (SHIZUOKA)

After Tokyo Orientation, incoming JETs will be flung far and wide to the various magnificent, but little-known, corners of Japan. For many, this will be the last chance in a while to explore the country's exhilarating capital. This is no easy task, as Tokyo is an expansive metropolis with possibly *way* too much to offer. Make the most of your whirlwind Tokyo nights by sticking close to home base, and delve into the glittering district of Shinjuku. All the highlights in this guide are conveniently located within walking distance of the Keio Plaza Hotel. Refer to the map for locations.

SEE AND DO

17. Want to see a shrine?

Most close before the sun sets, so it will be hard to visit the major shrines on typical tourist itineraries. If you crave spiritual enlightenment, or just seek a moment of serenity, wander over to the smaller and quieter Kumano Shrine, located within Shinjuku Central Park. If orientation jitters and Tokyo's frenetic place have you feeling a little overwhelmed, this sequestered shrine is the perfect place to collect your thoughts.

9:00-17:00

2-11-2 Nishi-shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku

18. Want to get your game on?

Japan's arcades and gaming centres are unlike any other in the world. Enter the sensory overload of your dreams at Club Sega. Here you can play arcade

games galore, try to win prizes from addictive UFO catchers, and take excessively decorated purikura sticker photos. Even if you don't like games, it's worth it to experience the futuristic, frenzied atmosphere.

10:00-24:00

1-12-5 Nishi-shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku

19. Want to sing your heart out? Karaoke is one of Japan's favorite pastimes, and if you have never experienced it, you most certainly will before the end of your JET Program tenure. Try Karaoke Kan (カラオケ館), just a quick 9 minute walk from the Keio, and enjoy a wide assortment of snacks such as *karaage* (fried chicken) while you sing to your heart's content.

11:00-6:00

1-5-12 Nishi-shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku

EAT AND DRINK

20. Want to choose your sushi from a conveyor belt?

Sushi prepared by a master chef is a delicacy that can cost tens of thousands of yen. Luckily, it's possible to get your fill of fish on rice for cheap, thanks to convenient *kaiten-zushi* restaurants (literally, conveyor belt sushi). For those who have rudimentary Japanese abilities, but want to go beyond familiar fast food chains, this is perfect; just pick the dish you like right off the belt! **Himawari Sushi** is a great option, balancing fresh ingredients with an unbeatable price.

11:00-22:00

1-15-3 Nishi-shinjuku, Shinjuku-Ku

21. Want to eat ramen?

Japan is home to an array of regional ramen specialties, and Tokyo is no exception. While you're there, try *tsukemen* ramen, a variety where the noodles are served in a separate bowl from the extra thick broth, and dipped just before eating. This provides a cooler ramen-eating experience during the hot summer months. If that sounds good, get in line at **Fu-unji**, a wildly popular hole-in-the-wall establishment that's close to Shinjuku station. Order your bowl from the vending machine, and give the ticket directly to the chef.

11:00-15:00, 17:00-21:00

2-14-3 Yoyogi, Shibuya-ku

SHOP

22. Want to start or continue a hobby?

Japan is a DIY-lovers paradise, with endless ideas and options for your projects. Although there are many specialty stores, drop into **Tokyu Hands** for the widest selection. Billed as a one-stop "creative life" store, this 7-story chain sells crafting goods, stationery, gardening and home decoration supplies, and other objects to inspire creativity in your daily life. If you're an admirer of Japanese design, this is your store.

10:00-21:00

Times Square Building 2-8F, 5-24-2 Sendagaya, Shibuya-ku

23. Want to spruce up your wardrobe?

There's no place quite like Tokyo when it comes to unique fashions. Shinjuku is home to many trendy malls, including **Shinjuku MYLORD** (8 minute walk) and **Isetan Shinjuku** (17 minute walk). Stop by either one of these malls if you're looking for brands

popular amongst Tokyo's fashionistas.

Shinjuku MYLORD

11:00-21:00

1-1-3 Nishishinjuku,

Shinjuku Isetan

10:30-20:00

3-14-1 Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku

And lastly, want to take a well-deserved break after a day of jetlag and information overload? Stay in your world-class hotel room and relax, and don't let anyone give you grief about it. With Japan's well-developed train network and the growth of low-cost airlines, you'll definitely be able to return to Tokyo for a proper vacation at some point. So invite your new friends over, and check out some of that whacky Japanese television everyone's always going on about.



Photos - David Klug

KONBINI GUIDE

CHERYL LEE (NAGANO) KIMBERLY MIGLINO (NAGASAKI)

HOT FOOD

• Doria (ドリア)
Melted cheese, rice, and other ingredients in a bowl.

• Pastas (パスタ *pasuta*)
Spaghetti, carbonara, cup noodles, etc.

• Counter Food
Fried chicken, corn dog, fried potatoes, etc.

COLD FOOD

• Rice Balls (おにぎり *onigiri*)
Come with various fillings. Try salmon (しゃけ *shake*), chicken and mayo (チキンマヨ *chikinmayo*), pickled plum (梅干 *umeboshi*), or cod fish eggs (たらこ *tarako*).

• Fruits & Veggies^{GV}
Whole and pre-cut, plus various salad choices.

• Bentos (お弁当 *obentou*)
Japanese style lunch boxes, filled with an assortment of dishes.

• Cold Noodles^V
Popular in summer. Cold buckwheat noodles (ざるそば *zarusoba*) and cold wheat flour noodles (ざるそうめん *zarusoumen*) are the most common.

• Energy Bars^V
Try Soyjoy or CalorieMate brands.

• Breads
Melon bread^V (メロンパン *meronpan*), yakisoba bread (焼きそばパン *yakisobapan*), and French toast^V.

• Ice cream^{GV}

NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINKS

• Iohas Bottled Water
Comes plain, sparkling, or flavored.

