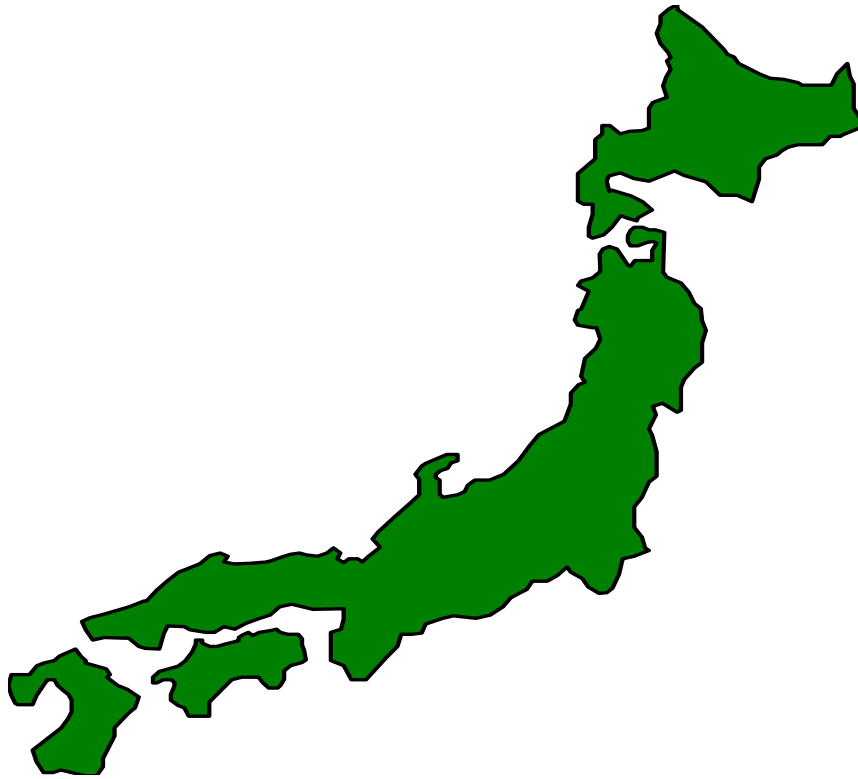


Jet & Beyond 2003

A National AJET Publication



Cover Photo By: Robyn Murray

Over a period of ten years, *Jet and Beyond* has evolved from a tiny AJET information handbook for leavers into the present edition you see before you. Such a transformation could not have occurred without the thoughtfulness and hard work of many, many JETs. Since 2000 *Jet & Beyond* has been in the position of not having enough revenues to print a new edition. So, the preface is a request for assistance, rather than the customary salutations for best of luck in the future. Please support this book it is a valuable resource. You need it. It also would be a shame if years of hard work disappeared over night.

Working on the production of *Jet & Beyond* presents a good learning opportunity. You can become part of the process. If you have certain dissatisfactions with the book, get involved and make some changes. It's easy. We need you. Every year there are areas left undeveloped because the contributors have either insufficient time or they don't have the appropriate knowledge. So, if you've got it, we want it. Also please help *Jet & Beyond* by spreading its name. When I first came to the book, although I remembered some vague reference to it at the Tokyo Orientation, I knew little else about it. I think many Jet's are like me. So talk about it, or assist with distribution and advertising, because many hands make light work.

Finally, I do wish you the best of luck, and I hope *Jet & Beyond* will be of assistance to you in many ways.

Megan Jones

JET & Beyond 2003

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The Renewal Decision

Should I stay or should I go?

These days, as we participate in a global economy where the average person moves into a new career four or five times throughout his/her life, a five-year stint at one occupation approximates a career. Previously it may have been reasonable to simply view the JET Programme as a stimulating, though diversionary sojourn in a foreign country that brought a wider viewpoint and a lot of new friends. But now CLAIR has initiated a new phase in the JET Programme that allows JETs to extend their contracts an additional two years and take on positions that hold promises of more responsibility. Extended renewal on the JET Programme can definitely function to either limit or enhance our future options. Clearly the decision to stay or go is of serious concern to all of us.

Since 1998, the volunteers of Jet & Beyond have done two surveys on JET alumni to cover the following issues: How long should I stay? How will my JET experiences translate into employment? If I decide to stay, what can I do to make the Programme worthwhile and in turn, give me a better chance for a bright future?

Leaving JET

Many of us come on the Programme because we are interested in the opportunities for travel and international experience. Molly Sebastian says, "My goal was to have the experience of living abroad and I was able to do that without burning out." Eisuke Koya stayed only one year before relocating to Amsterdam for a graduate school position. He comments, "I think staying longer would have been a waste of time for me, since the school did not appreciate my Japanese language skills nor did it have any relevance to what I wanted to do in the future."

Others of us return because we don't like the circumstances of our lives or we dislike our workplace. Barbara Althaus reflects that

given “more responsibility” she would have stayed on, but “I did not feel the desire to continue as an assistant.” So Starkle left, “If I had stayed longer I would have felt trapped into teaching. It was long enough to be in such a bizarre environment.” Making the decision to leave, though personal, has consequences for other people. You may discover you have to deal with feelings of doubt or obligation as you encounter resistance to your decision of returning home. People at your Board of Education, local JETs, or other members of the Japanese community may ask you to explain your reasons for not continuing. Explain your reasons for not staying clearly and then just make the most of your remaining time in Japan.

Emotions are a major part of the decision. For many of us the time spent in Japan may be a one shot deal. Some people have regrets about going back after a year. Patricia Kho of Canada went back home after a year due to family circumstances. “Looking back, I wish now that I could have spent one more year in Japan. I found that it is very hard to go back to Japan on your own.”

Perhaps taking an objective approach to the renewal decision is a good way to proceed. Julie Phelps, an Australian who stayed two years, went about it like this: Weigh up the good points and the bad points. Write them down. See whether the things you like outweigh the things you don't like. See what you can do about the things that you don't like, and decide if you can cope with the negative things if they don't change.

Okay, so you've made your pros and cons list, and the first thing on the top of your bad list is work. You are not alone: 73% of respondents to our most recent survey mentioned work as a factor against renewing. Our situation is not easy. We are thrust into dealing with many unfamiliar people, in a milieu substantially different from the situation we are used to negotiating at home. Often, we are alone and have no examples to follow from other people doing similar work. Most of us encounter massive communication barriers and disturbing varieties of ‘special status’. Andrew Moncreiff, UK, says, “After two years, I didn't feel I would have been able to achieve much more at the schools due to restrictions placed on ALTs by the administration.” Scott Yokoyama, an American who worked as a SEA for one year, noted that, “Most of the other SEAs were also disillusioned by their lack of usefulness.”

On the other hand, an Australian ALT placed in Akita-ken said that although she felt very under-utilised in her first year,

things changed as she stayed. “My Japanese got better, people in my Board of Education and schools started trusting me more, and I volunteered for everything I was remotely interested in. Even better, I took advantage of *enkais* the same way a Japanese office worker would.”

“I went straight to the boss and told him what I wanted. Eventually I got new English resources and even feedback from my teachers. I would have missed so much if I had checked the wrong box on the renewal form my first year.” Maybe this is the key to the advantages of staying on the JET Programme for another year. Claire Banfield, UK, says she “gained a more robust way of dealing with difficult situations.” Grant Stephen, UK, describes the benefit of participating on the Programme as a “new maturity”. And Juliet Wilson, USA, says she gained “sensitivity to different cultures and a broader and more international perspective on life.”

Daryl Newman, UK, also found it easy to stay for the first two years of the Programme, but had “some hesitation about deciding to stay a third year.” However, he has “No regrets. [...] Especially where school relations were concerned.” Though third years that disliked their final year did show up in the survey, perhaps Daniel sums up the general opinion when he says, “One year is enough to get to know Japan. Two years is enough to make an impact. Three years and you are hooked for life.”

Ok! I'll do one more year

The time you spend on the JET Programme may be one part of your life that you reflect on the most. 64% of respondents to the most recent JET survey felt that their experience was positive overall. However 66% of respondents also had regrets of some sort. Below are the most common:

- Not studying Japanese often enough.
- Not building relationships with fellow staff members.
- Not keeping in touch with friends back home while in Japan.
- Not keeping in touch with Japanese friends after leaving Japan.
- Not travelling more within Japan and its surrounding countries.
- Not getting official recognition for skills learned, such as taking the Japanese₃ Language Proficiency Exam

or getting the next belt in a martial art.

Numerous respondents to the JET survey mentioned goal setting as an important part of renewing. If you do not have a specific set of goals in mind for the next year, you might find yourself drifting aimlessly. Initiatives that you take outside of the classroom can make the difference between success and failure in your next job hunt. Tristan Cammert advises, "In general the JET Programme is a good door opener, but that's all it is. The skills that you learned will always be useful, but in terms of a selling point, the Programme is what you make of it." Use the Programme to not only build up the talents and interests that you came here with but also to develop and demonstrate new abilities.

If you are thinking of teaching, Patricia Kho of Canada, informs us that, "Saying you have taught in Japan will not land you a job. It is just not enough. I wish I took some TESL/TEFL teacher certification while in Japan. It would have been very beneficial when I returned to Canada."

If you are thinking about a career that takes advantage of the language skills you picked up in Japan, be prepared to demonstrate ability equal to level 1 or 2 of the Japanese Language Proficiency Exam. Daryl Newman, UK, found that the spoken Japanese he learned during JET was "useful in finding a job on a working holiday I took in Australia. However, more written Japanese study would have been useful regarding career goals." If you have specific sector knowledge and business skills, a good grasp of Japanese can land you a great job. Melissa Singleton, USA, gives this advice, "Any technical folks on the Programme, i.e. engineers, should really consider working on their language skills."

