

# 2018 Gifu JET Survival Pack

~This is How We Do It~



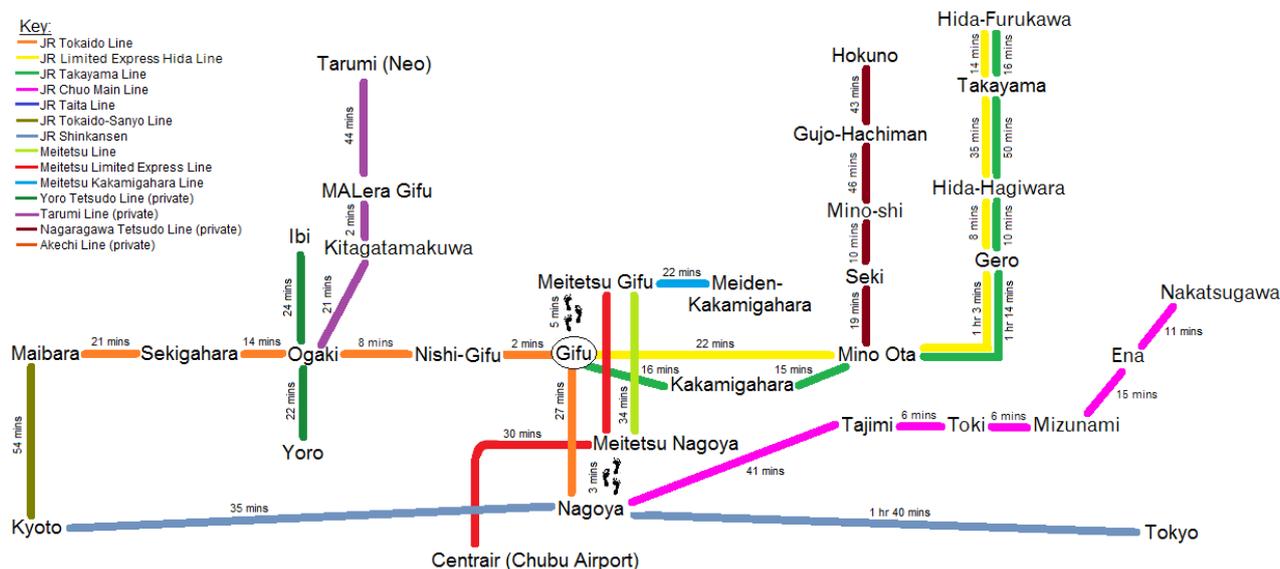
Gifu Prefecture

Life Orientation Information Book

## Table of Contents

Essential JET Programme Vocabulary .....	pg 30
Getting Around .....	pg 32
Gifu JET Support System .....	pg 34
Being a Responsible JET Participant .....	pg 40
Contracts and Salary .....	pg 41
Tax and Pensions .....	pg 44
Insurance .....	pg 46
Natural Disaster Preparation .....	pg 48
Getting Set Up in Japan .....	pg 51
Japanese Work Culture .....	pg 54
JET Guide to Feeding Yourself .....	pg 56

## Getting Around



### Reserved seats:

Some trains have reserved seating cars. To get a reserved seat, you must pay a little extra when buying your ticket before. If you choose not to reserve a seat you must sit (or stand) in the unreserved seating car.

Reserved: <sup>していせき</sup> 指定席 - *shiteiseki*

Unreserved: <sup>じゆうせき</sup> 自由席 - *jiyuseki*

### IC Cards:

Not all stations have IC cards. Private lines will not allow you to use IC cards, and most stations in Hida aren't equipped with the technology. However, if you tap on in Gifu and train to Takayama, they will make you pay on the train, and give you a receipt to show to the station attendants so that they can clear your card. Even if you do not live near a station that takes IC cards, they are still useful during to Nagoya or further cities such as Osaka and Tokyo

### Resources:

- Hyperdia for train schedules- <http://www.hyperdia.com/en/>
- Gifu Bus for bus schedules- <http://navi.gifubus.co.jp/>
- Nohi Bus: <https://www.nouhibus.co.jp/english/>
- Willer Express: <https://willerexpress.com/en/>

## Gifu JET Support System

### **Your Supervisor:** First point of contact

Your superior has local knowledge of your school, local area and the whereabouts of hospitals, immigration offices, supermarkets and other important institutions. They serve as a link between you and your schools

**For Municipal ALTs**, your supervisor will likely be a local BOE Worker, overseeing all ALTs hired by your BoE.

**For SHS ALTs**, your supervisor will be a Japanese Teacher of English (JTE), with whom you will have a lot of direct contact.