• Salt & Fruit (ソレテイライチ *soreteiraichi*)

• Salty lychee flavored drink; unusual but delicious and hydrating.

• Vitamin CC Lemon
For when you feel a cold coming on.

• BOSS Canned Coffee
• Coke/Pepsi Products
• Bottled Water

INGREDIENTS AND ALLERGENS (1)

- Barley 大麦 *oomugi*
- Beef 牛 *gyuu*
- Buckwheat そば *soba*
- Chicken 鳥 / 鶏 / とり *tori* or チキン *chikin*
- Crab 蟹 / カニ / かに *kani*
- Dairy 乳 / ちち *chichi*
- Eggs 卵 / たまご *tamago*
- Gelatin ゼラチン *zerachin*
- Meat 肉 *niku*
- Peanuts ピーナッツ *pinattsu* or 落花生 *rakkasei*
- Pork 豚 *buta*
- Shrimp 蝦 / えび / エビ *ebi*
- Soybeans 大豆 *daizu*
- Sweetener (大) 水飴 *oomizu meshi*
- Tongue タン *tan*
- Wheat 小麦 / こむぎ *komugi*

ALCOHOL DRINKS

• Chu-Hi
Flavored beer, try the current seasonal flavors, Coconut Water or Sour Apple.

• Japanese Beers
Asahi, Kirin, and Sapporo are three common ones.

• Sake (二本酒 *nihonshu* or お酒 *osake*)
Rice wine.
• Umeshu (梅酒 *umeshu*)
Plum wine.

THOSE WITH DIETARY RESTRICTIONS: DO NOT LOSE HOPE!

The key here is to read the ingredients carefully. For example, *onigiri* can be filled with anything from pickled plum (*umeboshi*) to mayonnaise. For those avoiding gluten, in the summer the Japanese serve a tea known as *mugicha* (麦茶・むぎちゃ), which is made of barley. As such, this type of tea is common in konbinis so check labels and ask.

QUICK TIPS

- Remember to check *onigiri* and *mochi* fillings!
- Salad dressings, soy sauce (醤油 *shouyu*), meat, and mayonnaise (may) contain gluten.
- Oden broth contains dashi fish stock.
- Fried food may be cooked in oil with other products, including meat.
- There is never any guarantee against cross-contamination, especially with foods served over the counter.

SAFE FOR VEGANS AND VEGETARIANS:

Fruit juice, *onigiri* (check fillings), salads (check toppings and dressings), fruit and nuts, soy milk, *soba* (included sauce is not vegan, can substitute soy sauce), *mochi*, fried potatoes and croquettes, *tofu* and soy from *oden* (may contain fish broth)

EASY TO FIND ITEMS AT THE KONBINI:

- Toothbrush (*haburasshi*) and toothpaste (*hamigaki*)
- Socks (*kutsushita*), stockings (*sutokkingu*), undershirts (*andashatsu*), and underwear (*andaawe*)
- Sunscreen (*sansukurin* or ひやけどめ *hiyakedome*)
- Bug repellent (虫よけ *mushiyoke*)
- Shampoo (*shampoo*) & conditioner (リンス *rinsu*)
- Umbrellas (*kasa*)
- Hairbrushes (*heaburashi*) & combs (くし *kushi*)
- Tissues (*tisshu*)
- Toilet paper (*toiretto pe-pa-*)
- Wetwipes (*wettotisshu*)
- Body & hand Towels (*taoru* てぬぐい *tenugui*)
- Energy drinks 栄養ドリンク (*eiyo-dorinku*)
- Notebooks (*no-to*), pens (*pen*), pencils (*enpitsu*)
- Laundry detergent 洗濯石鹸 (*sentaku sekken*)

SAFE FOR GLUTEN-FREE:

Onigiri (check fillings), salads, fruit and nuts, juices

SO YOU FORGOT SOMETHING?

You can purchase simple toiletries, stationery, and supplies should you forget some!

A QUICK NOTE

Almost all konbinis have a 24-hour ATM, but only 7-Eleven ATMs allow international transactions. Please see page 19 for the ATM guide for more details. There is a konbini at the bottom of Keio Plaza (no ATM), and many within walking distance. Around Tokyo, you will most likely see Lawson, 7-Eleven, and FamilyMart convenience stores. However, other konbinis may be plentiful in your region once you are out of Tokyo, such as Circle K and others.

Cheryl Lee is a first year ALT and closet konbini addict living in Shiojiri, Nagano. Seriously, she buys everything at the konbini. That's probably really unhealthy, but she doesn't care.

Kimberly Miglino is a first year ALT in Unzen, Nagasaki. When not battling small elementary children at dodgeball, she enjoys konbini ice coffee, reading, and attempting to learn Japanese archery.

SOURCE

(1) <http://bit.ly/1JRruke>

Photo - Hannah Killoh

GLUTEN FREE & VEGETARIAN^V

TIP!
LOOK FOR SMALL GOLD AND GREEN BOTTLES OF UKON NO CHIKARA. THEY'RE FILLED WITH TURMERIC (UKON), WHICH CAN AID HYDRATION, LIVER FUNCTION, AND PREVENT HEADACHES.

24 HOURS



ARRIVAL IN TOWN CHECKLISTS

AUBREY BRUECKNER (WAKAYAMA) THEA FELMORE (HIROSHIMA)

Welcome to your new home! You've survived airport transfers, struggled with heavy luggage, and have had a whirlwind couple of days at Tokyo Orientation. Now you're ready to settle in, and we're here to make things easier! Take a deep breath and use this handy checklist to start you off.

FIND YOUR LOCAL...

- Grocery store
- Department store or other home goods store
- Convenience store
- Doctor or clinic
- Hospital
- Police station or *koban* (police box)
- Emergency evacuation area
- Daiso/100 yen store
- ATM
- Laundromat
- Post office

WHAT FURNITURE DO YOU HAVE?