Making it pay

Investing whilst in Japan

Megan Jones, Nagasaki ken

When I was a kid, in my neighbourhood an allowance from home never amounted to more than spare change to buy some Pop Rocks and a few Black Bart on the weekends. Yet the teachers at school had been progressive enough to initiate an investment research project for a group of eggheads like my sister who set up a fake

stock portfolio and then tracked its fate for a year. The shame of it all was that had the kids not used 'funny money,' they would have turned a good coin.

My mother never paid attention to the financial opportunity in stocks that my sister presented to her. The underlying theme to my young life remained something like that in D.H Lawrence's *Rocking Horse Winner*: Money! There's never enough money. By the time I was old enough to pursue a university education, I still heard the familiar refrain, so I added, "Until I earn it myself," and out the door I went.

The first bar I worked in was a trendy place frequented by the Edmonton Oilers, corporate types, stockbrokers, and their customers. Many of them used to pass onto me 'hot stock' tips as a way of encouraging me to invest. It was like the great gold rush all over again, but I never seemed to have the spare cash. And then, when I walked into the busiest happy-hour I'd ever seen, full of investors rattled to the bone, I was glad I hadn't been seduced by the popular delusions of those who believe they are going to make it rich quick.

Most of the brokers who came to that bar worked out of one company. It had just tanked – the word was the company had been caught for market manipulation. Some of the brokers were saying their farewells before the police caught up with them. Meanwhile, their customers were busy deciding which rooms at home they were going to wallpaper with worthless stocks.

Except for one very lucky person, I don't know anyone who has ever made it rich off the market. That honour goes to my dad's friend, a social studies teacher who became a millionaire after he bought into the Japanese Yen before it spiked. Even though the last time I saw him his garden was littered with outrageously priced modern sculpture, he is my hero.

Two acquaintances solidified my desire to invest. One I met at a party by tuning into his conversation on research for his Ph.D. in Economics. It indicated that the stock market was effective in transferring wealth. The market had finally become politically attractive. The second person was a young lawyer working over sixty hours a week to establish herself at a big law firm. A self-avowed financial idiot, she happily surrenders her paycheque every month into the hands of a capable financial manager. Finding myself

without a lot of spare time on my hands as well, her methods have become decidedly cool.

When I came to Japan, I had already resolved to set up an investment portfolio by using some of the windfall off my JET salary. Then my cheesy board of education gave me twelve days of holiday, and refused me extra time off during summer vacation. As a result, I have never suffered the pangs of having to forgo travel to exotic countries in order to muscle up on my financial situation. I have suffered in other ways though. When I finally hooked up with a financial advisor, I broke some cardinal rules in investing. One: I accepted a proposal from someone on the basis of a cold call. Two: I did not do enough research. There have been evenings when I wake up in a cold sweat following a money-mare. Or when I am sitting down at the computer doing research and I come upon something that looks really bad, and a chill runs through me, and I can't breathe properly for a few minutes. I recommend you do a lot more research than I did on whatever funds, stocks, bonds or other assets you may choose to invest in. I just checked into the company to make sure it was not fly-by-night, talked to some friends and then took the plunge. Do not do this - invest, definitely invest. But do your research, and then invest.

I am sure many of you are familiar with the sales pitch on the power of compound interest to guarantee you glorious retirement lifestyles. (Probably from your own bank trying to sell you RRSPs). I was never impressed. For whatever it's worth, the concept behind taking advantage of the power of compound interest is always hitched to, "You Can Retire a Millionaire IF You Start Investing Right Now". Somehow I just did not believe it.

What does make sense however, is a market history that shows how common stock, over the long haul, has outperformed any other type of asset, and a rate of inflation that gobbles up the interest paid out by banks on cash. Next to pissing it away, the worst thing you can do with your money is to leave it in the bank. In this case, the old adage, "better safe than sorry," just does not apply. Still, money makes us all crazy. Watch out for the inevitable hot head and consider these investments smarts that I have learned since I took the plunge on that fateful day.

- Get a certified financial advisor! Have your financial advisor help you set up a plan that determines the

best way for you, and nobody else but you, to save and invest.

- Silly! Financial success is tied to “asset allocation,” in other words- the way you spread your money around among various investments.
- Know the difference between speculation and investment and do not speculate.
- Do not jeopardise your principal. Check out the financial condition and the reputation of all the companies and assets that you are dealing with.
- Transfer your money into investments through your bank. Unless you have really good control over your pocket book, do not buy investments using your credit card
- Learn about the principles of value investing as laid out by Warren Buffet and his group of disciples.
- Make sure you have the personality to weather the storms that come with the market and don't be intimidated by bad news.

Buy investment fun

Essentially a fund is a corporation whose business is to collect and invest money. Rather than purchasing stocks or bonds directly, you pool your money in with other investors by buying shares in a fund. The fund managers pick and choose the stocks, or whatever else may be in the fund, such as bonds, real estate, or money markets (cash).

You get a slice of everything that is in the fund and your earnings fluctuate according to the vagaries of the market. These funds are also called mutual funds and there is a mind-boggling amount of them to choose from. Some of them are very safe and some are very risky. That is why you need a financial advisor to help you sort out the good from the bad and find the ones that are right for you.

The advantage of buying mutual funds is in the reduced specific stock risk associated with the portfolio diversification that they offer. On top of that, even if you have the money to build such a large portfolio, (lots and lots), it is unlikely that you would be able to track that many stocks on your own and be able to earn on par with the average gains in the market. You would make too many mistakes. Mutual funds on the other hand, give you a well-diversified portfolio without requiring a large initial investment. Plus you get professional management of your assets, so a good fund will perform as well as

or better than the market average.

The things to watch out for are a fund's associated fees. They can cut into your earnings something nasty. It is important to keep these fees at their minimum. Make sure to choose a fund that shows good long-term performance, and low operating expenses.

The best way to give a JET some idea on what is out there is to describe what kinds of funds I have. Even though I went out on life and limb when I chose my advisor, he has turned out to be a pretty cool guy. He works for an independent asset management company that charges no fees, and he has been able to offer a range of financial advice and assistance. The funds that he recommended I purchase are with a very reputable offshore company, so they are tax efficient (this might not be what you are thinking), and the information that I receive about their performance and all the details of my investment plan are very transparent.

At first, dealing with the implications of a rigid investment scheme was a little scary. I had to agree to pay a fixed amount into the fund every month for an initial allocation period, which was determined by the length of my investment plan. Longer plans take a longer allocation period. However, the minimum payments for this period are well within a JET budget (¥20,000 a month), and the shortest allocation period is only five months, (for a 5-year investment plan). Following the allocation period, further investments can be suspended or reduced. However, fees increase if payments are suspended, and can begin to cut into earnings over time. Not to worry though, I can make cash withdrawals or finance education costs from the fund, so loss of liquidity may not be a factor in a long-term investment plan.

The plan is also flexible in that I can contribute to it from anywhere around the world, though the payments have to be made in Yen, Euro or American dollars. As for the funds I own – my portfolio may not be for everyone. My funds include China, Asia, Japan, Europe, and global technology funds. That means I sometimes ponder such things as revolution in South East Asia until very late in the morning. Nevertheless, I love adventure and have found the whole process deliciously and terribly frightening. Really though, this whole article is not about adventure, it is about planning for your future. So build a budget and save. Talk to the people you trust, and think about how you want your hard-earned JET salary to work for you. Then get a financial advisor and start making oodles of money.

Recommended sources

The Intelligent Investor Benjamin Graham, Harper Collins, 1973.

Beating the Street Peter Lynch, Fireside, Simon and Schuster, 1993.

<http://www.money.com>

<http://www.Bloomberg.com>

Distance learning whilst on JET

Holly Naylor, Nagasaki ken

I had already decided before coming on JET that I would like to do a Master's degree, mainly to improve my chances of employment. I knew that teaching was not my long-term goal, yet I was searching for a general field of study that would leave me open to apply my Japanese language abilities (my first degree was in Japanese) and JET experience in any number of ways. Owing to some previous work experience, I had developed a strong interest in human resource management and organisational theory. Then I found the spare time I had on my hands at school, and at home (I live on a small island), provided me with an excellent opportunity to complete a Master's while still maintaining full-time employment.

I began investigating distance-learning programs in the January of my first year. The Open University is the most famous in the UK for distance learning. I made it my first area of investigation. However, it took the university a full month to inform me that with them, distance learning did not reach as far as a small island off the coast of Japan. I thought I would pass this on to save others the trouble for finding out for themselves.

I was mainly interested in business courses and found that magazines such as *Business Asia* and *The Economist* have whole sections advertising distance-learning opportunities. I searched on the Internet and then emailed some institutions directly for their prospectuses. Being from England, I only investigated British universities as I am unfamiliar with the grading systems and entry procedures elsewhere.

It took a few months for the prospectuses to arrive, but I noticed immediately that there were plenty of courses to choose from among TEFL and MBS, but fewer were available for specific Master's degrees. Expect to pay around the same price as you would for a normal

Mater's: ¥600,000. The deadline for application varies from institution to institution. For my course, there is only one application deadline, June; and yet it seems that the deadline is designed to accommodate as many different people as possible. It has a fixed schedule to accommodate the people who are studying for it on every continent. Other courses may be different; several are offered two or three times a year. Nevertheless, it is best to begin your search as early as possible.

I chose to study for a Post- Graduate Diploma in organisational behaviour from the University of London's external programme. The course has a wide number of applications, but it is particularly suited to human resources management. The application was straightforward previous experience and a small composition on why I wanted to do the course. I had to send in my original degree certificate and two letters of reference. Some courses also require transcripts. I had an offer letter within two weeks. The course information was really comprehensive and it laid out exactly what would be expected of me.

