

The Ultimate Guide to

Teaching English in Japan



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Teaching English abroad is a job filled with educational opportunities and cultural experiences alike. As a native English speaker, you will bring a valuable skill to students in Japan; as a visitor, you will learn how the Japanese people live, eat, communicate, travel and celebrate. This guide will acquaint you with all of these areas, beginning with details about the school system, and the documentation you'll need to teach in Japan.

Teaching ESL in Japan

With Japan's welcoming people, rich history, cuisine, art, culture, anime and technology,

it has become one of the most popular destinations for those who want to teach abroad.

Part of the increase in demand in Japan is the result of its [Education Ministry's 2013 recommendation](#) to more than double the number of foreign English teachers in the country, from 4,360 to 10,000. It also revived the Japanese Exchange and Teaching (JET) program, with a goal of having native English speakers in every elementary, middle and high school by 2023.

The country's business community continues to prioritize English-speaking proficiency in employees; its largest e-commerce company, [Rakuten](#), and a Yamaguchi-based international clothing company, [Uniqlo](#), have even changed their official company languages from Japanese to English.



Peak ESL Hiring Season in Japan

To successfully apply for a position teaching ESL in Japan, you'll want to start working on your application materials a year ahead of time. The typical Japanese school year differs from the typical U.S. school year, and the lead time for hiring decisions is factored in months, not weeks.

Public and Private School System

The public and private school year is divided into three semesters, with April to July being the first semester, followed by September to December, then January to March. Hiring for the public and private schools is typically done for positions either starting in April or August. ESL teachers looking to work for public and private schools should apply three to six months before the start of the semester.

Private Language Schools

Private language schools such as AEON and ECC hire on a continual, as needed, basis.

- AEON: The [AEON Corporation](#) has been providing English education since 1973. The company currently has over 300 branch schools and employs over 800 teachers. AEON teachers can expect to earn approximately ¥270,000 per month. Salaries may vary depending on the performance and bonus structure established by AEON.
- ECC: The [Education through Communication for the Community](#) (ECC) has been specializing in English instruction since 1962. Throughout Japan, ECC has over 150 schools and employs more than 650 teachers. ECC teachers earn a base

salary of approximately ¥252,000 per month. Salaries may vary depending on the performance and bonus structure established by ECC.

These language schools operate year-round; therefore, employment is based on supply and demand. During recent years, most of the placements for private language schools occurred between August and September or April and May. However, peak seasons during one year may differ from the next year.

For exact details regarding the hiring process, check out our [Job Placement Service](#). It should be noted that applicants are suggested to apply for positions three to six months prior to their desired departure date.

Universities and Colleges

Japanese universities have two semesters with the first semester starting in April and the second starting in October. Some universities offer new courses to parallel the Western academic school year, which start in either September or October. ESL instructors interested in teaching at a university or college should have a minimum of a Master's Degree and/or years of teaching experience. Some universities and colleges also require ESL teachers to have some basic fluency in Japanese.

The hiring season is similar to public and private schools with peak hiring occurring four to six months before the beginning of the semester. It's common for university and college teachers to have gained experience teaching in the Japanese public and private school systems before obtaining employment at a university or college. Doing this helps build contacts and relationships for creating job prospects.

Private Tutoring

ESL teachers can provide private tutoring for Japanese nationals, but most contracts prohibit teachers from doing so. The majority of job opportunities occur through word of mouth or advertising in the local newspapers; however, ESL teachers should be very discreet when obtaining tutoring jobs. ESL teachers should note that tutoring their own students will result in being fired, so it's highly recommended to tutor Japanese nationals who have no affiliation with a school.

Private English tutors can earn from 2,000 JPY/hour to 4,000 JPY/hour, depending on the student, the demand, and the location.

The Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (JET)

English teaching exchange programs are also a popular form of ESL employment. The Japan Exchange and Teaching Program, also referred to as the JET Program, is the most common English teaching exchange program for individuals wanting to live and work in Japan.

Please note that the JET Program application process typically takes 7-9 months, starting in late September. Applicants cannot apply outside of their native country, and the application process includes in-person interviews and health checks.

Interviews are conducted between February and March, with notice to successful applicants occurring between April and May. Individuals interested in the program should know a contract with JET is a minimum of one year with a possible extension for three years. Applicants accepted into the JET Program depart in late July.

For further details and exact dates, please visit www.jetprogramme.org/e/aspiring/howto.html.

How to Find Jobs Teaching English in Japan

Graduates of Oxford Seminars receive our Job Placement Service with access to established schools and recruiters around the world. After completing your in-class component, you will have access to a team of Job Placement Advisors who have firsthand experience working internationally and are ready to help you find your dream job in the Land of the Rising Sun. Contact your Job Placement Advisor for assistance and feedback to improve your chances of securing a position in this competitive ESL teaching market.

Other useful places to find ESL teaching jobs are:

- [Oxford Seminars' English Language Schools Directory](#)
- [Gaijin Pot](#)
- [Jobs in Japan](#)
- [The Japan Times](#)
- [Daily Yomiuri](#)
- [Kansai Flea Market](#)
- [The JALT Job Information Centre](#)
- [The Japan Research Career Information Network](#)
- [Westgate University Program](#)
- [All About Teaching English in Japan](#)

These resources are available in English and can be used to supplement your job search beyond the Job Placement Service.

Another useful resource for ESL teachers that is available online is [Metropolis](#). This news source contains a vast amount of information about Japan including job advertisements, apartment listings, popular restaurants, upcoming concert dates, and more. The editions are published daily and are entirely in English.

Jobs Teaching English in the Summer in Japan

As mentioned in the Peak ESL Hiring Season in Japan section, the school year is split into three semesters with the first semester occurring from April to July. Therefore, the summer English positions are short, not making it worthwhile for ESL teachers to travel abroad. In addition, the ESL summer positions usually do not pay for accommodations and often require the teacher to have them arranged before the position is awarded. Most teachers granted summer teaching positions are already living or traveling in Japan.



Teaching Requirements for ESL Teachers in Japan

Applying to work in another country can seem daunting, but it doesn't need to be. The paperwork and documentation process follows a logical progression: check the requirements for your country, gather the necessary personal documents (birth certificates, marriage certificates, passport, etc.), get background or criminal checks where necessary, and then apply for a certificate of eligibility, which is what you need in order to get a work visa.

The Certificate of Eligibility

A Certificate of Eligibility is issued before a visa application by a regional immigration authority under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice as evidence that the applicant fulfills various conditions of the Immigration Control Act, including those certifying that the activity in which the foreigner wishes to engage in Japan is valid and comes under a status of residence (excluding Temporary Visitor Status).

The Certificate of Eligibility has the advantage of reducing the time required to obtain a visa and complete immigration procedures, since a foreigner in possession of such a certificate can probably acquire a visa at an embassy or consulate without any inquiries being made to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, by showing the certificate to the immigration officer, obtain landing permission more easily. This document is required of individuals wanting to work, study, or live in Japan. A sponsor such as a

spouse, employer, or academic institute must submit the certificate before individuals can apply for a visa.