- Bed or futon set
- Sheets
- Pillows
- Blankets
- Table or desk
- Flashlight
- Batteries

KITCHEN MATTERS

- Stock up on basic essentials (see page 20 for ideas)
- Purchase bags for garbage and recyclables
- Obtain garbage and recycling calendar
- Find the garbage and recycling area

EXPLORE!

- Take a walk around the block
- Visit the town hall and stock up on pamphlets and maps
- Find out about events and festivals
- Understand the weekly schedule for buses, trains, or ferries
- Obtain a road map of area

APARTMENT BASICS

- Make a physical copy of your address and telephone number
- Post the contact information of your Contracting Organization
- Pass contact details onto family and friends
- Learn how to work the gas stove, microwave oven and washing machine
- Introduce yourself to neighbors
- Decorate apartment with pictures and souvenirs from home
- Organise internet connection (*BBAppl* is highly recommended)
- Set air conditioner to a comfortable 24°C and relax

FIND OUT HOW TO PAY FOR...

- Rent
- Utilities (water, gas, electricity)
- Cell phone

ARRIVAL IN TOWN SURVIVAL TIPS

AUBREY BRUECKNER (WAKAYAMA) THEA FELMORE (HIROSHIMA)

Your first week in your placement can become quite overwhelming. In fact, you'll probably feel as if your feet don't even touch the ground for at least the first month. Fear not, as we have some handy hints on ways you can successfully get through your first week without feeling the need to apply for a frequent flyers club!

TIP #1: CONTACT HOME

Keep yourself grounded by contacting your family and friends back home. Tokyo Orientation has kept you on your toes and you've probably been too busy to have a proper conversation with the people who mean the most to you. Skype, pick up the phone, or e-mail those back home and tell them all about your exciting first few days in Japan.

TIP #2: COMPOSE YOUR JIKOSHOKAI

Your *jikoshokai* is your self-introduction. On the day you arrive in your new city or town, you will most likely be taken straight to the office of your Contracting Organization. Once there, you might be asked to make your *jikoshokai* to the staff. Even if it's short and sweet, your co-workers will appreciate the effort.

TIP #3: MAKING YOUR PLACE YOUR OWN

Make your new living space into a home. Don't worry about making your apartment Pinterest-worthy in the first week. Aim for creating a familiar atmosphere by decorating with pictures from home, souvenirs and other items that will help you adjust to living in a new country. Find your local 100 yen store, like Daiso, to stock up on household goods and other random, crazy and cute items these stores sell. Have a look at page 16 for the 'Arrival in Town Checklist' on items that you might want to consider stocking up on in your first week.

TIP #4: BUDGET, BUDGET, BUDGET

Not something you want to think about doing in your first week, but definitely worth keeping in mind. New JETs wait anywhere from 2 to 6 weeks until they receive their first paycheck. Sometimes you are expected to pay up front for the business trips you will be taking in August, only receiving remuneration in September. With this in mind, keep expensive purchases - such as a bed, couch, washing machine, that weekend trip to bunny island - for after your paycheck.

TIP #5: MAKE CONNECTIONS

Find and connect with fellow ALT's, CIR's or SEA's that may be living in your area. This is a great way to socialise, get you out of the apartment, and explore your new home with like-minded people.



YOUR JAPANESE PHONE

GINA PANOZZO (OKINAWA) HIROSHI FUKUSHIMA (KUMAMOTO)

Getting a mobile device in Japan may sound daunting with all the different rules and the language barrier thrown in. Don't fret though, because here's a quick rundown of what to expect. Most Japanese contracts are two years, and there can be fees for canceling early. In Japan, you make monthly payments on your phone in addition to the phone service. Whether you go to the store with your supervisor, another JET, or on your own, make sure to bring your *inkan* (name stamp), resident card, and bank book.

HERE'S SOME QUESTIONS TO KEEP IN MIND:

1. How much does my actual phone cost monthly versus paying up front?
2. How much is my phone and phone plan?*
3. If I only stay for one year, how much will it cost to cancel my phone?
4. Does my phone have tethering options?
5. Is the data plan unlimited?
6. Does the company have an English customer support line?

**In Japan, calling time is more expensive than data as people message more. Mobile phone data usage is measured in "packets" – 128 bytes (1MB: ~8000 packets). Ask for promotions and discounts that suit your usage.*

Gina was a JET in Okinawa, Japan from 2012-2015. You can find more happy Japan tips and stories at her blog ginabearsblog.com.

PHONE STORE?



PHONE STORE...

USEFUL APPS

- Google Translate

A quick kanji check is always helpful. This app provides a rough translation of what you need. It lets you draw kanji, translate speech, and take pictures of Japanese text.

- Yomiwa & Waygo

These apps instantly recognize text from your phone and translate Japanese characters into English. Best for signs and other quick reads

- Imiwa & IMI Japanese Dictionary

These apps for iOS and Android (respectively) are the most commonly used dictionary apps for looking up words you see and hear. Make lists (great for work and study), study stroke order, and see example sentences.

- LINE & Aillis

Japan's #1 app to stay connected and social. Almost everyone uses it to call and text. With a plethora of cute stickers to send, it's super

easy to fall in love with it. Aillis is LINE's camera app, which simulates 'purikura' sticker booth fun.

- AJET – iConnect

Supported by National AJET, this app contains tons of resources for daily living, including medical terms, appliance guides, size conversions, and more.

- NHK

This helps you stay up to date on everything current in Japan. It comes in 14 different languages.

ATM GUIDE

STEVEN THOMPSON (FUKUSHIMA) PATRICK FINN (TOYAMA)



Once you've got your cash card and bank book, you'll be ready to hit the ATM. While many ATMs have English options available, not all will. Don't worry. With a little bit of vocabulary and practice, you'll have no trouble.

Even though ATMs can vary, this guide should give you a good idea of what to expect and how to navigate the menus. If all else fails, have a bank staff member or convenience store clerk assist you by pointing to the desired action below.