I was worried being unable to access a good library would disadvantage me, but the university sends me all the relevant teaching materials, plus photocopied articles and books, so I do not need to visit a library or bookshop at all. My study materials arrived promptly in early September. At the time of writing, I am two-months into the course. I study for about three hours a day, but longer at weekends if I take some time off. The course is a great source of stimulation, especially during those exam weeks in school when I am stuck in the staff-room!

Portions of the course material are difficult, but having previously studied some of the subject matter in brief, I have confidence. I have also been assigned a personal tutor, and I have been connected with a system that enables all the students to form a study and support network. I have enjoyed the materials so far, and the course has given me the boost I need for my second year on JET.

Assessment is in the form of an exam in June: One three-hour exam is required for each module. There is no formal written coursework, but the university encourages us to send in essays and mock exams so the tutors can judge our progress. There are a number of places in Japan where I can sit the exams, which are administered by the British Council. It costs about ¥15,000 to sit each paper

and ¥10,000 for administration fees, plus transport and accommodation to the examination centre.

Master's courses in the UK via distance learning are usually transferable for further studies. If you have plans for additional post-graduate studies you should confirm that your distance-learning program is given credit at any institutions of higher learning where you might wish to continue your studies. Additionally, if you are studying for a professional qualification, e.g. Human Resources Management, you must check that the relevant professional body recognises the course. In my case the British council only administers the exams.

It does not approve the course in any way. In the UK the leading serious newspapers (The Times, etc.) publish league tables of universities once a year. Institutions are ranked according to how many departments they have which are rated excellent. This is what I referred to in my search for a reputable course. Following completion of the diploma, I plan on studying for another year to finish off the MSc.

Sounds heavy doesn't it? On the other hand this course has given me added incentive to pursue the kind of job I really want to do and it is enabling me to tie my Japan specialisation in with business. I hope to work in Tokyo after JET. I have already seen some jobs on the Internet, specifically asking for Japanese speakers with knowledge of organisational behaviour. I do not have much relevant experience, but I am sure I would have much less chance of obtaining employment in this field if I were not working towards this qualification. I have become more confident about-facing the job market after JET and I am in no doubt that the outlay in course fees will pay dividends in the future.

My philosophy has always been to have a goal in mind no matter how big or small. Then you always have something to aim for even if you should suffer a set back in your daily life. I am comfortable with the extra workload I have chosen to take on while on the JET Programme. However, I am already learning to be more careful with my time. If you have motivation and self-discipline, then a correspondence course may be the way to enhance your professional experience whilst on JET and help you to move into a higher plane of existence as you say farewell to the Programme.

2001 JETAA Survey Results

JETAA

Are you active in your local JETAA?

	2001	2000
Yes I am a member of the committee	5%	9%
Yes, as a member	18%	15%
I am a member but I am not involved	38%	41%
No, but I'd like to be	21%	22%
No, I'm not interested	17%	12%

After the JET Programme

Has participation on the JET Programme contributed anything to your life?

	2001	2000
Yes, a more open mind/ international outlook	91%	87%
Yes, a wider circle of friends, Increased social skills	74%	79%
Yes, better personal qualities	80%	80%
Yes, a hobby for life		

Other

No	13%	37%
	0%	15%
	1%	

Would you recommend the JET Programme to a friend?

	2001	2000
Yes, absolutely	82%	82%
Probably	17%	17%
Unlikely	0%	1%
No, definitely not	0%	0%

Japanese Language Ability

Are you studying Japanese now?

	2001	2000
Yes	25%	24%
No	75%	75%

Did you pass any recognised Japanese language test whilst on JET?

Japanese Proficiency Test

	2001	2000
Level One	3%	3%
Level Two	11%	10%
Level Three	17%	21%
Level Four	5%	8%
Other		
No	3%	60%

Pension and Tax

Did you receive the lump-sum withdrawal payment for the Pension scheme?

	2001	2000
I applied and received the payment	91%	92%

I applied but my application was refused	2%	0%
I applied and am still waiting	1%	3%
I did not apply		4%
I don't know to what you are referring	1%	1%
<i>Did you apply for a refund?</i>		2000
	2001	
I applied and received the refund	73%	66%
I applied but my application was refused	2%	3%
I did not apply		11%
I don't know to what you are referring	4%	5%

	2001	2000	Programme?	2001	2000
I had it arranged already			Yes		
Within a month of starting looking	17%	17%			
Up to six months	22%		No	47%	2000
Six months to one year	23%	19%			
Up to two years	16%				
Interim employment	6%	7%	If you use JET to develop your skills	1%	
	17%		They don't seem to have heard of it	15%	13%
			I don't know	17%	15%
					9%
<i>How does the salary compare with that as a JET Participant?</i>					
It is much higher					
It is slightly higher	12%	9%			
It is roughly the same	20%	12%			
It is slightly lower	19%	20%			
It is much lower	18%	21%			
	18%	23%			

In your experience do employers look favourably on the JET

Leaving Japan

- Be nice to your successor: leave plenty of information and a clean place for them to arrive
- Pay all your bills
- Get contact numbers from your friends in Japan
- Cancel subscriptions and close accounts
- Make sure you have someone trustworthy who will forward your pension buy back tax refund to you
- Hand in your gaijin cards when you leave Japan
- Be prepared to handle the blues that can come with the change you will face as you adjust to a new life outside of Japan

A network of common experience

JETAA

This information was compiled by Boleyn Relova who was an ALT in Chiba-ken from 1994 to 1996 for CLAIR's Conference for Returning JET's 2002

JETAA (JET Programme Alumni Association) consists of forty-five regional chapters within twelve of the forty-four countries that have participated on the JET Programme. The only membership requirement is past participation on the JET, MET or BETS Programmes. As of February 2002, there were over 13,000 members registered with CLAIR.

The purposes of the association are to provide support for the participants after leaving JET and to help them maintain contact with Japan, the JET Programme and its participants. These purposes are achieved in three main ways:

Employment resources for alumni

Some regional chapters organise an employment referral service for alumni. Others set up career fairs and maintain contacts with the Japanese business community, Chambers of Commerce and other organisations.

Social gatherings and readjustment assistance

Social gatherings occur at each chapter's discretion, and often in conjunction with the local Japanese Embassy or Consulate General and CLAIR offices overseas. These gatherings are often held at Japanese restaurants or during local Japanese festivals. Many of these gatherings include members of the Japanese community.

Many chapters host a welcome back reception for returning JETs. They provide a supportive atmosphere for former JETs experiencing the readjustment process in their home countries and an opportunity for networking.

Selection and orientation for new JET participants

In most regions, alumni assist the local Japanese Embassy or Consulate General with the recruitment and selection process for new JET participants. Alumni also assist with pre-departure orientations and related activities. This enables past participants to use their own

experiences to provide guidance and knowledge to future JETs.

All returning JETs are strongly encouraged to join JETAA. In the summer, CLAIR will send out membership forms. The information gathered from these forms will be entered into the JETAA database at CLAIR. Former JET participants will then be eligible to receive the annual newsletter, *JET Streams*. Those interested in being a part of JETAA activities at home should contact their local chapter.

JETAA Resources The JETAA job guide (<http://cheno.com/job/>)

A website that provides general information for those JETs who are career planning or looking for employment. The website features the following:

- JETAA Job Bank: JETs can browse through a database filled with job opportunities and check out numerous companies that are looking to employ former JETs.
- JETAA Job E-mail list: Provides you with e-mail updates of the website as well as other employment-related notices
- The JETAA Career Section: Contains articles written by JET alumni and industry experts offering specific career advice.

For further information regarding the JETAA Job Guide website, please visit their homepage at the aforementioned URL.

The Jet mentor network (<http://cheno.com/mentor>)

A network of JETs and JETAAs interested in professional networking or are just seeking some good advice. It offers users the chance to search a database of registered JET mentors.

JETAA job: (jetaajob-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

There are nearly 600 subscribers to the JETAA Job E-list. Hear about jobs that are Japan-related or related to skills gained on the JET Programme (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/jetaajob>)

Webtech (webtech-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

A forum for JETAA Webmasters and others involved in the promotion

of JETAA through web pages and related technology.

Being home: deal with it

Ethan Sacks was an ALT in Kagoshima-ken. He currently works for The New York Daily News Online. You can see his collected works at www.dailynews.com

The hardest part about returning home after the JET Programme was figuring out whether my real home was in New York or Kagoshima, Japan. I had stayed in Japan just long enough to get used to looking to the right and then to the left when I crossed the street, leaving me utterly unprepared to return to American society. Was it right and then left, or left and then right? I could never remember. I had to get a job on the same block as my apartment so I would never have to cross the street.

Perhaps the toughest adjustment was going from being a celebrity to being a face in the crowd. I left the fly on my pants down in public just to have children laugh and point at me like they did in Japan. They would scream look at that guy's jeans, which sounded enough like gaijin to comfort me. I looked for gangs to beat me with baseball bats to satiate my nostalgia for kendo. I would chase Japanese tourists around New York landmarks, screaming, 'I just want to play with you.' That is not as uncommon a sight in New York as one might expect.

I also discovered that my English had deteriorated into fragments of slow and simple ideas, a stark contrast to the machine gun speed with which New Yorkers launch their conversations. My Japanese had not blossomed at the same rate as my English had withered, so I could only communicate with stray dogs, small rodents and some of my friends from New Jersey. I had to watch My Fair Lady before I could go out in public again.

I found that I bowed instead of shaking hands; that I missed watching naked obese men wrestle. I missed eating raw squid and ice cream that came from plants that Americans sprayed with weed killers. I missed that trains did not run on time in this hemisphere, and sometimes did not even run on the tracks; that pointing at my nose did not mean 'me' in New York sign language, but 'Punch me here.' More importantly, I found that speaking slowly and stupidly

in front of a group of school children that tried to grab my crotch did not prepare me for the real world. When prospective employers would ask me, 'What did you do on your last job?' I would answer, I have the ability to accept paycheques of large denominations, to sit for long periods of time in an office and write letters to my friends.