Resident Card

This card is issued to foreign nationals looking to stay in Japan for 3 months or longer by immigration authorities at the main international airports within Japan. This will serve as an important piece of identification that will likely be needed when purchasing a phone plan, opening a bank account or renting an apartment. Please note that you are required by law to notify municipal offices of any changes in address after receiving this card. Foreigners should always carry their resident card.

American Citizens

U.S. citizens wanting to teach English in Japan can qualify for three types of visas.

Work Visa:

In order to obtain a work visa, a Certificate of Eligibility is required. There are two ways to obtain the Certificate of Eligibility, which are:

1. Apply as an ALT (Assistant Language Teacher) through a private company for the public system such as the JET Program
 - a. Applicants require a degree
 - b. Applicants do not need to be U.S. born citizens as long as they have at least 12 years of education in an English-speaking country
2. Apply as an English instructor.
 - a. Applicants must apply through a private language school (juku and eikaiwa) such as Berlitz
 - b. Applicants require a valid U.S. passport

- c. Applicants need to have a criminal record check
- d. Applicants require a degree

Spousal Visa:

Spouses can apply for visas in one of two ways:

1. Spouse of a Japanese national must provide:
 - a. Documentation (original marriage certificate) proving the applicant is married to a Japanese national
 - b. The resident card of a Japanese national
 - c. A letter of guarantee by a person living in Japan
 - d. Japanese spouse's employment certificate and certificate of tax payment
 - e. If the Japanese spouse is not employed or is currently not living in Japan, you'll need a letter of guarantee from a Japanese guarantor residing in Japan. The guarantor's employment and tax payment certificate will also be required
 - f. The applicant can apply for the visa outside of Japan; however, the application process is usually done within Japan. The visa is valid for 90 days to three years and applicants must extend the visa before expiry.
2. Spouse of Permanent Resident must provide:
 - a. A permanent resident is someone who has lived in Japan for at least five consecutive years and who has applied and been accepted as a permanent resident

- b. Documentation (e.g. marriage certificate, statement of joint bank accounts, birth certificate, etc.) proving the relationship between the applicant and the permanent resident
- c. A copy of the permanent resident's passport
- d. Documentation certifying the applicant or his or her sponsor's financial stability (e.g. bank statement, employment and tax payment certificate, etc.)
- e. The applicant can apply for the visa outside of Japan; however, the permanent resident should be in Japan. The visa is valid for a maximum of three years.

Student Visa:

Individuals wanting to study in Japan must apply for a student visa. In order for applicants to qualify for a student visa they must:

1. Obtain sponsorship from an educational institution
2. Provide proof (e.g. bank statement) of money to pay for tuition, textbooks, and accommodation expenses

Student visa holders are prohibited from engaging in paid employment without obtaining permission from Japanese immigration and the school. If the request to obtain paid employment is approved, students are limited to a maximum number of working hours per week.

Canadian Citizens

Canadian citizens wanting to teach English in Japan can qualify for four types of visas.

Work Visa:

A Certificate of Eligibility is required. There are two ways to obtain the Certificate of Eligibility:

1. Apply as an ALT (Assistant Language Teacher) through a private company for the public system such as the JET Program
 - a. Applicants require a degree
 - b. Applicants do not need to be Canadian or U.S. citizens as long as they have at least 12 years of education in an English-speaking country
2. Apply as an English instructor
 - a. Applicants must apply through a private language school (juku and eikaiwa) such as Berlitz
 - b. Applicants require a valid Canadian passport
 - c. Applicants need to have a criminal record check
 - d. Applicants require a degree

Working Holiday Visa:

Applicants must be/have:

1. A Canadian citizen
2. Intending mainly to holiday in Japan for a specific period of time
3. Between 18 - 30 years of age at the time of application
4. Proof (e.g. bank statement) of a specific amount of money for the holiday in Japan - the minimum amount is \$2,000 CDN

5. A return travel ticket
6. A valid Canadian passport

Applicants applying for a working holiday visa in Japan can only acquire one during the course of their life. Once the initial working holiday visa has been issued, applicants must enter Japan within three months. The initial stay is six months but applicants can apply for an extended stay of six months, which has to be approved by Japanese immigration authorities. Holiday visa holders who intend on leaving Japan during their stay must present their resident card to immigration authorities upon departing with the appropriate box ticked in order to qualify for re-entry.

Spousal Visa:

Spouse of a Japanese national must provide:

1. Documentation proving the applicant is married to a Japanese national
2. The resident card of a Japanese national
3. Documentation certifying the profession and income of the applicant or his or her spouse
4. A letter of guarantee by a person living in Japan
5. A permanent resident is someone who has lived in Japan for at least five consecutive years and who has applied and been accepted as a permanent resident.
6. Documentation (e.g. marriage certificate, statement of joint bank accounts, etc.) proving the relationship between the applicant and the permanent resident
7. A copy of the permanent resident's passport
8. Documentation certifying the profession and income of the applicant or his or her spouse

9. A letter of guarantee by the permanent resident

The applicant can apply for the visa outside of Japan; however, the application process is usually done within Japan. The visa is valid for one year or three years and applicants must extend the visa before expiry.

Student Visa:

Individuals wanting to study in Japan must apply for a student visa. In order for applicants to qualify for a student visa, they must:

1. Obtain sponsorship from an educational institution
2. Provide proof (e.g. bank statement) of a specific amount of money to pay for tuition, textbooks, and accommodation expenses.

Student visa holders are prohibited from engaging in paid employment without obtaining permission from Japanese immigration and the school. If the request to obtain paid employment is approved, students are limited to a maximum number of working hours per week.

Australian Citizens

Australian citizens wanting to teach English in Japan can qualify for four types of visas.

Work Visa:

A Certificate of Eligibility is required. Australian citizens require sponsorship from an employer to apply for the Certificate of Eligibility. Other prerequisites applicants require are:

1. A college degree
2. Valid Australian passport
3. Health and criminal record check

Employment visas are valid for a period of three years.

Working Holiday Visa:

Individuals applying for a working holiday visa must:

1. Be an Australian citizen
2. Intending mainly to holiday in Japan for a specific period of time
3. Be between 18-30 years of age at the time of application
4. Provide proof (e.g. bank statement) of a specific amount of money for the holiday in Japan - the minimum amount is 2,500 AUD
5. Have a return travel ticket
6. Have a valid Australian passport

Applicants applying for a working holiday visa in Japan can only acquire one during the course of their life. Once the initial working holiday visa has been issued, applicants must enter Japan within three months. The initial stay is six months but applicants can apply for an extended stay of six months, which has to be approved by Japanese immigration authorities. Holiday visa holders who intend on leaving Japan during their stay must present their resident card to immigration authorities upon departing with the appropriate box ticked in order to qualify for re-entry.