銀行ATM

WITHDRAWAL

お引き出し

ohikidashi

1. Put in your ATM card.
2. Push "withdrawal" (お引き出し).
3. Enter your PIN number.
4. Touch "confirm" (確認).
5. Enter the desired amount.
6. Touch "yen" (円) and "confirm" (確認).
7. Touch "yes" (はい) for a receipt (発行) or "no" (いいえ).



OTHER BUTTONS

- **Correct 訂正 *teisei***
Use this if you entered a number incorrectly.
- **Cancel 取消 *torikeshi***
Use this to cancel your transaction and get your card back.
- **Return 戻る *modoru***
Use this to go back a screen.

DEPOSIT

お預け入れ

oazukeire

1. Push "deposit" (お預け入れ).
2. Put in your ATM card.
3. Touch "agree" (確認).
4. Insert your money.
5. Touch "close cover" (ふた閉).
6. Confirm the amount of money and touch "agree" (確認).
7. Touch "yes" (はい) for a receipt (発行) or "no" (いいえ).

UPDATE YOUR BANK BOOK

通帳記入

tsuuchou kinyuu

1. Open and insert your bank book.
2. Wait for your bank book to update.
3. Touch "confirm" (確認).
4. Remove your bank book.



TIPS

A majority of ATMs in Japan close at night to go home and be with their families (or something). Know the hours for the ATMs in your town. Average closing time is about 8 PM.

Local ATMs will not accept foreign credit or debit cards, but 7-Eleven and the Japan Post Bank will. Open 24 hours, 7-Eleven ATMs also offer English service and work with nearly any card from around the world. They charge a small transaction fee (around 200 yen). Remember to notify your bank back home you're moving, or they may shut down your card for suspicious overseas activity!

GROCERY GUIDE

MIRA RICHARD-FIORMORE (SAITAMA) ALEXANDRA BRUECKNER (AOMORI)

We understand the first couple of days in a new country can be very stressful. So in order to ease your transition into Japanese life, we have prepared an essential survival guide for you and your kitchen.

ESSENTIAL JAPANESE INGREDIENTS

Mirin (みりん) is a clear, sweet, slightly thick rice-based cooking wine. Add a splash of it in the last few minutes of cooking stir-fries and balance the sweetness with soy sauce. Mix it with spices, garlic, and tomato paste to create a great barbecue sauce, or mix with equal parts *miso* and water to make a glaze for chicken or tofu.

Soy sauce, or *shoyu* (醤油・しょうゆ), is probably the best-known Japanese ingredient. It's intensely salty and can be used for everything from dunking sushi to finishing off fried rice. Mix it with some *mirin*, sugar, and fresh ginger to make a basic teriyaki sauce.

Miso (みそ) is fermented soy bean paste. There are many different kinds, but the two most common are white and red. Mix with *dashi* soup stock to make broth for *miso* ramen, use it as a dip for fresh vegetables, or combine with *sake* and marinate chicken or fish overnight to grill or roast the next day.

KITCHEN ESSENTIALS

Home stores like Homac and Nitori will have all of the basic cooking utensils and tableware that you might want, but if you're on a budget, head to Daiso, Seria, or another 100円 (yen) store. The items sold there are of good quality, and the low prices mean that you can completely stock your kitchen for only a few thousand yen.

- Long Chopsticks
- Spatula
- Fry Pan
- Pot
- Knife
- Cutting Board
- Cutlery/Tableware

INGREDIENTS

- Pre-made Bentos
- Instant Rice Packs
- Cooking Oil
- Soy Sauce
- Salt & Pepper
- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Meat/Fish
- Eggs
- Bread
- Dairy

Check your kitchen! Check off what you have!

USEFUL FOOD-RELATED JAPANESE SENTENCES

いくらですか?

Ikura desu ka?

“How much is this?”



_____はどこですか?

_____ *wa doko desu ka?*

“Where is ___?”



これに *** が入っていますか?

*Kore ni *** ga haitte imasu ka?*

“Is there *** in this?”

***chocolate (チョコレート *chokore-to*) dairy (乳 *chichi*) egg (卵 *tamago*) ham (ハム *hamu*) peanut (落花生 *rakkasei*) seafood (魚介類 *gyokairui*) soy (大豆 *daizu*) wheat (小麦 *komugi*)

JAPANESE VEGETABLES	Boil	Pan Fry	Bake	Steam	Grill	Deep-fry
Japanese Mustard Spinach 小松菜 <i>komatsuna</i>	●	●	×	●	×	×
Taste like spinach and bok choy. Sautéed is best.						
Bok Choy チンゲン菜 <i>chingensai</i>	●	●	●	●	●	×
Great for nimono, stir-fries, or steamed.						
Ginger Flower みょうが <i>myouga</i>	●	●	●	●	×	×
Great in miso soup, veggies, and pickled salad.						
Greater Burdock ゴボウ <i>gobou</i>	●	●	×	●	×	×
Shredded in kinpira gobou, or in a hot pot						
White Turnip かぶ <i>kabu</i>	●	●	●	●	●	×
Great for stews, grilled veggies, or stir-fries.						
Hen-of-the-wood 舞茸 <i>maitake</i>	×	●	●	●	×	●
Excellent for tempura, or stir-fries.						
Mustard/Water Greens 水菜 <i>mizuna</i>	●	●	×	●	×	×
Used in hot pots, stir-fries, or salads.						
Japanese Yam 長芋 <i>nagaimo</i>	●	●	×	●	●	×
Great in okonomiyaki and poured on rice.						
Taro Root 里芋 <i>satoimo</i>	●	●	×	●	×	×
Used in nimono or stir-fries. Great for stews.						
Bitter Melon ゴーヤ <i>go-ya</i>	●	●	×	●	×	●
Bitter! Used in stir-fries, soups, or dumplings.						