When a woman at a bar asked me if I was having a good time, I found myself answering, "I'm fine thank you, and you?" Upset that I could not adjust to life away from JET, I would look out of the window of my new apartment towards Japan; towards the friends that I had left behind on the other side of the earth. Unfortunately, the only thing I could see from my window was a brick wall with the words "Die Scum" scrawled across the bricks in white spray paint. It brought a tear to my eye, because it was the same greeting that my first-grade class used to shout at me in the hallways of one of my schools. After struggling for a few months, I did manage to find a good job, albeit one that pays half of what I made as an ALT, and I did manage to adapt to my new surroundings. My apartment spawned cockroaches just like my Kagoshima mansion, so I felt less homesick. I started receiving letters from my friends in Japan. I thought that they missed me, until I realised that most of the mail were angry reminders that I owed them money.

The dislocation that results from moving between radically different lifestyles can be confusing; it can leave the former JET disoriented and unsure of where he or she truly belongs. The home that they once knew, be it in New York, Nottingham, Auckland, or Lethbridge, seems smaller and unfamiliar. I am not a psychologist, but I can say that those were the feelings I experienced upon my return from the JET Programme. Here are some suggestions that I can offer based on what has worked for me in the post-JET readjustment process:

- Make Japanese friends or join a Japanese culture club in your hometown. Memorise the location of every bar with a karaoke machine in your neighbourhood. Join the local JET alumni group.
- Remember that nothing is wrong with feeling depressed. If you hear voices in your head telling you to kill your neighbours, however, it is probably time for help.
- Visit the city in which you were posted. If you are fleeing from the authorities, for example, try and combine life on the run with a trip to see old friends.

- Take time to travel immediately after the Programme, if possible. Travelling to a war torn country like Somalia is a good way to make your hometown seem like Eden.
- Finally, indulge yourself as much as possible. See a CD that you want? Buy it. Eat, drink, and be merry. If possible, live off your parents for a while.

After returning to your place of origin, or starting over after the JET Programme ends, it is okay to miss the life you have left behind. Human beings have a great resiliency and pretty soon you will resign yourself to your fate. Just remember, as you look at the horizon and reminisce about Japan, that there is someone just like you facing the same direction, staring at a brick wall.

Postscript

Three years on and the pieces of my life have started to fall into place. I carried my experience of being unappreciated as an ALT into a position where I am unappreciated at a large New York newspaper. Editors have looked to pick my knowledge of Japan for tough articles like, "What Would New York City Do If Godzilla Attacked." I wish I were making that one up. In an effort to retain the four or five Japanese words that I remembered, I enrolled in a Japanese language course. That is where I met my wife, Masako.

Our relationship has provided me further insights into Japanese culture. For example, I did not know that it is customary for a father-in-law to beat his son-in-law with a stick until my father-in-law explained it to me.

There have been friends to whom I had sworn over hot *shochu* never to lose touch with, with whom I have lost touch. Nevertheless, some of my JET friendships have grown into stronger bonds. The friends in whose apartments in neighbouring townships I passed out in a drunken stupor have become the friends who I can visit in England, Australia, Canada and other American cities and then pass out on their apartment floors.

I even had the opportunity to visit my old post in Sendai City, Kagoshima prefecture (town motto: No, not that Sendai!). While some of my old Japanese friends had trouble remembering me, we quickly

fell into our old rhythm drinking at our favourite bar. I swore to them, over hot *shochu*, never to lose touch again.

Transition blues

Elizabeth M. Bennett was an ALT in Nagasaki-ken and the 1998 editor of Jet and Beyond.

Culture shock. Tired of hearing about it? As you come to the end of your stint, the new catch phrase is re-entry shock, which, simply put, means you get the blues (and hopefully not the crazies). Any transition can bring the blues: a move to a new city, a new job and of course, another country. The more radical the change you experience, the more severe the blues will be. In this article, an experienced professional will offer his insight and advice.

Re-entry shock: what is it?

Re-entry shock, the term for difficulties encountered upon repatriation, is usually worse than the initial culture shock, according to Douglas W. Jack, managing director of Communication Efficiency Trainers (ComET), which specialises in cross-cultural communication. He has lived in Japan since 1989 and has served CLAIR in the past.

Jack says that re-entry shock is usually worse because of one's expectations. Many of us think we are returning home when home is hardly just a place. Home is wherever you construct your life-style. That means your native country will not be home until you reconstruct your life there. While you may imagine slipping back into your old niche, if your JET time has been enriching, you will have changed. The problems of your country may seem much worse. You may suddenly develop a newfound appreciation for the culture that you have just left. You may find that the homogeneity of Japanese society has crept up on you, and you have a hard time coping with diversity. Or, you may relish diversity and seek out groups where you can still be the different one. Things may seem run-down. People may seem rude. At any rate, there will not be any snappily dressed clerks chirping, 'Welcome' upon your entrance to the donut shops in your home country.

Ego also plays a part. You may feel, or want to feel, superior, having lived abroad. Dwelling on the good things of your adopted land may alienate family and friends. Maybe that grunting, sweaty guy who drives like he has a death wish suffers in comparison to the

white-gloved Japanese cabby, but it is likely that no one at home really cares.

This can become a problem. The people closest to you are the ones who will frustrate you the most. Family members may think you have been too busy missing them to have fully adopted your host country. Your friends decided not to go overseas, and may not want to hear how great it was. That may leave you with no outlet. People don't know how to ask about your experiences, so they don't. "The returnee doesn't feel validated, and loneliness sets in," says Jack.

Another problem you may have is a perceived loss of status. On the JET Programme, we are all stars by virtue of being different. We are smothered with attention, but when we return home, we are simply one of several citizens among many. Jack speaks of this as achieved status vs. ascribed status.

To be sure, some of the attention associated with our ascribed status may be negative; nonetheless, in Japan we are special. No matter how ambitious you are, it will still take a while to achieve social standing upon your return. In the meantime, you may feel disoriented or insecure. You may just miss being a star. No more little kids and their incessant "hello"s and people telling you how brave you are for venturing abroad alone. This loss of status can also contribute to loneliness.

The loneliness can in turn lead to depression, anxiety, poor motivation, and even reclusive behaviour. Returning home to an uncertain future can exacerbate the problem. Most often, achieved status in a Western society is linked with a job. A job search is always a tense prospect, and an unstable living situation can keep you squarely trapped on the shifting sands of transition. Without a routine, it will be harder to reconstruct a lifestyle, and lack of routine is a big part of re-entry shock.

Naturally, while experience varies from person to person, Jack thinks the peak and dip model most often used for initial culture shock is also useful here. The model describes a cycle of reactions that may repeat themselves.

First there is euphoria, then shock, which is characterised by irritation and hostility. Finally, comes the gradual adjustment that leads to adaptation. While this model is useful, Jack says how

everyone experiences the stages is very personal. Many remain in the shock-adjustment loop for a long time. Others may ride the euphoria of being home straight into adaptation.

Often, the JETs who are most successful abroad face the most upheaval upon return. Though they may feel the same stress as everyone else upon arrival, they adapt very quickly and begin to thrive. As a returnee, they may feel more Japanese than Western. Such cases, however, are rare. Most are somewhere in the middle. For many, to adopt new cultural markers is tacitly admitting that the way they were before is in some way lacking. People who view themselves only as representatives of their own culture may wind up saving a Western experience in the vicinity of Japanese events. Such people will most likely have only the mild transition shock that comes with a new set of habits.

How do I get rid of it?

Jack offers some coping strategies. The first is simply mindset. Always be aware that though we are returning home, we are also leaving it. The memories of your native land may be tinged with nostalgia and not wholly accurate, thus adding to your feeling of loss. Be prepared to grieve for your lost home while you build a new one. You may also want to help the people closest to you relate to your experience.

Many of your family members and friends will not be able to wrap their head around it, says Jack. He suggests showing them photographs, sharing art, cultural objects and humorous stories. Speaking of objects, just as you brought some familiar things to Japan, ensure that you bring a few Japanese things back. The sight of something familiar could be a comfort. Travel can be a good buffer. Depending on the individual, it can clean your palette, so to speak. Also, you may be so grateful for the ease of your native tongue that any pining you do for Japan will be nicely tempered.

Next, be advised that good planning can be an enormous help. Jack says the home situation has a tremendous effect on your re-entry experience. If you have a job or school lined up, your time will be much easier, because you will already have a routine. You can slip happily into a new niche.

Finally, Jack considers getting involved with the international community the most important strategy for a re-entrant's well being. This could mean joining the JET Alumni Association, or doing some work for the JET programme itself. You can teach your language and customs to newcomers, or simply seek others who have lived abroad. You can now be a cultural bridge, he says. Use your knowledge and validate yourself. If you learn to integrate these two sides, you will likely end up feeling nothing but positive about the whole experience.

One last recommendation; take it easy. Keep telling yourself that this is actually pretty hard, says Jack. Do not expect to thrive immediately upon your return and get frustrated if you do not. Any transition is difficult, and you are about to make a radical one.

Suggested reading

The Art of Coming Home Craig. Storti, Intercultural Press.

Survival Kit for Overseas Living. Dr. L. Robert Kohls. Intercultural Press, 1984.

Strangers at Home: Essays on the Effects of Overseas Living and Coming Home to a Strange Land. Carolyn D. Smith. Aletheia Publications.

Cross-Cultural Reentry: A book of readings. Clyde N. Austin. Abilene Christian University Press, 1986.