Spousal Visa:

Spouses can apply for a visa by obtaining a Certificate of Eligibility or by providing:

1. Documentation proving the applicant is married to a Japanese national
2. The resident card of a Japanese national
3. Documentation certifying the profession and income of the applicant or his or her spouse
4. A letter of guarantee by the Japanese spouse

The applicant can apply for the visa outside of Japan; however, the application process is usually done within Japan. The visa is valid for one year, three years, or six months and applicants must extend the visa before expiry.

Student Visa:

Individuals wanting to study in Japan must apply for a student visa. In order for applicants to qualify for a student visa they must:

1. Obtain sponsorship from an educational institution
2. Provide proof (e.g. bank statement) of a specific amount of money to pay for tuition, textbooks, and accommodation expenses

Student visa holders are prohibited from engaging in paid employment without obtaining permission from Japanese immigration and the school. If the request to obtain paid employment is approved, students are limited to a maximum number of working hours per week. The visa is valid for six months, one year, or three years and applicants must extend the visa before expiry.

British Citizens

British and Irish passport holders do not require a visa if they intend on staying in Japan for six or less months and are entering for the following purposes: holiday, visiting relatives, conferences, study, and business.

Work Visa:

A Certificate of Eligibility is required. UK citizens require sponsorship from an employer to apply for the Certificate of Eligibility. Other prerequisites applicants require are:

1. A university degree
2. A valid UK passport
3. A health and a criminal record check

Employment visas are valid for one to three years.

Working Holiday Visa:

Applicants must be/have:

1. A British citizen
2. Intending mainly to holiday in Japan for a year or less
3. Between 18 - 25 years of age at the time of application
4. Traveling without children
5. Traveling without spouses unless the spouse has a valid visa
6. A minimum of 2,500 GBP in the applicant's bank account (bank statement of last 3-months must be shown)
7. Receipt of return travel ticket
8. A valid UK passport

Applicants applying for a working holiday visa in Japan can only acquire one during the course of their life. Once the initial working holiday visa has been issued, applicants must enter Japan within three months. The initial stay is six months but applicants can apply for an extended stay of six months, which has to be approved by Japanese immigration authorities. Holiday visa holders who intend on leaving Japan during their stay must present their resident card to immigration authorities upon departing with the appropriate box ticked in order to qualify for re-entry.

Spousal Visa:

Spouses can apply for a visa by obtaining a Certificate of Eligibility or by providing:

1. Documentation proving the applicant is married to a Japanese national by providing the Japanese spouse's family register. The copy has to be issued within three months of visa application and show the registered marriage

2. The resident card of a Japanese national
3. Proof (last three months of bank account) of sufficient funds to settle in Japan

The applicant can apply for the visa outside of Japan; however, the application process is usually done within Japan. The visa is valid for one year or three years and applicants must extend the visa before expiry.

Student Visa:

Individuals wanting to study in Japan must apply for a student visa. In order for applicants to qualify for a student visa they must obtain a Certificate of Eligibility by:

1. Obtaining sponsorship from an educational institution
2. Proof (e.g. bank statement) of a specific amount of money to pay for tuition, textbooks, and accommodation expenses

Student visa holders are prohibited from engaging in paid employment without obtaining permission from Japanese immigration and the school. If the request to obtain paid employment is approved, students are limited to a maximum number of working hours per week.

Irish Citizens

Irish citizens wanting to teach English in Japan can qualify for four types of visas.

Work Visa:

A Certificate of Eligibility is required. Irish citizens require sponsorship from an employer to apply for the Certificate of Eligibility and it expires three months after being issued. Once the Certificate of Eligibility has been issued the visa application process can begin. Other prerequisites applicants require are:

1. A college degree
2. Valid Irish passport
3. Health and criminal record check

Employment visas are valid for one or three years.

Working Holiday Visa:

The Republic of Ireland and Japan have established a working holiday program for young Irish citizens. The program officially started in January 2007. Up to 400 Irish citizens will be granted holiday visas at which point the application period will be closed. The applicant prerequisites for a working holiday visa are listed below.

Applicants must be/have:

1. An Irish citizen
2. Intending mainly to holiday in Japan for a specific period of time
3. Between 18 - 25 years of age at the time of application; the Japanese government has agreed to extend the age limitation to 30 years of age
4. Traveling without a dependent unless the dependent has the proper visa to enter Japan
5. Proof of a return travel ticket and full intention to leave Japan when the visa expires
6. Proof (e.g. bank statement) of a specific amount of money for the holiday in Japan - minimum 1,600 EUR including return travel ticket or 3,200 EUR without return travel ticket
7. Copy of overseas travel insurance
8. Criminal record and health check
9. Valid Irish passport

Applicants applying for a working holiday visa in Japan can only acquire one during the course of their life. Once the initial working holiday visa has been issued, applicants must enter Japan within three months. Holiday visa holders who intend on leaving Japan during their stay must present their resident card to immigration authorities upon departing with the appropriate box ticked in order to qualify for re-entry

Spousal Visa:

Spouses can apply for a visa by obtaining a Certificate of Eligibility or by providing:

1. Documentation proving the applicant is married to a Japanese national by providing the Japanese spouse's family register. The copy has to be issued within three months of visa application and show the registered marriage.
2. The resident card of a Japanese national
3. Proof (last three months of bank account) of sufficient funds to settle in Japan
4. A letter of guarantee from the Japanese spouse

The applicant can apply for the visa outside of Japan; however, the application process is usually done within Japan. The visa is valid for one year or three years and applicants must extend the visa before expiry.

Student Visa:

Individuals wanting to study in Japan must apply for a student visa. In order for applicants to qualify for a student visa they must obtain a Certificate of Eligibility by:

1. Obtaining sponsorship from an educational institution
2. Providing proof (e.g. bank statement) of a specific amount of money to pay for tuition, textbooks, and accommodation expenses.

Student visa holders are prohibited from engaging in paid employment without obtaining permission from Japanese immigration and the school. If the request to obtain paid employment is approved, students are limited to a maximum number of working hours per week.

New Zealand Citizens

New Zealand citizens interested in teaching ESL in Japan can qualify for four types of visas.

Work Visa:

A Certificate of Eligibility is required. New Zealand citizens require sponsorship from an employer to apply for the Certificate of Eligibility and it expires three months after being issued. Once the Certificate of Eligibility has been issued the visa application process can begin. Other prerequisites applicants require are:

1. A college degree
2. Valid New Zealand passport
3. Health and criminal record check

Employment visas are valid for one or three years.