Photos - Alexandra Brueckner, Patrick Finn, Mira Richard-Fioramore

AN ALT'S FIRST DAY AT WORK

RAYNA HEALY (SHIMANE) BECCA SIMAS (KAGOSHIMA)

It's easy to feel like a fish out of water on your first day of work, which is probably what they'll serve you for lunch. But button up your blazer and walk in with confidence, it's going to be a wonderful year!

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Be ready to talk about yourself in both English and Japanese. The first few days of work, whether you are an ALT or a CIR, will mostly be you introducing yourself over and over again. Hand out the *omiyage* you brought from your home country to your new coworkers. And don't forget to bow!

When you introduce yourself to your students, speak slowly and clearly in English so they can understand you. Use basic expressions such as "I like..." and "I play...". You'll be expected to give a short speech about yourself to the student body at the Welcome Ceremony.

LEARNING NAMES AND WHERE TO GO

Ask your JTE for a seating chart of the Teachers' Room and make some for your classrooms (this will be a lifesaver if you're teaching at multiple schools). The same goes for CIRs and your office. Remembering your coworkers' and students' names goes a long way to

foster positive relationships. If your supervisor has time, ask him/her for a tour of the school. Bonus points if you can get a student to show you around the school in English! Learn where the copier and laminating machines are as well as all of your classrooms.

よろしく
お願いします!



SIMPLE JAPANESE GREETING

When you meet new teachers, try to speak Japanese with them. If your Japanese is not great, fear not. Use this as your guide for a simple Japanese greeting that will impress your new coworkers!

Hajimemashite.

"Nice to meet you."

bow

Watashi wa _____ desu.

"I am _____."

Douzo yoroshiku onegashimasu.

"Please look favorably on our relationship."

bow

CLUBS

Clubs are a great way to build stronger relationships with your students. Ask your JTE what clubs are available at your school. Even visiting them for a day helps you learn about your students' interests and shows them that you are invested. Ask your predecessor what clubs he/

she was involved in (English Club or Debate Team) that you could take over.

The first day will be a blur of new faces and places. It'll get less overwhelming as the year goes on. Use your first day to focus on making good impressions and getting your bearings; it'll be the start of a great year.

A CIR'S FIRST DAY AT WORK

KAI WEISNER-HANKS (NIIGATA)

You've been hired as a Coordinator for International Relations. Congratulations! You're probably a bit excited, a bit curious, and a big bit terrified. This article will look to answer some questions about what you can expect on your first day.

The first order of business as a CIR is introductions! Despite the summer heat, try to dress up in business wear as you'll likely be meeting a lot of the office bigwigs. First, you'll meet your coworkers in your division. There will be a lot of names to remember, but for now just worry about your direct supervisor and the head of your division. After that, you should be introduced to a string of higher ups, and possibly even the mayor or governor. These meetings will be short and you will mostly just talk about yourself, your interest in Japan, and your placement. If you have souvenirs, now would be a good time to pass them out as you will most likely not be seeing these people very often during your usual day-to-day routine.

Beyond introductions and some explanations concerning things like salary and taxes, on

the first day, CIRs are often left to their own devices. So here's some tips for things to do:

First, find a seating chart. Every office will have one, and it can be very useful, especially in your first few weeks as you're trying to remember everyone's name.

Second, you should also try to find, and look through, any information your predecessor might have left you. Even if you got a lot of information from him or her, there's likely to be a wealth of stuff on your computer. Familiarize yourself with the files you have access to, as you will likely be referring to them for some time to come.

Third, if you feel like you're not being given any work yet, don't worry! Most offices realize you're new and will not toss a lot of work at you immediately. So take your first day to relax and familiarize yourself with your coworkers, materials, and surroundings.

Your first day as a CIR can be a daunting one, but try to relax and get ready for the great adventure of the coming year!

Photo - Rochelle Zheng

THE FIRST ENKAI

KEITH LAWTON (GIFU)

An *enkai* is more than just a work party. There is a level of communication you can reach with your coworkers at an *enkai* that you won't find in the *kyouinshitsu* (teachers' room). People will be much more open to asking you questions, making future plans to meet, and tying neckties around their foreheads. *Enkai*s typically cost between 3000 to 5000 yen, but be sure to ask someone in advance. If you can afford it, you should definitely go.

If you end up sitting far from your English-speaking colleagues, don't fret. After the party takes off you will be free to move around. However, you might not want to. You'd be surprised at how beer, *atsukan*, and *mugi shouchu* unlocks the English in your Japanese colleagues. Take every opportunity you can to make small talk with those around you.

DON'T TOUCH YOUR DRINK

During the speeches keep your attention on the speaker. Your coworkers will be sitting in *seiza* (on their knees).

You'll get points if you can do it too, but *muri shinaide ne* (don't overexert yourself).

You may be asked to say something. 'Public speaker' has now become a synonym for your job title (you're a JET!), try your best. If you don't know what to say just throw 'em your *jikoshokai* (self-introduction) again.

After the speeches comes the *kanpai* (toast). The *kanpai* is done with beer. Don't drink beer? Pick up the glass for the *kanpai*, set it down, and order something else. Don't drink? *Kanpai* with tea. It's polite to pick up your glass when someone is pouring for you.

PACE YOURSELF

Don't drink something you don't want to drink. Your coworkers will not let your glass become empty, and you should not let their glasses become empty either. But know that the act of refilling your coworkers' glasses is symbolic in Japanese culture. You are not being pressured to drink.

After the party is officially over you may find yourself invited to a *nijikai* (an after party) at a karaoke bar or an *izakaya*. *Nijikais* are optional. Turning down an invitation to a *nijikai* is not rude. If you do go, know that it's prudent not to talk at work about what may or may not have happened at the *nijikai*.

Throughout the *enkai* you should enjoy yourself to the fullest, communicate as best you can with everyone around you, and do be careful not to overdo yourself... *Kanpai!*

TIPS

Rural placement? Try to carpool with your coworkers.