Taking your loved one home

Jenn Smith was an ALT in Kagoshima and Editor for Jet and Beyond 2001

Some time during the course of your JET days you decided to delve into Japanese culture a little more by dating a local. Luckily, this person turned out to be your soul mate! Having found your life partner, you are beyond happy until reality sets in. How do you take your loved one back to your home country? The reality is that this is a very difficult thing to do. However, with a lot of patience, you can indeed fight through all of the red tape to have a successful relationship with your Japanese partner in your own country. Countless JETs before you have done it, and many more after you will as well.

The most annoying problem will be the immigration process.

You will need time, money, and plenty of preparation beforehand. Here are a few tips that will save you from the headaches in whichever country you will be trying to get a spousal visa for.

First, the process is long, and involves a lot of paperwork. It is easy to make mistakes in the paperwork. Any mistake will make the process longer, and a large mistake may make the processing officer distrust you. Check any form you send to the immigration officer at least three times. Get someone else to check the form as well. If you have any questions, phone the office where the form will be processed, and ask for clarification. Do not just guess and risk a wrong answer.

Second, remember to stay polite and friendly. Immigration officers are afforded a lot of discretion, and you want to make sure that discretion is used in your favour. In applying for a spousal visa, you are opening up your lives to observation and judgement. Nothing is private during the application process. An immigration officer can ask you or your partner anything they want - from your salary, or future plans, to reproductive issues or your sex life. Be candid, no matter how embarrassing the process.

Third, budget your time and money. Not only will there be costs that you must pay to the immigration office for the process, you may also have to prove that you have a certain amount of money in the bank to support your significant other. A time budget is also important to ensure that you have all of the documents in on time. Ensure that you are prepared for a process that takes 6 months or 3 years.

Fourth, remember that this process is set up for partners that are applying from two different countries. Which means that most likely, you and your partner will not be able to go from Japan to your home country at the same time. Be prepared for a separation, which may be short, or drag on for a long time. You may need to have a job that meets a minimum income requirement before being allowed to sponsor an immigrant. It seems that the system is set up for mail-order brides, and it is exasperating to know that this system can work against couples that actually meet and have a relationship together in another country before starting the immigration process.

Finally, realise that this process can make you very, very frustrated. There may be parts of the process that will make you

angry. As a Canadian, I always believed that we had an easy immigration system. Now that I have entered into the system myself, I realise how difficult the process is, unless one is rich.

I have newfound respect for all of the immigrants I know back home who have found a way to deal with the system. If you wish to return home together with your partner, the first step to take is to call your country's embassy in Japan and ask for as much information as you can get. Check the appendices for contact information. Here is an overview of the process by country.

Australia

Australia recognises both marriages and de facto relationships (at least 12 months of cohabitation) with the sponsor, who must be an Australian citizen, Australian permanent resident or eligible New Zealand citizen. The process involves two steps. The first is an application for a temporary visa and the second, an application for a permanent visa, occurs two years later. The first step includes an application, interview, medical examination and character clearances. If this stage is successfully cleared, a visa is issued that is valid until a decision is made on the permanent visa. <http://www.immi.gov.au>

Canada

In Canada, the process occurs in two parts. One is for the sponsor, the other, for the prospective immigrant. For the spousal visa, a legal spouse or a common law spouse can be considered. The first part that must be submitted is the Application to Sponsor a Family Class Member. Identification, proof of relationship between sponsor and applicant, proof of income and financial obligations must be included among other information. The sponsor agrees to be financially responsible for the prospective immigrant for ten years.

When sponsoring a spouse or children, one does not have to meet Low Income Cut Off (LICO) requirements, but must meet those requirements when sponsoring anyone else, including a fiancé (e). At this time, both a Processing Fee (approximately \$600) and the Right of Landing Fee (\$975) must be paid.

The next step is that of evaluation of the applicant. Once the sponsor's application is approved, the applicant receives the Immigration Application Kit to be filled out. Along with it you must

submit a questionnaire, a medical certificate, a security clearance, birth certificate, marriage certificate and other proof of relationship. At this point an interview or immigration seminar may be required. <http://www.cicnet.ci.gc.ca>

New Zealand

New Zealanders can sponsor their legal spouse, or a person with whom they have had a stable de facto relationship with for at least two years (regardless of gender or sexual orientation). You must include a police certificate, a medical certificate, settlement information fee (\$90), migrant levy (\$125), photographs, Sponsorship Form for Residence In New Zealand (NZIS 1024), proof of financial assets, passport, and proof of relationship between the sponsor and applicant. <http://www.immigration.govt.nz>

United Kingdom

In order to bring one's spouse to the UK, you must prove that you and your spouse have somewhere to live, have enough funds to live without government assistance, and that you have met. At first, submit forms IM2A and IM2B, along with photos, marriage certificates, proof of abode and financial assets, and your passports. <http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk>

United States

In the United States, only legally married couples are eligible for the immigration process. The process is divided into three steps. The first step involves the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS) giving approval for an immigrant visa petition that you are responsible for filing. This form is I-130, Petition for an Alien Relative.

The second step is that of confirmation of the availability of an immigrant visa for the applicant by the State department. The third step is going to a local US consulate to finish the process and to get the visa. If you have been married for less than 2 years when the applicant is granted permanent resident status, then the status will be granted only on a conditional basis. The couple must apply together to remove the conditional status before the 2-year anniversary of the granting of the permanent resident visa. <http://www.ins.usdoj.gov>

After Immigration

Once you have completed the immigration process, congratulations are in order as you are well on your way to Happily Ever After. However, there may be a few more difficulties in your life than in the lives of couples that have the same passports. Here are some hints for attaining the perfect international marriage.

When your Japanese spouse arrives in your home country, run, don't walk, to your nearest centre for immigrants. Although they operate under many different names, almost every decent sized city has one. The people who work and volunteer there have lots of experience and can help you with language training, legal issues, finding work and other issues that will no doubt come up.

Find out if your spouse's qualifications will be recognised in your home country. It can be frustrating to find out something you have worked so hard for will be reduced to nothing if you cross a border. If your spouse does have a professional qualification, there may be steps that you can take to get it recognised. Talk to the government branch which doles out the money for post-secondary education, they should be able to help you. Perhaps the easiest to be recognised are trade qualifications such as journeyman certificates. On the other hand, there are many fully qualified doctors cleaning toilets all over western countries.

English language qualifications such as TOIEC or TOEFL can help land a job for your spouse if he/she has trouble with the language. There are lots of community courses your spouse can take for a nominal fee, which might prove to a prospective employer that your spouse's English is good enough to work at their company.

Find a mentor. This is an important first step in your relationship. Finding a couple that has already gone through the process can help both of you adjust. The best couples share the same gender/ethnic make-up as you. A Japanese man, moving to be with his western wife, will have many different challenges than a Japanese woman moving to be with her western husband. Couple friends, especially if they speak the same language, are integral to a strong international relationship.

Study international relationships. There are challenges specific to international relationships, which can be overcome if you know where

the problems lie. Find books in English and Japanese about international relationships. Join a mailing list for international couples, or search for a chat group online. It helps to know there are others going through the same experience as you.

Find Japanese community. As English-speaking JETs, we were given a ready-made support group when we arrived. We could rent videos in English and get books at major bookstores. Chances are, your partner will not have it as easy as you did in Japan. Find people who speak your partner's language, find out where to buy their favourite foods, and import books and magazines to make your loved one more comfortable.

Remember all the problems you experienced when you came to Japan, and help your partner out. Communication can solve most of the problems. You will be called upon to translate a lot. Include your partner in get-togethers with your family and friends, and help your partners find their own friends.

Suggested reading

Marriage in Changing Japan. Joy Hendry. Tuttle Press.

Oh! And don't forget to...

Apply for pension and tax rebates

Who is eligible to collect the lump-sum withdrawal payment?

All foreign residents who have paid into either the National Insurance Plan or the Employees' Pension Insurance Plan while in Japan and who satisfy the following four requirements are eligible, upon request, to receive a pension refund:

- Persons who do not possess Japanese citizenship.
- Persons who have paid into either one of the two pension plans stated above for 6 months or more.
- Persons who do not have a place of residence in Japan. (Provided they had cancelled their alien registration on or after Nov. 9 1994)
- Persons who have never previously qualified for pension benefits (including Disability Allowance).

How to claim lump-sum withdrawal payments

Those wishing to claim the refund must do so **within two years of leaving Japan**. The pension refund normally takes up to six months to arrive in your bank account. You will need to complete the *Lump-Sum Withdrawal Payment Claim Form*.

Visit your local Social Insurance Office, *Shakai Hoken Jimusho*, or the National Pension Section of your Municipal Office and request the claim form and multilingual (English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Korean, Chinese) information brochure for the claim form. Be careful to strictly adhere to the instructions given to you or the application will be returned to you. Include:

- Your pension handbook, *nenkin techo*, (It is blue and orange and you received it when you first arrived – unless your BOE held onto it for you.)
- A photocopy of your passport in order to identify your name, birthday and date of departure from Japan.
- Information pertaining to the name of your bank and bank account number in your home country. Once you have left Japan, the necessary forms must be sent to:

**The Social Insurance Operation Centre, 3-5-24 Takaido-nishi,
Suginami-ku, Tokyo 168-8505 Japan. Tel in Japanese:
03-3334-3131**

Amount received

The amount paid will depend on the length of time of pension coverage received while in Japan and is calculated by multiplying the average standard monthly remuneration with the rates shown in the following table according to the insured period. Please note that as of April 2003, the pension coverage has slightly changed. The monthly contribution will decrease, therefore decreasing the amount a JET is entitled to reclaim. However, the procedure for claiming a refund remains the same. The beginning of your enrolment is the month in which your contract begins. The end of your enrolment is the month previous to the month you finish your contract. The amount remitted to your account will be calculated at the currency exchange rate on the date of transaction.