**For CIRs**, your supervisor is likely to be a co-worker in your office.

### **Regional Prefectural Advisors (RPAs)**

Each of Gifu's four regions has two or three RPAs who will be able to assist you with day-to-day concerns about life in Japan and, more specifically, about life in your region.

- **Seino:**  
Michael Parkes: [mtparkes87@gmail.com](mailto:mtparkes87@gmail.com)  
Sam Ito: [sjito@ualberta.ca](mailto:sjito@ualberta.ca)
- **Gifu:**  
Gaelle Lagrous: [q01701@govt.pref.gifu.jp](mailto:q01701@govt.pref.gifu.jp)  
Emmy Flannigan: [p01025@gifu-net.ed.jp](mailto:p01025@gifu-net.ed.jp)  
Sammy Ebbs: [p01021@gifu-net.ed.jp](mailto:p01021@gifu-net.ed.jp)
- **Tono**  
Harly Lane: [harlynhlane@gmail.com](mailto:harlynhlane@gmail.com)  
Nicholas Jackson: [kaminariman.jack@gmail.com](mailto:kaminariman.jack@gmail.com)
- **Hida**  
Sam Lee: [Samuel\\_m\\_lee@hotmail.com](mailto:Samuel_m_lee@hotmail.com)  
Colby Draney: [Colby.draney@gmail.com](mailto:Colby.draney@gmail.com)  
Nicole Pehrson: [p01023@gifu-net.ed.jp](mailto:p01023@gifu-net.ed.jp)

## **Prefectural Advisors (PAs)**

Gifu Prefecture has four PAs, consisting of two JET participants and two Japanese PAs. There is a CIR PA and Japanese PA located in the International Affairs Division of the Prefectural Government, and an ALT PA and Japanese PA located in the Educational Training Division at the Prefectural Board of Education.

The PAs at the Board of Education have broad responsibility for ALTs employed by the Prefecture, while the International Affairs Division PAs have responsibility for Municipal & Private ALTs as well as CIRs.

**General PA Email:** [gifupas@gmail.com](mailto:gifupas@gmail.com)

*This email will reach all JET PAs.*

**Point of Contact for Municipal ALTs and CIRs:** PAs at the International Affairs Division of the Gifu Prefectural Offices

Peter Collins (CIR PA) –

Work TEL : 058-272-1111

Work E-mail: [q01700@govt.pref.gifu.jp](mailto:q01700@govt.pref.gifu.jp)

Ruiko Mizuno (JPA)

**Point of Contact for High School ALTs:** PAs at the Educational Training Division of the Gifu Prefectural Board of Education

Laura Duvall (ALT PA) –

Work TEL : 058-271-3450

Work E-mail: [p01003@gifu-net.ed.jp](mailto:p01003@gifu-net.ed.jp)

Mikihiro Wakasa (JPA)

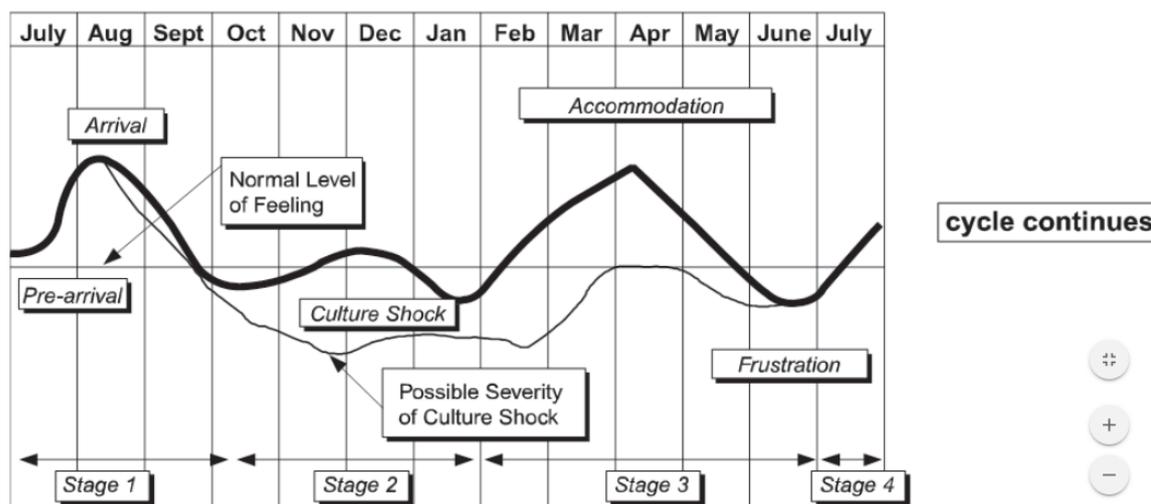
*These phones will be answered in Japanese, but saying anything in English will ensure that the phone is quickly transferred to an English speaker.*