Dietary Restrictions? Let them know on the day they invite you!

WARNING!

Japan is incredibly strict about operating cars and bicycles after drinking alcohol. Don't drive even after one sip of alcohol. Drinking and driving is strictly forbidden and will lead to severe punishment. If you've partaken, you'll need to get a ride with a teacher, taxi, or walk your bike home if you rode there.

Photo - Shelby Lake

BREAKING DOWN LANGUAGE BARRIERS

Photo - Sterling Diesel

MARGARET PICKARD (HOKKAIDO)

You've studied the hiragana prep books and memorized a couple of useful phrases, but now is the test: communicating with *real* Japanese people. Suppress those nerves and navigate those language barriers with grace (or the closest thing to it)!

COMMUNICATING IN ENGLISH

Most people you encounter may only have the bare minimum of English skills. Encourage them by setting the right tone: smile, don't raise your voice, and don't become frustrated! And remember this: **JET!**

Just the basics—try to keep your sentences short and free of colloquialisms.

Enunciate—keep your words from running together! Avoid sentences like "D'ya wanna go t'the store?"

Try rephrasing—if you're still met with a blank stare after repeating slowly, try using different words and even hand gestures.

COMMUNICATING IN JAPANESE

- BEGINNERS

There's a wealth of online guides for beginning Japanese, such as Tae Kim and Maggie-sensei. Peruse these during non-class periods! Learn the greetings used daily in the office and say them as *genki*-ly as possible. Write down and memorize a few simple phrases to communicate your own interests ("○○ *ga sukidesu*" is "I like ○○") and curiosity ("Kore wa *nandesuka?*" is "What is this?"). Don't be afraid to make mistakes—everyone does!

- INTERMEDIATE

Talk as much as possible with your co-workers! Ask them questions about their own likes (such as alcohols during the *enkais*), and different aspects of Japanese culture. Try introducing traditions from your own country. Manga is a great way for intermediate learners to study, so stop at your local Book-Off, Tsutaya, or any other bookstore, to pick up any interesting-looking volumes. Some easy to read ones include *Dragonball*, *Yotsuba&!*, and *Shirokuma Cafe*.

Study websites: [Duolingo](#), [Memrise](#), [Anki](#), and [Textfugu](#)

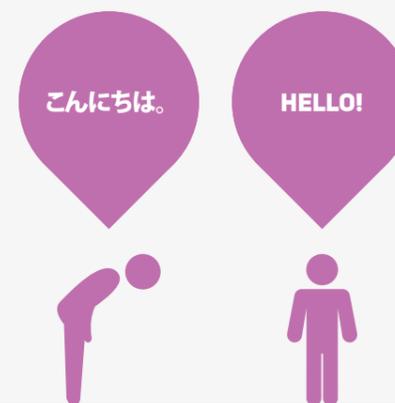
Online dictionaries: [Tangorin](#) and [Jisho.org](#)

For dictionary and translation apps, see "Your Japanese Phone" on [page 18](#).

- ADVANCED

To combat the feared "learning plateau," find materials that interest you to advance your studies. Try reading your favorite book in Japanese, challenge your comprehension by playing the Japanese version of games (added bonus: they're usually released earlier here!), and/or find a television show to follow (put on subtitles with the 字幕 button). The only way to improve is to continually use the language, so get out from behind your N1 book and keep talking with everyone you can!

For more Japanese resources, see bit.ly/AJETjapanese or tofugu.com/learn-japanese from our friends at Tofugu.



THE 10 COMMANDMENTS A JAPANESE ETIQUETTE GUIDE

ERICA GRAINGER (FUKUSHIMA)

一 二 三 四 五 六 七 八 九 十

1. **Thou shalt** bow instead of handshake.
2. **Thou shalt** remove one's shoes and change into slippers, or a pair of indoor shoes, before entering Japanese homes, schools, etc. Especially the toilet! Never wear shoes on tatami!
3. **Thou shalt** use Japanese in a bright and clear voice whenever appropriate. E.g. *Ohayo gozaimasu* (Good morning) upon arriving to work and *Osakini shitsurei shimasu* (Thank you for your hard work, I'm leaving now) when leaving work.
4. **Thou shalt** always be early; being on time is actually considered late!
5. **Thou shalt** not talk loudly on public transport, or public places. Most importantly, don't talk on your phone while on public transport, especially buses or trains. You might be asked to leave!
6. **Thou shalt** not point one's feet towards other people, as it's considered rude. *Seiza* position is possible for short periods of time.
7. **Thou shalt** bring *omiyage* (souvenirs) for work colleagues after a trip outside your local area or city. Ideally food which is wrapped individually, one per person.
8. **Thou shalt** not point with chopsticks, nor lick them off or rub them together after breaking them apart. Don't stab food with them or eat directly from communal dishes.
9. **Thou shalt** cover tattoos when one is at the workplace. Many onsens don't permit tattoos. Wear minimal makeup and jewellery, and keep perfume to a minimum.
10. **Thou shalt** wear a kimono at all times! (Just kidding).
At important ceremonies (such as opening ceremony) one should wear a formal suit. During the first week of school, it's better to overdress than underdress. Cool business style is advisable. However, don't wear anything low-cut or extremely tight. Women should cover their shoulders and wear sleeves, as it's inappropriate to expose your shoulders in the workplace. This also applies to daily life.

SURVIVING THE JAPANESE SUMMER

Photo - Wendy Ng

LEAH GRAY (HIROSHIMA)

Summer in Japan is great. There are impressive fireworks shows, delicious food stalls, and numerous cultural festivals. However, summer also brings the heat, humidity, and bugs. Here are some tips to help you deal with the unpleasant aspects of summer so that you can make the most of the fun moments:

APARTMENT TIPS

1. Consider buying a fan and placing it near your bed to help you sleep at night. You may be able to find one at a secondhand store such as Hard Off, or if you want to buy a new one, at a store like Don Quijote.
2. If you want to save energy, and your living space is small, use the air conditioner only when you are at home. However, if it is a relatively big space, it might be cheaper to keep the air conditioner on all the time rather than have it cool your living space down every time you come home.
3. Consider sealing off part of your apartment and running the air conditioner constantly in that area, creating a refrigerator-like effect (1).