If all or part of the coverage period for an insured person is before April 1st, 2003, the monthly remuneration during this coverage period is to be multiplied by 1.3 to compensate for the revisions in calculating the pension refund amount.

The average monthly remuneration should be calculated by adding the remuneration of the coverage period before April 1st, 2003 (multiplying the monthly remuneration by 1.3) to the remuneration of the coverage period after April 1st, 2003 and dividing it by the total number of insured months.

ALT's and CIR's who arrived after the main summer, or April orientations do not complete a full 12 months of contributions in their first year, and will not be able to claim the full amount.

Insured Person Coverage Period	Old rate/New rate
6 months or more	0.5/0.4
12 months or more	1.0/0.8
18 months or more	1.5/1.2
24 months or more	2.0/1.6
30 months or more	2.5/2.0
36 months or more	3.0/2.4

If a JET completes a one-year contract, having made 12 months worth of pension payments, said JET will receive an equivalent of one months remuneration, or ¥ 300, 000. If a JET re-contracts and completes two years on the Programme, the JET will be eligible to receive two months worth of remuneration, or ¥ 600, 000. An automatic 20% income tax will be withheld from the refund.

Additional tax refund

Persons eligible to receive the refund may also qualify to receive a rebate on the 20% flat tax placed on the Lump-Sum Withdrawal Benefit. Contact your local tax office in Japan for a copy of the *Nozeikanrinin no Todekesho, Gaikokujin yo*, (Declaration Naming a Person to Administer the Taxpayer's Tax Affairs, for use by aliens). Use the form to appoint a tax representative and submit it to the tax office in the jurisdiction where you are residing. Your tax representative must be a resident of Japan. Choose someone whom you trust to handle your money responsibly.

After leaving Japan file for the pension refund. Upon receiving it, send the original *Dattai Ichijikin Shikyu Kettei Tsuchisho* (Notice of the Lump-Sum Withdrawal Payment Entitlement) to your representative. Have your representative go to the same tax office as before and file the *Kakutei Shinkokusho* on your behalf. A bank account in Japan needs to be designated at the time of the filing. The refund will be deposited into that account. Your representative can

then forward you the tax refund. **You must apply for the tax refund within five years of receiving your pension rebate.** For more information contact:

Public Relations Dept. Social Insurance Operation Centre
Tel: (03) 3334-2111.

Forward your mail

The post office cannot forward mail to an overseas address, unless the mail itself has come from overseas. Nevertheless, leave your forwarding address with your place of work and local post office. Make sure also to have the post office make up a card to send to all your friends and acquaintances in Japan supplying them with your new address.

The post office will forward mail to a new address in Japan for up to one year with a *tenkyo todoke* postcard. If you are staying in Japan supply the post office with that address.

Otherwise, have your mail forwarded to a friend in Japan who can then redirect important mail or packages to you back home. Those travelling for a few months before returning to Japan may have their mail forwarded to a temporary address. However, parcels will not be returned to the sender if they don't reach you.

Cancel your keitai

It is possible to cancel your keitai any time up until the day you leave Japan. DoCoMo charges ¥3,000. J-Phone charges ¥4,000 for a phone that is under 2 years old and ¥2,000 for anything older than that. AU costs ¥2,000 for a phone under a year; any thing older is cancelled free.

Budget for your move home

Your final paycheck may only be two-thirds the amount you normally receive. This is because of the way payroll is calculated. When you arrived in Japan you may have received an initial paycheck that was one third of the normal amount, before you started on a regular monthly salary. Again when you leave, your contract may have you terminate before a full month's salary has been earned.

Check with your host institution.

Your host institution may also ask that you leave money (around fifty thousand yen) to cover any left over bills, or cleaning and repairs. You will have to dry clean any futons and bed covers that were provided to you in your housing, and you may have to replace certain things if you damaged them, such as fusuma, curtain rails, window screens, etc. These kinds of requests can cut into your budget and create unexpected havoc. Clarify your host institution's expectations well in advance of leaving, so you have some idea of what kind of expenses you may incur in the last weeks of your stay on the JET Programme.

Dispose/transfer ownership of your car

When you leave Japan or part with your vehicle for any other reason, the vehicle must be disposed of properly with all necessary paper work completed. If you do not complete the required documentation, you may be held responsible should your car be involved in an accident. You will be liable for vehicle tax until you properly dispose of the vehicle,

Disposal

If you are unable to sell your car to another individual, and car dealerships judge that it has no re-sale value, you will have to dispose of, *haisha*, the car.

You can choose to process the paper work yourself, but this and the physical disposal of the vehicle are usually taken care of by a vehicle sales or disposal company. There is of course a disposal fee. The following items will be required:

- Vehicle Inspection certificate
- Front and back number plates
- Certificate of disposal from the disposal company
- Your *hanko* and registration of it (less than 3 months old) from your local city office /town hall.
- A letter of attorney if you are authorising a company to take care of the paperwork. If you dispose of the vehicle yourself you will also have to complete the appropriate documents from the licensing centre.
- Tax certificate (depending on the office or company processing the paperwork)

Sale

As above but instead of a certificate of disposal you will need a certificate of transfer. The procedures for transferring ownership need to be carried out in the jurisdiction of the Land Transportation Office of the new owner. If number plates are re-issued a portion of the vehicle tax will be refunded. Procedures must be carried out within 15 days of the transfer.

Cancellation of voluntary insurance, *Nin I hoken*

If you have paid for a year's worth of insurance, even in you cancel the policy in mid-term, you will not receive a refund. However, if you are paying by the month you will not be charged after you cancel your policy. For detailed information, contact your insurance agency.

Get reimbursed for your flight home

Upon completion of your contract, your host institution is required to supply a one-way, direct, economy class air ticket, and passage from the contracting organisation to the international airport in Japan from where you will depart. Your institution may reimburse you with money and leave the booking of your ticket up to you.

However with the way tax audits are working these days, you will more than likely be handed a one-way ticket out. This is not to say you have to leave the day your contract ends, as you are entitled to extend your visa for up to one month prior to picking up your one-way ticket home from your office. Visa extensions can be easily obtained by taking your passport along with a letter of recommendation from your office to your nearest immigration office. Make a point of applying for this extension a few weeks in advance of the expiration date of your visa. However, should you decide to overstay this period or continue to work in Japan, be prepared to pay for your own way out of Japan. A ticket from your host institution will no longer be available. For more information contact CLAIR at (03) 3591-5968.

Flight information

(See the Travel Information and Advice chapter of this book for a list of travel agencies.)

borrow or buy the following:

- Bubble wrap (available at home improvement stores)
- Duct tape (or an equally strong, water-proof adhesive).
- A craft knife, scissors.
- Sturdy cardboard boxes.
- Waterproof marker.
- Sheet plastic or big zip-lock bags (available at home improvement stores in a variety of sizes)

Talk to your shipping agent to see if they can provide you with the following supplies:

- Wooden crates to hold your boxes (sometimes required)
- Metal bands to secure the wooden crates (recommended).
- Insurance.
- Export paperwork.

Packing

There are three major horrors that good packing should prevent: breakage, water damage, and outright loss.

- Inventory everything. Keep two copies and give two to the shipping company.
- Sort your belongings according to packaging. Fragile items should be packed separately from books and other heavy items.
- Be careful when selecting boxes. If you're sending something like pottery home, you might want to purchase a sturdy chest.
- Less expensively, you can pack large items and clothing in scavenged stereo and TV boxes.

Fragile items

Pack each item in several layers of plastic bubble wrap, and then arrange them carefully, watching for delicate protruding bits, in sturdy cardboard or wooden boxes. Breakable items should be packed towards the middle of any given box, padded by clothing, blankets, futons, or crumpled newspaper. Tape the boxes thoroughly with duct tape and clearly label fragile, in English and in Kanji, on all sides. (われもの注意)

Computers

Make backup copies of all your files. Store the backup disks with your original program disks in a secure container. Remove all floppy diskettes from the drives. To prepare your hard disk, make sure the recording heads are parked for transport. When automatic `park and lock` systems are powered down, the disk automatically retracts the recording heads from the data area into a safety zone. Some computer systems require that you run a program to activate the park procedure. IBM and most hard-disk clones include the program SHIPDISK.EXE, which parks the heads. The hard disk becomes un-parked once you turn the computer back on.

Once your drive is secure, turn off the system and remove all cables from the back of the unit. When possible, you should always pack your computer in the box that it came in. If you do not have the original box, buy proper packing materials and containers.

If you have a printer, pack it in its original box. Remove the ink cartridges from laser printers. If you are moving a pin printer, insert a piece of paper in the platen to secure the print head.

Other

Futons can be shipped in the sturdy plastic or cloth sacks sold for that function at futon shops. Steel chests, suitcases, and duffel bags, if clearly marked, can go as they are.

Labelling and Crating

After all items are wrapped, boxed, securely sealed and labelled fragile, write your name, phone number, destination address, shipping agent, and shipper's phone number both on the box and on sheets of paper inside the box, in case something awful happens to the package itself. It is a good idea to number your boxes and keep an inventory for each. If you are not crating the boxes yourself, the shipper should crate them, strap them with metal bands, label the crates and send them. If you are doing it yourself, local companies can often help. Fragile boxes should be packed in the middle of the crate for extra protection.

Finally, do not forget to keep copies of your inventory list and any other paperwork associated with the move, particularly schedules,

receipts, and insurance forms. Without these last two, you can kiss your money good-bye if anything happens and you need to make a claim.

Shipping via Japan postal service

If you have not accumulated a tremendous volume of belongings, surface mail is probably the cheapest way to send things home. There are two different categories: printed matter and parcel post. Printed matter is much cheaper, so if you have books, use the post office's special book bags and send them home as printed matter. Up to date Postal rates are listed in your JET Diary.