Working Holiday Visa:

Applicants must be/have:

1. A New Zealand citizen
2. Intending mainly to holiday in Japan for a specific period of time
3. Between 18 - 30 years of age at the time of application
4. No dependent children
5. Proof of a return travel ticket
6. Proof of a specific amount of money for the holiday in Japan - a minimum of \$2,000 NZD, or \$3,000 NZD for a married couple. Bank - statements, ATM printouts or cash will not be accepted as proof

7. In Japan within six months of the date of issue of the visa
 - Criminal record and health check
 - Valid New Zealand passport

Applicants applying for a working holiday visa in Japan can only acquire one during the course of their life. The initial stay is six months but applicants can apply for an extended stay of six months, which has to be approved by Japanese immigration authorities. Holiday visa holders who intend on leaving Japan during their stay must present their resident card to immigration authorities upon departing with the appropriate box ticked in order to qualify for re-entry.

Spousal Visa:

Spouses can apply for a visa by obtaining a Certificate of Eligibility or by providing:

1. Documentation proving the applicant is married to a Japanese national by providing the Japanese spouse's family register. The copy has to be issued within three months of visa application and show the registered marriage
2. The resident card of a Japanese national
3. Proof (last three months of bank account) of sufficient funds to settle in Japan
4. A letter of guarantee from the Japanese spouse

The applicant can apply for the visa outside of Japan; however, the application process is usually done within Japan. The visa is valid for one year or three years and applicants must extend the visa before expiry.

Student Visa:

Individuals wanting to study in Japan must apply for a student visa. In order for applicants to qualify for a student visa they must obtain a Certificate of Eligibility by:

1. Obtaining sponsorship from an educational institution
2. Providing proof (e.g. bank statement) of a specific amount of money to pay for tuition, text books, and accommodation expenses

Student visa holders are prohibited from engaging in paid employment without obtaining permission from Japanese immigration and the school. If the request to obtain paid employment is approved, students are limited to a maximum number of working hours per week.

Once you've finished gathering your materials and putting your ESL teaching application together, it's time to begin learning about life in Japan. What will your living accommodations be? Does your health insurance work there? When should you take your shoes off? How should you use your chopsticks? And can you communicate with basic phrases?

What You Need to Know About Living in Japan

The 'Land of the Rising Sun' is a welcoming destination for many ESL teachers wanting to find a job teaching English abroad. Teaching in Japan allows teachers to explore a nation known for being the perfect blend of ancient customs and cutting-edge technology.

Housing

Housing in Japan is generally smaller and very different from homes in the United States. The terms used to describe housing also differ. Japan has its own set of housing terms to distinguish between the different styles of housing units available. The letters LDK are used to identify whether the house has a living room (L), dining area (D), and kitchen (K). For example, a 2DK apartment is an apartment with two bedrooms and a dining room with kitchen; whereas 1K is an apartment with one bedroom and a small kitchen. Housing in Japan is typically measured using tatami matting, a traditional style of flooring, which still covers the floors of some rooms in modern apartments.

A typical bedroom is six tatami mats in area (~100 sq. ft.). While many modern apartments have Western-style bathrooms, combining a small bathtub, shower, and sink, ESL teachers should expect older apartments or buildings to have "squatters" (toilets on the ground). Newer apartments tend to have a bath unit, which includes everything in one room. The bath units are covered with tile or plastic inserts, so foreigners should not expect shower curtains or dividers.

In addition, bathtubs are not used for washing, but for soaking and relaxing. They're smaller in length but much deeper than U.S.-style tubs and they can be compared to miniature hot tubs.

Some employers provide dorm style apartments with shared bathrooms and kitchens and separate bedrooms. Typical one-room apartments (studio) often do not contain a separate bedroom.

A futon mat rolled out on the floor is still commonly used for sleeping, which is then folded up and stored in a closet during the day to save space, or hung outside using special clips to air. It is important to note that apartments are not usually insulated, so space heaters, electric floor mats, and Kotatsu (small tables with built in electric blankets) are used to keep apartments and houses warm.

Technology and Advancement

On the whole, Japan is a technologically advanced country with talking escalators and heated toilet seats. It's the model of efficiency in many ways, and so accessing the Internet is fairly easy for ESL teachers. If teachers don't have access at their accommodations, there are a few other options for accessing it, such as:

- Rent a mobile phone (Keitai) with Internet connection
- Visit an Internet cafe. There are a few common franchises including, Yahoo Japan Internet Cafe, Manga Land, and Kinko's
- Use wireless Internet "hot-spots"

ESL teachers shouldn't have a problem accessing the Internet or computers in Japan, as most work places will have Internet access; however, setting up the Internet on your home computer can be a fairly drawn-out or lengthy process.

Airfare

Similar to accommodations, some contracts may include paid airfare depending on the employer and length of contract. It's common for employers to reimburse teachers for the cost of their airfare after they've fulfilled the contractual agreement, often in the form of a contract completion bonus.

This encourages employees to stay the full duration of their contract and protects employers from losing their new staff members prematurely. Therefore, ESL teachers should plan to pay for airfare, at least initially.

Health Benefits

Since 2007, the majority of ESL teachers are enrolled in the Japanese Employee Health Insurance system, Shakai Hoken. Although this usually provides subsidized health benefits, it could still be worthwhile for an ESL teacher to have additional coverage from their home country. It's essential to establish what coverage a teacher has, before departing from their home country.

For further information regarding Japan's health benefit system, visit <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/>.



Language in Japan

The Japanese language is one of the most intriguing and difficult languages to learn because it is written with a combination of three different types of scripts:

- Kanji (Chinese characters)
- Hiragana (phonetic script used for writing Japanese)
- Katakana (phonetic script used for writing foreign words in Japanese)

Some may consider Romaji, the widely used Roman script, to be a fourth script. English teachers should attempt to learn Japanese to help make the transition into daily life a lot easier and to help with the initial culture shock.

Before leaving for Japan, consider learning the following Japanese phrases, which will help you during your stay in Japan.

- **My name is _____.**
_____ to mooshimasu.

- **How are you?**
Ogenki desu ka?

- **Thank you/You're welcome.**
Arigatou/Dou itashimashite!

- **How much does this cost?**
Ikura desu ka?

- **I can speak English.**
Watashi wa Eigo ga hanasemasu.

- **Can we go there by bus?**
Basu de ikemasu ka?

- **How much is the ticket?**
Kippu wa ikura desu ka?

- **Good Morning!**
Ohayo Gozaimasu

- **Excuse me.**
Sumimasen

These are just some of the basic phrases English teachers may want to learn in Japanese before arriving in Japan. Keep in mind that rural areas tend to have less English traffic signs and maps when compared to tourist locations such as Tokyo, so a phrase book will be useful to pack.

Transportation in Japan

Japan is proud of its transportation network. You probably won't be driving (Japan residents drive on the left side of the road, which is counterintuitive for most visitors), but the network of subways, trains, taxis and buses can get you anywhere you need to go.