STAYING COOL

Staying cool during the summer is important for your health and comfort.

1. Try to wear clothes that will absorb your sweat and then quickly dry out. UNIQLO sells clothes under the label AIRism designed specifically for this purpose.
2. You can also buy an inexpensive personal fan (団扇, *uchiwa* or 扇子, *sensu*) and use it to cool down (2).
3. For the times when you sweat a lot, a sweat towel is good to have on hand (2).
4. One of the biggest concerns to your health during the summer besides heatstroke is dehydration. So remember to stay hydrated!

BUGS

You are bound to have some unexpected guests visit.

1. Prevention is a good idea. Avoid leaving food and sweet drinks out, and don't let clutter accumulate.
2. If you do spot an uninvited guest, have a plan for what you are going to do with it. Will you catch and release it outside, or kill it and dispose of its remains? The type of insect should help you determine what to do here.
3. 100 yen stores, like Daiso, have insect traps that you can set out.

Here's to a safe and happy summer!

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SEE
AJET.NET'S
DAILY LIFE
RESOURCES
(BIT.LY/AJETCOOL)
FOR MORE INFO ON
COOLING YOUR
APARTMENT

UNIQLO!

???

GETTING CONNECTED

CAMERON JOE (CHIBA) SABRINA ZIRAKZADEH (OKAYAMA)

Are you worried about feeling isolated in your new home? Don't be! There are plenty of ways to make friends, get involved, and explore your interests in your new community. The key is to be open to new experiences and be ready to reach out to others. Don't be afraid to get out there!

You have many resources in your workplace and local community to help you get involved. First, if you have a predecessor, it's likely they were involved with something while they were here. Ask what they did, and try it out for yourself! This is one of the best ways to find information on sports and traditional Japanese activities in the area. Feel free to approach your coworkers as well. School clubs are a big commitment and you may only be allowed to join one, but if you want to be involved in multiple activities and meet new people, your co-workers who live in the area are a great resource. Sometimes your school may even host activities after students go home that you can get involved in. It never hurts to ask!

If you're still curious about what else is available to you locally, check out the nearest community center (*kouminkan*). They offer a variety of classes that you can join, such as *ikebana*,

SOCIAL GROUPS

Social Groups are groups that have no AJET affiliation, but are largely created by and for the JET community. Feel free to join any that interest you!

- JETFit
bit.ly/JETFitFB
Help each other reach your fitness goals through healthy eating and staying active.
- JET Food
bit.ly/JETFood
Trade recipes, share photos, and source ingredients you'll need for your next masterpiece!
- JET Gaming
bit.ly/JETGamingEnjoy
A group for tabletop and console gamers of all kinds.
- JET Ladies
bit.ly/JETLadies
A community for all women to ask questions and share resources and experiences about life as a woman in Japan.
- JET Programme Couples and Families
bit.ly/JETCouplesFamilies
A group for those participating in the JET Program with dependents or partners.
- JET Photography Club
bit.ly/JETPhoto
A community for sharing and talking about all things photography-related.
- JET Setters
bit.ly/JETSetters
A group of like-minded travellers in the JET community.

PLEASE
NOTE THAT
BIT.LY LINKS
ARE CASE
SENSITIVE!



CONNECT

foreigner-friendly classes similar to the community center, along with Japanese classes where you can make friends while improving your Japanese. International centers are also a great resource for information on volunteering, so definitely check one out.

On a larger, regional scale, a great resource is National AJET. AJET uses a block system to organize regional events across the country, from sports tournaments to charity events to monthly get-togethers. Check out the blocks on [page 7](#) or visit bit.ly/1LQZj4K. There are also Special Interest Groups (SIGs) directly affiliated with AJET. The following are active SIGs and ways to get connected to their respective communities.

Moving to a new city is an exciting adventure! There are new places to explore, new foods to eat, and new people to meet. Our workload is lighter in August than the rest of the year, so take time to ask and learn about the area and ways to get involved. Don't be afraid to put yourself out there, and start making your own way in your new home!

AJET SPECIAL INTEREST AND FACEBOOK GROUPS

- API AJET
api@ajet.net
bit.ly/APIAJETFB
Created to provide a supportive environment for the Asian Pacific Islander (API) community living in Japan. To increase awareness about API diaspora issues, encourage dialogue, and act as a resource for anyone interested in understanding an API's unique perspective (as a foreigner) in Japan.
- VegJET
vegjet@ajet.net
bit.ly/VegJETFB
An open community and useful resource for vegan/vegetarian JETs living in Japan, sharing information on veggie life in Japan, events, recipe ideas, and much more. If you're a current or incoming JET wishing to maintain a compassionate and healthy lifestyle, join!
- JET Christian Fellowship
jcfnatco@gmail.com
bit.ly/JETChristian
A community that helps JET participants connect with local churches and other Christians for the purpose of understanding and sharing God's love and the Gospel.
- JETs of African Descent
JETsAD@ajet.net
bit.ly/JETsofAD
A community for discussion, support, and announcements relating to the JET AD community at-large. Provides useful information on hard-to-find beauty products, foreign foods, events, and other topics relevant to its demographic.
- Stonewall Japan
stonewallsig@ajet.net
bit.ly/JETStonewall
An English-speaking LGBTQIA group in Japan that connects the LGBTQIA community, shares information and resources, provides a safe space for members, organizes events, and maintains resources on our website and online community.
- Hola JETs
holajets@ajet.net
bit.ly/HolaJETFB
A group focusing on topics related to JETs of Hispanic and Latino descent, open to everyone and anyone who wishes to experience Hispanic and Latino culture while in Japan. ¡Bienvenidos!