To avoid delay, it is best to leave your parcels unsealed until the post office inspects them. The one exception is for books, which may be sealed beforehand. For all items, you must fill out an international parcel label, which is a combination invoice, customs declaration and address label.

If you need your things a little quicker, but still have several weeks, then SAL service may be best. Packages go by air, but not express, so it is cheaper. Contact your post office for current rates. An English *Post Office Guide* is available at most offices.

<http://www.post.yusei.go.jp/new-eng/index.htm>

<http://www.postal.mpt.go.jp>

Important international parcel information

For up to 20kg the sum of all dimensions must not exceed three meters. The length must not exceed 1.5 meters OR the sum of all dimensions must not exceed two meters. The length must not exceed 1.05 meters.

Air, SAL and surface parcels may be insured upon request. Amounts vary according to destination, but cannot exceed the value of the contents. For parcels, the first ¥20, 000 costs ¥400 to insure, with each additional ¥20,000 costing ¥50. Although proof of value is unnecessary when purchasing insurance, filing a claim without it is nearly impossible. Receipts or photographs can serve as proof. Smaller post offices may not offer insurance.

International parcels are indemnified up to a maximum of

¥21,710 per item, depending on weight: 5 kg -¥8, 810; 10 kg -¥12, 770; 15 kg -¥17, 240; 20 kg -¥21, 710. When you send 10 or more parcels at a time, you receive a 10% discount. The discount rises to 20% when you send 50 or more parcels at a time. Parcels in the same shipment going to different destinations are eligible. Your local post office might not know what to do or be able to ship your items, so it is better to go to a main branch. Check the weight of your parcel including wrapping, and verify the maximum weight and size limits.

Sending via Takyubin

This method provides an affordable option should you wish to avoid being overcharged at the airport for excess baggage. Takyubin can be accessed through most supermarkets, convenience stores and gift shops, and provides both domestic and international shipping services. Special rates are also available for bulk shipments. For more information, contact your nearest convenience store.

Private freight shipping companies

Start early, if you decide to use an international shipping company. Companies like two or three months notice, with one month being a minimum. The company needs to gauge the volume of your move.

This allows them to quote a price and check shipping schedules and container space. Both air and sea freight are available through private companies, though air service is much more expensive. Sea freight prices will vary depending on departure and destination points, the type of service the company offers (door to door, door to port) and extra services such as packing, unpacking, crating or special insurance.

As with all this information, check prices and services with the individual company before entrusting your items to them. Remember that freight is usually calculated by volume and not weight, so presumably it would be better to send the heavy items in small boxes by freight, leaving the lighter and bulkier to the parcel post. Check the rates for books, etc. The shipping company may have a minimum charge or their rate may be higher than the special printed matter rate from the post office.

The best measure when looking for a shipping company is to seek a door-to-door delivery price per a given unit of volume, i.e. one cubic meter, depending on the mode of transportation. Make a comprehensive list of items going home and get a rough estimate from your shipping company. The base-shipping unit is a cubic meter, about seven large suitcases. Shipping a fraction of a cubic meter is possible, but costly, so getting with others is a good idea, but bear in mind the possible complications at customs should you do so. Finally, even some shipping companies will admit that sending things through the post is cheaper, but shipping companies tend to handle fragile or oddly shaped items better.

Insurance

All moving companies offer insurance coverage. Check the restrictions; with some policies, the shipping company must do the packing. (Of concern to those who send parcel express goods to a major city for shipping).

Be sure to find out what the deductible is (the payment for which you are liable before the coverage takes effect) and where the insurance is payable. If you have to claim against a company in Japan, you may end up spending more time and money than you will receive in compensation. Very valuable items should be covered under a plan that uses valuation by item. Such items should be professionally appraised.

Of course, the better your items are recorded, the more swiftly insurance claims can be paid. Descriptive lists, photos, estimates, and receipts: these are a few of their (least) favourite things. Keep the originals, and send copies to a relative or friend at your destination.

Shipping companies

Japan Luggage Express

<http://www.japanexpress.co.jp/hikkoshi/eng.htm>

Tel: (03) 5463-4541 Toll Free: (0120) 228-322

Email: Hikkoshi@japanexpress.co.jp

One cubic meter costs: Europe: ¥120, 000, N. America: ¥100, 000 and excludes pickup and transport, but it includes all charges at

destination (shipping only = ¥50,000) Insurance is 1% of value, minimum ¥3,000.

Nippon Express, Pelican Service

<http://www.ocnis.nittsu.co.jp/> E-mail: jyu-ishii@ocnis.nittsu.co.jp:

Tel: (03) 3572-4305 Toll Free: (0120) 150-422

Charges are determined by destination and insurance and customers' charges. Sum of dimensions must be less than 150cm. The weight must be under 30kg. Call for information on volume discounts and other destinations.

Econoship

Tel: (03) 3705-5595 Toll Free: (0120) 222-111 Contact Hisako Gainer, Customer Relations Dept. Shipping one cubic meter approximate costs: Europe: ¥56,500, N. America.: ¥61,400, Oceania: ¥52,980. This excludes document processing (¥4,860), export brokerage (¥19,600) commission (10%) and customs charges. Insurance is 1.5% of value. They offer free pickup, marine insurance, packing and crating service and a JET 30% discount. If shipping less than a cubic metre the minimum charge is ¥64,000 total.

ValueMove

<http://www.occidental.co.jp>. Toll Free: (0120) 682-444

E-mail: movers@occidental.co.jp

JET Special Going Home Package = Australia ¥ 65,000, Canada ¥64,000, New Zealand ¥ 66,000, UK ¥67,000, USA 69,000. Charges determined by volume. Insurance is not included and special conditions apply. Call for further information.

Internet sites

Allied Pick fords

<http://www.alliedpickfords.co.jp/jp/>

Japan Luggage Express

<http://www.jluggage.com>

PremierWorld-wide Movers <http://www.asiantigers-premierwww.com>

Excel International http://www.ijnet.or.jp/eico/moving_english.html

Donate your goods

Donation is a worthy option if you have clothing in good shape, but don't want to haul it home. Contact one of the following:

Japan Relief Clothing Centre

22-2 Fukaehanma-cho, Higashinada-ku, Kobe 658-0023
Tel: (066) 2714021.

Amnesty Group Kobe

Miyohokeinnai 4-5-8 Eizawa-cho, Hyogo-ku, Kobe 652-0816
Tel: (078) 575-2608

Emmaus

Tel: 03-3920-9118

Christian Fellowship Org.

Tel: 03-3315-3902 (9:00 –21:00)

Salvation Army

Tel: 03-3384-3769 (Mon-Fri. 9:00-16:00)

San-yu Kai

Tel: 03-3874-1269 (Mon.-Sat. 9:30 –17:00)

Franciscan Chapel Centre

Tel 03-3401-2141 (8:30 –17:00)

Customs

General information

Definitions

Declaration: your written and/or oral statements, declaring all goods that you are importing; specifically all goods acquired abroad (including gifts) and prohibited or restricted goods.

Duty and Tax: national taxes on all imported goods. Duties and taxes are not penalties. **Duty-free Goods:** goods on which no import duties need be paid at point of purchase. These goods must still be declared, and you may have to pay duty on their value if you exceed the applicable exemption.

Exemption: permission to import something without paying duties and taxes otherwise applicable. This is also known as duty-free entry.

Household Effects: items you have owned, possessed and used in your

household, including furniture, appliances, cooking utensils, china, glassware, cutlery, linen and bedding, personal sporting goods, cameras, video equipment, TV's and radios. *In the US, stereos, tape decks and photographic equipment acquired abroad do not qualify as household effects under exemption.

Personal Effects: items you have owned, possessed and used in your daily life, including clothing, items for personal hygiene, and jewellery, cars (Canada), tools or instruments of your trade. Note: Usually alcohol, tobacco products, perfumes and toilet waters do not qualify as personal effects for duty-free entry. Some countries place restrictions on art, antiques and furs.

Prohibited Goods: can in no instance be imported, even if they are declared. The checklist that follows is a guide:

- fireworks
- explosives
- weapons
- counterfeit currency
- materials inciting hatred
- narcotics
- pirated copies of copyrighted materials

Restricted Goods are generally not allowed into the country, but there is a chance, if you fill out required paperwork BEFORE you get to customs, that you can import them.

- firearms
- commercial goods (for resale)
- food
- products made from materials covered under CITES (Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna).
- soil, bark or biological specimens
- ammunition
- obscene materials
- national treasures
- pets
- prescription drugs

Customs duties

Exemptions on household and personal effects

Customs makes special allowances for former residents who return to take up permanent residence after living abroad. You may import your household and personal effects duty and tax free, provided you satisfy several conditions. Importing goods originally purchased and duty paid in your home country is not a problem. For expensive items like cameras that you brought from home, you may be asked to prove that they were duty paid in your home country (see Warnings and Tips).

Importing goods acquired abroad is a different story. To qualify for duty-free entry, these items must have been owned and used for a certain amount of time. Check with your home country's embassy or customs office for current regulations. For all countries, you must prove that you have owned and used the things for the required period, so keep your receipts. Duty-free entry of household and personal effects should be for your own use and not for commercial resale or other purposes. They may not be lent, hired out, or sold for at least one year after importation without customs approval. Cars and motorcycles have different stipulations again. Each country has its own safety and emissions standards that must be met by an imported vehicle. Duty and tax are usually high, often totalling the assessed value of the vehicle. Sometimes, however, motor vehicles can be included in one's household and personal effects, duty-free. Besides the safety and emissions standards your car must meet, there are ownership and use requirements specific to motor vehicles. If these requirements are met, taxes may be waived, but do not count on it. Write to your country's transport department for more information.