Taxi

Traveling by taxi is definitely the most expensive mode of transportation, as is the case with most developed countries. Fares are similar in most parts of Japan, and the initial fee is approximately 600 - 700 JPY for the first 2km. After the initial 2km, it is approximately 100 JPY for every 350 meters.

Here are a few tips when traveling by taxi:

- Don't whistle for a taxi. Waving or holding your hand above your head is acceptable
- Do not open or shut the door. Drivers will be able to control the doors with a remote
- ESL teachers should have someone write down their destination in Japanese. Don't expect the driver to speak or read English
- Expect to wait in line for a taxi at most train stations

Train and Subway

The train is certainly the most popular mode of transportation among teachers and Japanese nationals alike. It's fast, frequent, and comfortable, but can be expensive depending on the type of train and distance traveled. The

types of trains vary from small local companies to the bullet train (Shinkansen). The [Japanese National Tourism Organization \(JNTO\)](#) provides English timetable booklets, which include general information regarding the train services in Japan and timetables for all major trains.

[HyperDia](#) is a useful English website that provides users with the schedule, traveling options and cost to travel between the two stations.

Subways are very clean, efficient and affordable, but can be extremely crowded during rush hour. Major routes in major cities have a frequency of one train every two minutes, making it one of the most efficient transportation services in the world. The subway is also reasonably priced and ESL teachers can purchase monthly passes giving them unlimited access to stops within their specified route.

Bus

The bus can be the most difficult mode of transportation for foreigners. Unlike the train and subway system, timetables and destinations are usually written only in Chinese characters (Kanji) making it a little harder for teachers to reach their destination.

City buses usually operate on one of two systems:

1. Individuals pay a flat fee regardless of distance
2. Passengers take a ticket when boarding the bus and pay the driver upon departure based on distance.

When travelling long distances, the bus can be a very cost-effective option for teachers when compared to the train.

Other Modes of Transportation

Other popular modes of transportation that are available for ESL teachers include:

Bicycle

The bicycle is a very common mode of transportation among Japanese nationals and foreigners alike, due to convenience, speed and cost. If foreigners choose to purchase or rent a bicycle, it's important to remember that it's illegal and dangerous to perform the following actions:

- Carry an open umbrella while riding a bike, unless it is securely attached to an umbrella holder
- Ride at night without lights, although most bikes come equipped with lights
- Ride double or tandem
- Ride a bicycle directly behind cars, buses, or street cars
- Ride a bicycle after consuming alcohol
- Ride on the sidewalk
- Ride while speaking on a mobile phone
- Ride while listening to music through headphones

If a teacher is seen conducting any of these actions, the police may stop them. Some other tips for riding a bicycle are:

- Always lock the bicycle up; bicycle theft is the most common crime in Japan (most bikes have locks built in to them)

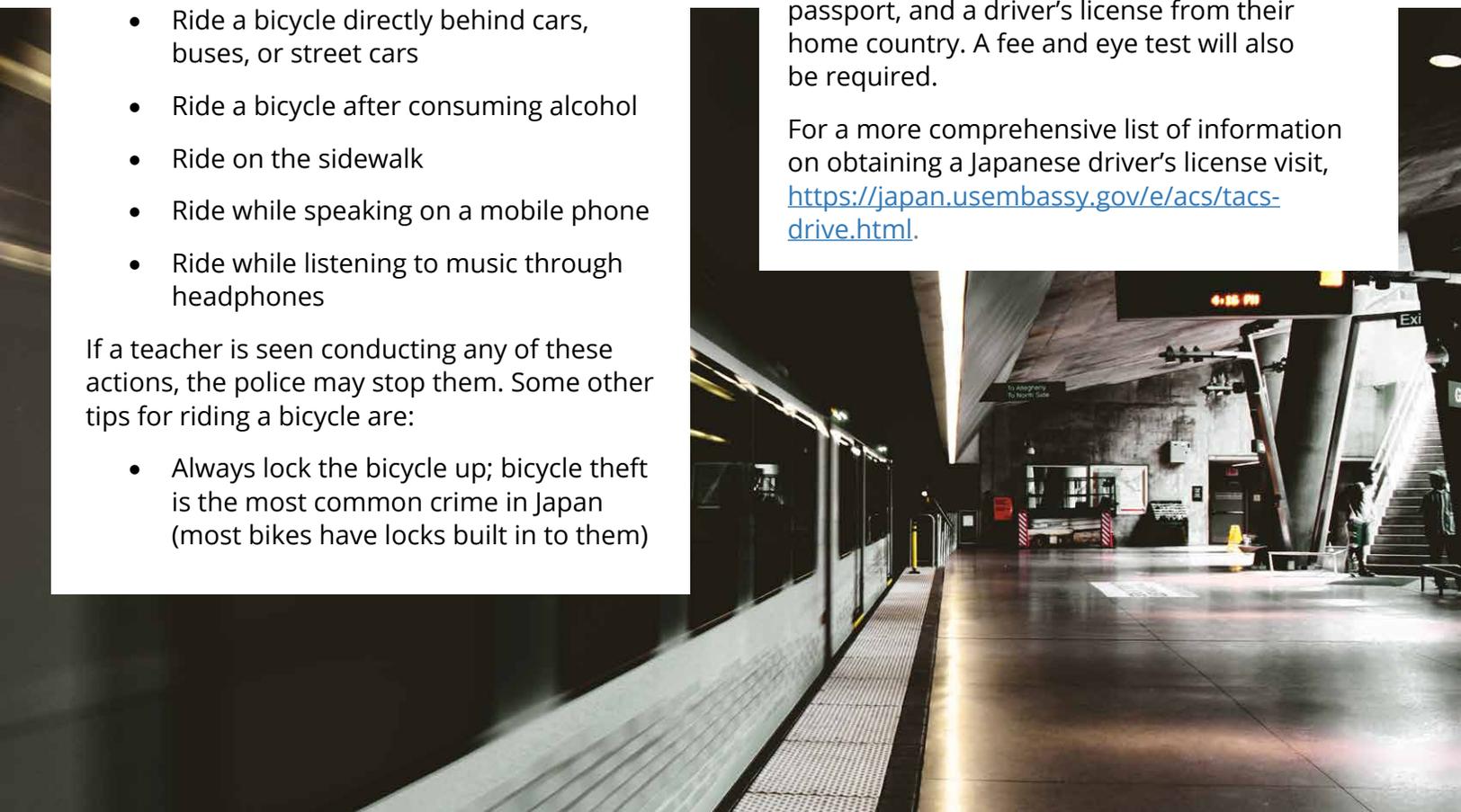
- Register the bicycle for theft prevention
- Write your name, phone number, and work address on the bicycle in English

These are just some examples of the rules and regulations for bicycle safety. English teachers wanting to travel by bike should ensure that they're familiar with all the regulations and traffic signs.