Photo - Alan Curr

TOKYO ORIENTATION

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WHAT'S NEXT FESTIVALS AND ORIENTATIONS

STEVEN THOMPSON (FUKUSHIMA)

Now that you're all settled in to your new town and have been around the office, it's time for the weekend! You've arrived at the perfect time as summer festivals are just starting up - although no one will fault you for staying in bed and sleeping! Find out from other JETs in the area, your prefectural AJET website, or Facebook pages what festivals are going on when.

If this is to be your first *matsuri* (祭り festival), here's what you can expect!

FOOD AND MORE FOOD!

The first thing you'll likely spot is all the food stands. Festival food usually costs between 100-500 yen each, and there's a huge variety. Popular items include:

- *toumorokoshi* (とうもろこし roasted corn)
- *ikayaki* (イカやき grilled squid)
- *yakitori* (やきとり meat skewers)
- *okonomiyaki* (お好み焼き savory pancakes)
- *yakisoba* (やきそば grilled seasoned noodles)
- *takoyaki* (たこ焼き battered octopus fritters)
- *karaage* (からあげ fried chicken)

Look for local specialties and make sure to get some sweets like chocolate-covered

bananas or *taiyaki* (cream-filled pastries in the shape of fish). Try something you've never eaten before!

FIREWORKS

Popular in summer, Japanese fireworks displays are some of the best. Make sure to find a good spot to sit and see the sky light up.

TANABATA AND BON ODORI

Depending on when and where you go to the festival, it could be one of two types. If you see lots of colorful streamers and bamboo with slips of paper tied to it, you're at *Tanabata*! See if you can find a place to write a wish for the coming year. If you see people dancing on the street, in a town square, or on a raised platform with lanterns, you're at *Bon Odori*. Held during *Obon*, a week to honor the spirits of one's ancestors, the *Bon Odori* is a traditional dance to welcome those spirits. Dances usually go in a circle and the movements are repetitive and local to your region. Jump in and try it out to score points with the community.

ORIENTATIONS

On the more professional side of things, you can expect to have a prefectural orientation after arriving in your placement. This orientation will be specific to your area and help you get to know your new home. Topics covered

could include teaching, local events, prefectural support systems, emergency procedures, and everyday life matters like garbage sorting and transportation. Make sure to take notes, ask any questions you can think of, and get to know all the other new JETs in your area! Your fellow JETs will form an invaluable support structure during your year. Most prefectural AJET groups organize a welcome party for new and current JETs to meet each other during this time as well.

The end of August will also see the beginning of classes for ALTs, so make sure you've got your self-introduction lesson planned! Games, pictures, and interactive lessons are the best way to help your students get to know you and your culture.

Photo - Shelby Lake

LOOK OUT FOR THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE OF CONNECT ONLINE ONCE YOU GET SETTLED IN TO HELP YOU START DIVING HEADFIRST INTO THE JET COMMUNITY.

WANT TO CHAT? THE PEER SUPPORT GROUP IS HERE TO LISTEN!

WHAT IS
PSG?

PSG IS A CONFIDENTIAL AND ANONYMOUS SERVICE PROVIDED BY VOLUNTEER JETS FOR JETS.

WHETHER YOU'VE HAD A BAD DAY AT WORK, NEED MEDICAL SERVICES, OR JUST WANT TO SPEAK ENGLISH WITH SOMEONE, THE VOLUNTEERS AT PSG ARE AVAILABLE TO LISTEN.

FOR THOSE IN NEED OF PROFESSIONAL ONGOING CARE, PSG CAN PUT YOU IN TOUCH WITH THE APPROPRIATE RESOURCES.

AVAILABLE 8-7AM/365 AT 050-5534-5566 OR SKYPE (AJETPSG). FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SERVICE, PLEASE CONTACT THE NATIONAL COORDINATOR AT AJETPSG@GMAIL.COM

FIND US ON FACEBOOK AT [FACEBOOK.COM/AJETPSG](https://www.facebook.com/AJETPSG)



CONTRIBUTING TO CONNECT

Connect is a magazine for the community in Japan, by the community in Japan. Everyone is welcome to write, no matter your experience or style! If you have an idea you want to see in these pages, reach out to our Head Editor, or any of our awesome section editors. We'll work with you to make it the best it can be and share it with our audience of thousands. Not every article needs to be an essay! We feature interviews, infographics, top-ten lists, recipes, photo spreads, travelogues, and more.

Contact the Head Editor of Connect, Rajeev Rahela, at connect.editor@ajet.net with your submissions, comments, and questions.

ARTICLES

Write about something you're doing. Write about something you love. Tell us a story.

SPOTLIGHT

Tell us about someone in your community who's doing something neat and noteworthy. Cooks, collectors, calligraphers—we want to hear about the inspiring people around you.

COMMENTS

Let us know what you think. Click the comment button at the end of any article, or interact with us on Facebook, Twitter, and issuu.com.

PHOTOS

All of Connect's photos are provided by the community, from the cover to the articles and everything in between. If you're an aspiring photographer and want your work published, send it to us at connect.editor@ajet.net.

HAIKU

Each month Connect will feature haiku from our readers. Haiku are simple, clean, and can be about anything you like! If you're an aspiring wordsmith with the soul of Basho, send all of your haiku along with your name and prefecture to contest@ajet.net.

COMICS

You asked for it, and now Connect features comics. Whether you're a desk doodler or a published artist, we want to see your panels and strips about life in Japan.



CONNECT WITH US

Interested in contributing to Connect? Want to stay up-to-date on interview opportunities, photo requests, and Connect announcements? Sign up to be a contributor at the [Connect Contributors Circle](#) online to receive updates from us, pitch your ideas, and get involved with the Connect staff and community. You can find the current Connect team and their contact information [here](#).

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