As an ordinary traveller, you are exempt from paying duty and tax on a certain amount of goods acquired abroad, provided they are properly declared. When you return home, you can use this personal exemption to cover goods that do not qualify for duty-free entry as household and personal effects.

If you end up having to pay duties on the goods you send home, of course cash in your country's currency is preferred, as all calculations will be converted to that currency. If you cannot pay when you arrive, your goods may be held on deposit until the duties and taxes owed are paid. You will get a receipt for goods held and will be expected to pay within a reasonable amount of time, which can vary.

Warnings

- Check out prohibited or restricted goods before you go. This is important with pets, as many countries destroy unauthorised animals upon arrival.
- Carry your prescription if you have medications.
- You are responsible for opening, unpacking, and re-packing any goods a customs official wants to see.
- Gifts will be treated as part of your personal exemption when they accompany you.
- Make an inventory of all goods being shipped and estimate their total value. Keep goods that do not qualify for duty-free entry on a separate list. Appropriate headings would be cutlery and bed linen, not six knives, forks and soup spoons, two pillows and a blanket, etc.
- List all serial numbers for items that have them.
- Keep two copies of your list and the receipts for items purchased abroad.
- Excess alcohol or tobacco may cost you too much to make it worth importing, and there may be limits on quantities. Check first if you plan to make a large shipment.
- There are time limits for shipping household and personal effects duty-free. If you plan to ship your things home and continue travelling for some time, check out who can claim the goods for you back home and whether they need special authorisation.
- Customs officers are allowed to delay you for a reasonable time to determine how to treat your effects. Any fuss you make with them can increase your delay. They usually look very carefully for prohibited and restricted goods, and consider finding such things to be rather exciting, so be warned.

Taking your pet home

This is a matter of satisfying the export requirements to leave Japan and the entrance requirements for the destination country. Check with the airline that you plan on using when you travel home. Certain airlines will allow you to transport your pet as carry-on luggage. Restrictions apply as to the size and make of the case for your pet, as well as for the number of animals that can be transported

on-board at one time. Confirm all the details when you book your ticket. See “When Pigs Fly” in the *Staying in Japan* section for more pet-related information.

New Tokyo Airport Animal Quarantine Service

Narita Branch, 2nd Quarantine Section, 282-0004,

Tel: (0476) 34-2342 / 2343

E-mail: info@animal-quarantine-service.go.jp

<http://www.animal-quarantine-service.go.jp/english>

Customs information by country

See the JET pages in your CLAIR General Information Handbook for a complete listing of Embassies and Consulates in Japan. If you have any questions related to matters in your home country, please make sure to contact your AJET Nationality Representative. The NRs are a link between JETs and their respective embassies in Japan, AJET, and CLAIR. They are in a position to distribute information and solicit help should you have any concerns, or should a crisis arise.

Australia

AJET Nationality newsletter, *Oz Talk*, contains useful customs and tax information. Booklets are also available from the Embassy in Tokyo. Tel: (03) 5232 4078.

Personal exemptions

Australian adult citizens are allowed personal exemptions of \$400 or \$200 per child on accompanied goods, excluding alcohol and tobacco products (1.125 litres of alcoholic beverages and 250 cigarettes are allowed duty free). Only unaccompanied goods more than one year old are duty and tax-free. Customs Information Centre, Toll Free Australia: 1-300-363-263 Outside Australia Tel: 2-6275-6666 <http://www.customs.gov.au>

Motor Vehicles

Customs duty and sales tax rates will vary according to the vehicle's depreciated value. Note that a new motor vehicle valuation method has been introduced, and any vehicle purchased after March 2, 1998 will be subject to these new rules. Administrator, Motor Vehicle

Standards, Federal Office of Road Safety GPO Box 1553, Canberra
ACT 2601 Tel: (02) 6274-7506

Health

Secretary, Department of Community Services and Health, GPO Box
9849 Canberra ACT 2601 Tel: (06) 289-1555 Fax: (06) 281-6946

Canada

Revenue Canada publishes a pamphlet entitled *I Declare*. It provides an outline of duty-free exemptions, customs reporting requirements, and federal controls on goods. Duties are payable in cash traveller's checks, certified checks or personal checks (under \$2,500). Some places also take Visa and Master Card.

Personal exemptions

Goods other than alcohol and tobacco up to \$750 in value are duty and tax-free if you are out of Canada for at least seven days. You may import personal items and household effects duty free if you have returned from living abroad for at least one year. The goods must have been in your possession and use for at least 6 months prior to re-entry, and there is a \$10,000 limit on any single item. Personal and household effects include: furniture, furnishings, silverware, linen, jewellery, appliances, books, musical instruments, family heirlooms, antiques, power tools, private collections of coins, stamps and art, and other hobby items. If you have any unaccompanied goods arriving later, file an E24 form, which is available from the customs inspector upon arrival

Travellers Division, Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, 8th Floor,
Sir Richard Scott Bldg. 191 Laurier Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0L5
Fax: (613) 998-5584

Plants and Animals: Plants require import permits in advance from Agriculture Canada as well as a photo-sanitary certificate from the federal plant health authority from the country of origin

Director, Animal Health, Montreal, Quebec Tel: (514) 283-3143,
Guelph, Ontario Tel: (519) 837-9400, New Westminster, BC Tel: (604)
666-8900

Motor Vehicles: To check whether your vehicle is eligible for importation call Toll Free from N. America: 1-800-333-0558, or Tel: (905)-837-7918

New Zealand

There are several useful pamphlets to answer your questions on customs available through the embassy.

- Advice on private (non-commercial) importation
- Advice on private motor vehicle importation
- Advice to travellers

Personal Exemptions

New Zealanders are allowed \$700 worth of accompanied goods duty free. In addition, 4.5 l of wine or beer and 1.125 l of spirits, and 200 cigarettes or 250g of tobacco or 50 cigars or a mixture of all three not exceeding 250g, are allowed duty free. Duty must be paid in NZ dollars or can be charged to Visa, MasterCard, Diners Club or American Express credit cards. New Zealand Customs Service Call Centre, Tel: 9 300 5399

Fax: 9 359 6730 E-mail: feedback@customs.govt.nz
<http://www.customs.govt.nz>

Motor Vehicles

It is possible to import vehicles. However, all vehicles entering the country will be put into quarantine and inspected by the Ministry of Agriculture before being released to the VIN issuing authority. The cost of registering cars varies according to size, but expect to pay NZ \$500-1000 for a VIN, inspection, certification, registration, and 12-month license.

The Land Safety Authority Head Office, PO Box 2840, Wellington, New Zealand Tel: (04) 494-8600 Fax: (04) 494-8601
<http://www.itsa.govt.nz>

Plants and Medication

The Ministry of Agriculture, PO Box 10-814 Wellington Tel: (04) 473-8996 Fax: (04) 473-2975
The Ministry of Health, PO Box 5013, Wellington Tel: (04) 496-2136 Fax: (04) 496-2340

United Kingdom

The embassy provides a leaflet called **Bringing your Belongings to**

the United Kingdom. Get **Endangered Species** if you plan to take home goods made from animals or plants that face extinction. They will be confiscated.

HM Customs and Excise Business Advice Centre,
Dorset House, Stamford St. London SE1 9PY Tel: (0171) 202-4227,
Fax: (0171) 202-4131. Web page <http://www.hmce.gov.uk>

Social Security

In many cases it is possible to safeguard your National Insurance Record and benefits by paying social security contributions (Class 3). Include your National Insurance Number, the date you left the UK, the date your employment began, length of employment, when you intend to return to the UK and approx. annual salary in sterling. It is advisable to contact the DHSS before returning to the UK.

Pensions and Overseas Benefits Directorate (Great Britain)
Newcastle Upon Tyne, England, NE98 1BA
Tel: (0191) 21-8777 Fax: (0191) 21-87293 <http://www.dss.gov.uk/ba/la>

Inland Revenue, North Ireland Contributions Office, Int'l Service
24-42 Corporation St. Belfast BT1 3DP Tel: (1232) 25-1411
Direct line: (1232) 54-3289 Fax: (1232) 54-3354

Further Information

The Government News Network allows access to up to date information in the form of press releases for all government offices and departments at <http://nds.coi.govt.uk>

United States of America

The Customs Department publishes a pamphlet entitled *Know Before You Go*, which has all the information you need to pass customs when you return home. To receive this pamphlet, write to the Customs Attaché, c/o the American Embassy, or call the Embassy or the nearest consulate and ask them to send it. The Embassy customs information line is fully automated. It is suggested that you put all your requests into writing.

Personal Exemptions: American citizens are entitled to a \$400 personal exemption, and not more than 100 cigars (non-Cuban) or 200 cigarettes (one carton), and one litre (33.8 fl. oz.) of liquor duty free when entering the United States.

Personal belongings taken abroad are also allowed duty-free entrance, and if shipped separately, should be marked American Goods Returned. However, items purchased abroad that do not qualify as personal belongings but are sent separately do not qualify for the personal exemption. Customs officials will clear items sent through the post. They will attach a mail entry with the amount of duty to be paid.

The post will then deliver the packages to the designated address at which time the duty and a handling fee will be collected. Foreign-made items are dutiable each time they are brought into the States unless you have acceptable proof of prior possession.

Motor Vehicles

Embassy officials in Tokyo strongly recommend against importing motor vehicles from Japan. Recent changes in US regulations have clamped down on vehicle importation; there are no waivers available. All vehicles must be brought up to US inspections such as emissions, safety, bumper and theft prevention standards before entry.

For further information, company names and copies of the customs pamphlet, *Importing a Car* and the EPA brochure, *buying a Car Overseas? Beware!* Contact the Embassy Consular Section Tel:(03) 3224-5435.