Motor Vehicles

ESL teachers wanting to operate a motor vehicle must obtain an International Driving Permit from their home country driving association. The International Driving Permit is valid for one year and those staying longer must obtain a Japanese driver's license. Documentation required for a Japanese driver's license includes a resident card, a passport, and a driver's license from their home country. A fee and eye test will also be required.

For a more comprehensive list of information on obtaining a Japanese driver's license visit, <https://japan.usembassy.gov/e/acs/tacs-drive.html>.



Etiquette in Japan

Japan has many unique customs and etiquette; therefore, prior to departing for Japan, English teachers should take note of the following cultural traditions.

The bow is probably the most commonly known Japanese greeting to those outside of the country. Basic bow etiquette involves men bowing with their hands at their side and women with their hands clasped on their laps. Mastering the bow takes years of practice, but once it's mastered, one may convey a variety of different messages. For example: the longer and deeper the bow, the more respect and dignity is expressed.

General Etiquette

Some other examples of commonly practiced customs and etiquette are:

- Don't wear shoes on tatami mats; it's recommended to wear socks, although bare feet may be acceptable
- Always remove shoes when entering a home and place them with the toes facing the door
- When visiting someone else's house, wear shoes instead of sandals. Those who do choose to wear sandals should bring a pair of white socks so their bare feet do not touch the slippers the host offers
- The seat of a car directly behind the driver represents the place of honor
- Don't step on the thresholds of temples
- Don't leave a social function before the guest of honor
- Most workers will arrive early and start working immediately once working hours begin

- It's common for workers to apologize for leaving work before their co-workers
- When seated at a traditional Japanese restaurant, it is customary for men to sit cross-legged when eating, while women sit with their legs folded to the side
- The guest of honor always sits the farthest away from the door
- There are separate slippers to be worn in the toilet
- Japanese nationals don't blow their noses in public

These are some of the more prominent customs and they may vary by region. While teachers should respect their local hosts, foreigners aren't expected to be familiar with all of the intricacies of the culture.

Bathing Etiquette

Bathtubs are solely used for soaking and relaxing, not for washing. This is especially important to remember when bathing at public baths and hot springs (Onsen). Common bathing practices include:

- The body must be washed and rinsed of all soap before entering the bathtub
- Bath water may be shared so washing and rinsing after getting out is also appropriate
- Only use soap outside the bathtub
- Tattoos should not be visible when bathing (unless at home) and will need to be covered
- Always carry handkerchiefs and tissues because public washrooms may not provide toilet paper or paper towels

These bathing practices are especially important for ESL teachers in shared accommodations or while living with Japanese families.

Eating in Japan

Japanese cuisine is one of the highlights for any teacher living in Japan. There are a variety of food choices from sushi and sashimi to okonomiyaki. Popular Japanese cuisine among foreigners includes:

- **Izakaya:** Japanese style pub grilled and fried foods
- **Okonomiyaki:** Japanese pizza or pancake
- **Sukiyaki and Shabu-Shabu:** Thin slices of beef served with vegetables and tofu
- **Soba and Udon:** Soba are thin, buckwheat noodles, while Udon are thick white noodles
- **Ramen:** Large bowl of noodles served in a meat broth
- **Japanese sweets:** Varies from Yokan (sweet red bean jelly) to Mochi (pounded rice cakes)
- **Takoyaki:** Octopus in fried batter balls
- **Onigiri:** Triangular rice patties containing a variety of fillings and wrapped in seaweed
- **Kaiten Sushi:** Restaurants serving sushi on a conveyer belt
- **Fugu:** Raw pufferfish carefully prepared by master chefs
- **Katsudon:** A bowl of rice topped with deep-fried pork cutlet, egg and other accompaniments
- **Curry Rice:** Japanese-style curry served on rice

Keep in mind that if you try these types of foods before going to Japan, it may vary in taste. Don't worry about trying to understand a Japanese menu; often, there are plastic food displays to help with selecting and ordering food which can be of great assistance when first arriving in country.

Other popular concepts with foreigners living in Japan that relate to food and drink are nomi houdai and tabe houdai. These translate to "all you can drink" and "all you can eat" and can be a very cost-effective way to fill up.

Typical Food Costs

As a whole, it is cheaper to eat Japanese food rather than to purchase American-style food or to eat at American-style restaurants. Many teachers find it more reasonable to eat in Japanese restaurants, than to buy groceries and eat at home.

Average restaurant meal: (/person)

Cheap: 800 JPY

Medium: 1,000 - 4,000 JPY

Expensive: 4,000+ JPY

Finding American Food

ESL teachers may be surprised to hear that most major cities have Costco and specialty food or import stores that supply American foods. As most teachers will not own a vehicle, it is beneficial that Costco will deliver right to one's home and stores are often conveniently located next to train lines.

If teachers are living in a smaller, more rural city, large supermarkets such as Costco may not exist but it is likely that they will still be able to find typical American food. Another food source in Japan is Foreigners Buyer's Club (FBC), which will also deliver American groceries anywhere in Japan.

It should be noted, however, that buying American food will likely cost considerably more than buying Japanese food. These purchases should be considered by most teachers as luxury items.

Eating Etiquette

Common eating etiquette varies tremendously from the United States. Chopsticks are the utensil of choice and learning to eat with them will make your meals much easier while living in Japan. Cutlery, such as forks, knives, and spoons are available in most restaurants, but ESL teachers may need to request to use them, as they are typically not provided. English teachers visiting a Japanese home will rarely find cutlery to use during mealtime. Things teachers should know about eating include:

- It's proper to slurp noodles; it is a sign of enjoyment and satisfaction
- Japanese nationals do not pour soy sauce on their rice
- It's unacceptable to eat while walking
- If someone offers to pay for a meal, it is polite to attempt to pay for your portion once or twice before allowing them to pay
- It's unacceptable to fill one's own glass; it may indicate that you are an alcoholic; however, teachers should be sure to fill the glasses of others that are empty
- If a teacher doesn't want any more food or drink, they should leave their glass or bowl half full

Even though these are common practices in Japan, locals expect foreigners to be unaware of the proper etiquette. However, foreigners should attempt to follow common eating practices as this displays politeness and courtesy.

Chopstick Etiquette

Chopsticks hold a very special place in the minds of Japanese nationals, so observe the following rules when using them:

- Do not stick chopsticks vertically in the food; this is only done at funerals
- Do not pass food between another set of chopsticks
- Do not lick or suck on chopsticks
- Chopsticks should not be used to skewer foods
- It's considered taboo to use mismatched chopsticks
- Most Japanese nationals use their fingers when items are too large for chopsticks; cutlery may also be provided
- Do not use chopsticks to move dishes
- When taking food from a shared dish, follow the lead of your hosts

Japanese foods do have seasonal elements. While basic rice and vegetables are staples year-round, there is an annual calendar of fish availability, and restaurants feature such items as fresh bamboo shoots in spring, eggplant in the summer, mushrooms in the autumn and pickled turnip in the winter. It's no wonder that Japan's weather is such an integral part of the island's character.

Climate in Japan

Japan has a very complex climate. The type of weather encountered will depend on the location. Similar to many regions in North America, Japan has four distinct seasons:

Spring

Spring is the season of the famous cherry blossoms and probably the most comfortable season for ESL teachers. Temperatures are warm but not too hot, with little rain. Those living along the coastline will experience more precipitation.

Summer

During the summer the weather can be very hot and humid throughout most of the country. The rainy season starts in the southern part of Japan during the early part of summer (May and June) and eventually moves northward. Typhoons also occur during the summer months, where torrential rains and high winds are formed. During typhoon season, coastal provinces along the Pacific Ocean will endure more intense rainfalls and wind.

Autumn

Autumn is similar to spring with relatively warm temperatures and low rainfall. Second only to cherry blossoms, Japan's fall foliage is a sight to see.

Winter

The Japanese have yet to adopt centralized indoor heating and with winter being the coldest season, ESL teachers might have trouble adjusting. In the north and on Japan's seaside, high levels of precipitation and heavy snowfalls occur through the months of December to February. The Pacific side of Japan can be very cold but it experiences less heavy snowfalls.

Natural Disasters

The 'Ring of Fire' is a zone that surrounds the coastal lines of the Pacific Ocean, which causes earthquakes, volcanoes, typhoons, and tsunamis. Both Japan and USA's Pacific and west coastline are considered part of this unstable environmental region; therefore, they experience similar plate tectonic activity and a combination of earthquakes, volcanoes, typhoons, and tsunamis.

For further information regarding Japan's natural disasters and emergency tips, please visit <https://travel.state.gov/>.

Holidays in Japan

One thing Japan does not lack is national holidays. English teachers traveling to Japan should be enticed by the long list provided below, although some private schools may not provide them as days off.

Remember: Take money out before any national holiday, as most banks and ATMs are closed (ATM machines are not accessible 24-hours a day)

January 1st - New Year (shogatsu) This is the most important Japanese holiday. Most businesses are closed until after January 3rd.

Second Monday of January - Coming of Age (seijin no hi) This is a celebration of men and women who are 20 years of age.

February 11th - National Foundation Day (kenkoku kinrenbi) The day when the first Japanese emperor was crowned.

Around March 21 - Spring Equinox Day (shunbun no hi) During the week of Equinox Day, graves are visited.

April 29 - May 5 - Golden Week: The longest holiday in Japan and Japanese workers are given the time off with pay; be prepared for most stores to be closed or to have smaller staffs during this time.

April 29 - Showa Day (showa no hi) Showa Day is part of the Golden Week; it is the birthday of the former Emperor Showa.

May 3 - Constitution Day (kenpo kinrenbi) A national holiday remembering the new constitution.

May 4 - Green Day (midori no hi) Part of the Golden Week; a celebration of nature.

May 5 - Children Day (kodomo no hi) Part of Golden Week; on this holiday, and for some time prior, families with boys will fly a windsock in the shape of a koi.

Third Monday of July - Ocean Day (umi no hi) This day represents the return of Emperor Meiji from a boat trip to Hokkaido in 1876.

Third Monday of September - Respect for the Aged Day (keiro no hi) The elderly are celebrated.

Around September 23 - Autumn Equinox Day (shubun no hi) During the week of Equinox Day, graves are visited.

Second Monday of October - Health and Sports Day (taiiku no hi in Japanese) This represents the 1964 Olympic games in Tokyo.

November 3 - Culture Day (bunka no hi) This day celebrates peace, freedom and the promotion of culture.

November 23 - Labor Thanksgiving Day (kinro kansha no hi)

December 23 - Emperor's Birthday (tenno no tanjōbi) The current emperor's birthday is always a national holiday. The holiday has always been celebrated on Emperor Akihito's birthday since he assumed the throne in 1990.

Resources for Living and Teaching English in Japan

There is an abundance of resources for future ESL teachers; however, finding resources that meet specific teaching needs can be difficult. Some examples of the available teaching resources include:

- [Teaching English in Japan \(TEIJ\)](#): Resources and support for those interested in teaching ESL in Japan; everything from resume tips to conversational textbooks and how to conduct your first day of class.
- [Transitions Abroad](#): A multi-faceted website for those who want to work, study or volunteer abroad. This page has multiple articles and job advertisements for teaching English in Japan.
- [Songs For Teaching](#): Choose from a vast selection of songs that help students learn English and other subjects in fun and collaborative ways.
- [Genki English](#): The “Genki” English model – which has been researched by Harvard University and the University of Oxford – includes songs, games and lessons aimed at the ESL learner.
- [Escape Artist](#): A trusted resource for expats interested in teaching English abroad, EscapeArtist provides tips on finding work and living in different countries, and a community of experienced fellow educators.

Oxford Seminars ESL Teaching Resources

Oxford Seminars has created its own extensive library of tips, links to useful websites, detailed checklists, articles, research and classroom ideas – most of them printable – for those interested in teaching ESL in

Japan.

- [Preparing to Go Checklist](#): A guide to preparing your documentation, including international identification, airline tickets, medical needs and legal issues
- [Guide to Vaccinations](#): Common vaccinations, current guidelines and links to the CDC and WHO
- [What to Pack](#): A comprehensive list, from travel documents to general living items to classroom needs
- [Travel Safety](#): Emergency preparedness lists, procedures and contacts
- [Visa and Travel Information](#): Understanding the kinds of visas and application guidelines
- [Lesson Activities](#): Lists are broken into speaking, listening, writing, reading, grammar, vocabulary and games and puzzles
- [Lesson Plans](#): Classroom plans for beginning, intermediate and advanced students, as well as some for any level
- [Classroom and Teacher Resources](#): Alphabet, number and phonics flashcards, worksheets and online resources
- [Theory and Research](#): Sophisticated articles about language acquisition and learning differences
- [Additional Resources](#): A group of ESL teacher resources, including portal sites and chatrooms

These are just some examples of the resources available to ESL teachers. As mentioned above there is a large number of teaching aids available, but teachers will have to devote time to finding the resources that meet their individual teaching needs.

Embassy and Consulate Information for Japan

American Embassy and Consular Offices in Japan

Embassy of the United States in Japan

1-10-5 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-8420

City: Tokyo

Phone: 81 03-3224-5000

Fax: 81-03-3505-1862

Website: <https://japan.usembassy.gov>

Consulate of the United States in Osaka

2-11-5 Nishitenma, Kita-ku, Osaka 530-8543

City: Osaka

Phone: 81 06 6315 5900

Website: <http://osaka.usconsulate.gov>

Consulate of the United States in Fukuoka

5-26 Ohori 2-chome, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka 810-0052

City: Fukuoka

Phone: 81 092 751 9331

Website: <http://fukuoka.usconsulate.gov>

Consulate of the United States in Sapporo

Kita 1-Jo Nishi 28-chome, Chuo-ku, Sapporo 064-0821

City: Sapporo

Phone: 81 011 641 1115

Fax: 81 011 643 1283

Website: <http://sapporo.usconsulate.gov>

Consulate of the United States in Nagoya

Nagoya International Center Bldg. 6th floor,
1-47-1 Nagono, Nakamura-ku, Nagoya 450-0001

City: Nagoya

Phone (Consulate): 81 052 581 4501

Phone (Consular Services): 81 066 315 5912

Fax: 81 066 315 5914

Website: <http://nagoya.usconsulate.gov/>

Email: aok@state.gov

Canadian Embassy and Consular Offices in Japan

Embassy of Canada

7-3-38 Akasaka, Minato-ku. Tokyo 107-8503,
Japan

City: Tokyo

Phone: 81 03 5412 6200

Fax: 81 03 5412 6247

Website: www.japan.gc.ca/

Canadian Honourary Consulate, Hiroshima

4-33 Komachi, Naka-ku, Hiroshima-shi, 730-8701

City: Hiroshima

Phone: 81 82 246 0057

Fax: 81 82 246 0057

Canadian Honourary Consulate, Sapporo

Canada Place, 2F, Poseidon Maruyama, 26-1-3
Odori Nishi, Chuo-ku, Sapporo, Hokkaido 064-0820

City: Sapporo

Phone: 81 011-643-2520

Consulate of Canada in Nagoya

Nakato Marunouchi Bldg., 6F, 3-17-6
Marunouchi, Naka-ku, Nagoya-shi, Aichi-ken
460-0002

City: Nagoya

Phone: 81 052 972 0450

Fax: 81 52 972 0453

Email: ngoya@international.gc.ca

Australian Embassy and Consular Offices in Japan

Australian Embassy

2-1-14 Mita, Minato-ku, Tokyo 108-8361

City: Tokyo

Phone: 81 035 232 4111

Website: www.australia.or.jp/en/

Australian Consulate General Osaka

16F Twin 21 MID Tower, 2-1-61 Shiromi, Chuo-ku, Osaka 540-6116

City: Osaka

Phone: 81 066 941 9271

Fax: 81 066 920 4543

Website: www.australia.or.jp/en/consular/osaka/

Australian Consulate-General Fukuoka

7th Floor, Tenjin Twin Building, 1-6-8 Tenjin, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka 810-0001

City: Fukuoka

Phone: 81 092 734 5055

Fax: 81 092 734 5058

Website: www.australia.or.jp/en/consular/fukuoka/

Australian Consulate Sapporo

17th Floor - Sapporo Center Building, Kita 5 Nishi 6-2, Chuo-ku, Sapporo, Hokkaido 060-0005

City: Sapporo

Phone: 81 011 242 4381

Fax: 81 011 242 4383

Website: www.australia.or.jp/en/consular/sapporo/

British Embassy and Consular Offices in Japan

British Embassy

No 1 Ichiban-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-8381

City: Tokyo

Phone: 81 352 11-1100

Fax: 81 352 75 0346

Website: ukinjapan.fco.gov.uk/en/

Email: consular.tokyo@fco.gov.uk

Visa Email: visa.tokyo@fco.gov.uk

British Consulate-General, Osaka

Epson Osaka Building 19F, 3-5-1 Bakuro-machi, Chuo-ku, Osaka 541-0059

City: Osaka

Phone: 81 066 120 5600

Fax: 81 066 281 1731

Website: www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations/british-embassy-tokyo/office/british-consulate-general-osaka

Email: consular.osaka@fco.gov.uk

Irish Embassy and Consular Offices in Japan

Embassy of Ireland in Japan

Ireland House, 2-10-7, Kojimachi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0083

City: Tokyo

Phone: 81 033 263 0695

Fax: 81 033 265 2275

Website: www.irishembassy.jp/

Email: tokyoembassy@dfa.ie

Honourary Consulate of Ireland

1-1 Doshomachi, 4-Chome, Chuo-ku, Osaka 540-8645

City: Osaka

Phone: 81 066 204 2024

Fax: 81 062 04 2032

New Zealand's Embassy and Consular Offices in Japan

Embassy of New Zealand in Japan

20-40 Kamiyama-cho, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-0047

City: Tokyo

Phone: 81 033 467 2271

Fax: 81 033 467 2278

Email: nzemb.tky@mfat.govt.nz

Website: www.nzembassy.com/japan/

New Zealand Consulate-General

Umeda Centre Building, 2-4-12 Nakazaki-nishi, Kita-ku, Osaka 530-8323

City: Osaka

Phone: 81 066 373 4583

Fax: 81 066 373 4394

New Zealand Consulate Sapporo

c/o Home Kikaku Centre Co. Ltd, 1-26, West 2-Chome, North 38-Jo. Kita-Ku, Sapporo 001-0038

City: Sapporo

Phone: 81 011 802 9272

Fax: 81 011 802 9275

New Zealand Consulate Nagoya

Rinnai Corporation, 2-26 Fukuzumi-cho, Nakagawa-ku, Nagoya, 454-0802

City: Nagoya

Phone: 81 052 361 8415

Fax: 81 052 361 8871



Embassy and Consulate Information Outside Japan

Japanese Embassy and Consular Offices in the United States

Embassy of Japan in Washington, DC

2520 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. Washington, DC 20008

City: Washington, DC

Phone: 1 202-238-6700

Fax: 1 202-328-2187

Website: www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/english/html/

Consulate general offices are located in major cities and offer full services including consular services. Honorary consulates offer a limited range of services including consular services. A full list of Japanese consulates in the US can be found at: <http://www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/jicc/consulate-guide.html>

Japanese Embassy and Consular Offices in Canada

Embassy of Japan in Ottawa

255 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 9E6

City: Ottawa

Phone: 1 613 241-8541

Fax: 1 613 241-4261

Website: www.ca.emb-japan.go.jp/

Email: infocul@ot.mofa.go.jp

Consulate general offices are located in major cities and offer full services including consular services. Honorary consulates offer a limited range of services including consular services.

A full list of Japanese consulates in Canada can be found at: http://www.mofa.go.jp/about/emb_cons/mofaserv.html

Take Your First Step Toward Teaching English in Japan

It's not surprising that teaching English to eager students in Japan while experiencing another culture interests so many people. Meeting new friends, seeing a new country and making a difference in the lives of people who want to understand and use the English language can be very fulfilling.

Our 100-hour TESOL/TESL/TEFL Certification Course helps you take that first step to making teaching ESL in Japan a reality. Led by instructors who have taught ESL abroad, our course includes three weekends of in-class instruction with hands-on teaching practice, complemented by an online component.

Also included in the course is our lifetime Job Placement Service. Our advisors guide you through the entire job search and application process, helping you find your best-fit teaching destination with our trusted contacts in Japan and elsewhere.



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