**In the event of an emergency or other urgent matter the best way to contact a PA is through telephoning the appropriate office within working hours, or through *LINE* outside of working hours**

## Counseling & Mental Health Support

CLAIR has a number of resources for JETs who need counselling or assistance with mental health problems. To access JET services for mental health support, you must first contact your supervisor. Moving to a foreign country, often one radically different from one's home country can be a very stressful situation, and culture shock is a serious problem amongst foreign people in Japan. We encourage you to seek early intervention rather than wait it out. Please see the GHI pg 149 for more about culture shock:

**A JET Participant's Typical Culture Shock Cycle**



### JET Online Counseling Services

This service is free and completely anonymous. There are two different types of online services provided; webmail and skype. Both can be used in English or Japanese. Neither are meant for immediate use as they take 3+ days for a webmail response or skype appointment. Access to these resources requires a password which is held by the PAs or your Contracting Organization.

#### Messaging:

Sessions in three back-and-forth messaging. After three messages, you can continue counseling by starting a new messaging thread. There is no limit to the amount a JET can make use of this service.

#### Skype

CLAIR offers JETs the chance of a limited number of audio Skype sessions with a counsellor. This is a great chance to discuss your problems and get advice, but it is not suitable for long-term counselling as there is a restriction on the number of sessions available to each JET per year. It is however useful to help you deal with short-term issues and also to see whether counselling is something that you feel would help you on a longer-term basis. Sessions are 20-40 minutes. Sessions based on availability, so you must make appointments in advance.

#### **JET Mental Health Counseling Assistance Programme**

If you wish to see a mental health professional for in-person counseling, you may qualify for a partial subsidy provided by CLAIR. They will pay 50% of the cost up to 20,000 yen per year. This can be an important aid as counselling is generally not covered by either the National Health Insurance or the JET Accident Insurance Policy which all JETs are covered by.

Like skype sessions, this subsidy is primarily to help the JET decide if in-person counseling would be beneficial to them, not to provide long term financial assistance for mental health counseling.

#### **AJET Peer Support Group (PSG):** <https://www.ajetpsg.com/about-us>

National AJET provides an English free confidential listening line for JET participants via Skype voice call or phone, run by trained JET volunteers. This is a great resource particularly in situations when you feel you don't need mental health assistance but simply would like to talk about your day to someone, or to speak English after being surrounded by Japanese all day.

Hours: 20:00-7:00, 365 days a year

Skype: AJETPSG

Phone: 050-5534-5566

**Tokyo English Life Line (TELL):** <http://telljp.com/>

A non-profit organization providing free and anonymous phone counseling in English.

Hours: 9:00-23:00

Phone: 03-5774-0992

**International Mental Health Professionals Japan (IMHPJ):** <http://www.imhpj.org/>

A database of professional therapists, articles and information regarding mental health consultation in Japan

**Japan Healthcare Information:** [www.japanhealthinfo.com/](http://www.japanhealthinfo.com/)

Locate hospitals around the nation for free, or pay a small joining fee to access additional services such as ambulance calls on your behalf, or arrangement of medical appointments. Comprehensive tool for English speakers in Japan!

**Alcoholics Anonymous (English):** [www.aatokyo.org/](http://www.aatokyo.org/)

Has information about English-speaking Alcoholics Anonymous meetings in Tokyo and around Japan. They can also be reached via telephone.

Phone: 03-3971-1471

## Being a Responsible JET Participant

Congratulations! You are now a public servant! This means that you are now expected to set an example especially since you will stand out in your community.

- No drugs
- No drunk driving
  - ↳ Japan has zero tolerance laws for drinking and driving.
  - ↳ Don't get in a car if you know the driver has been drinking.
  - ↳ Realize that alcohol might still be in your system the morning after drinking.
- No legal trouble

### **Protect Yourself from Legal Issues**

*(<http://www.pref.gifu.lg.jp/kurashi/kosodate/seishonen-ikusei/suishin/jyourei.html>)*

- No posting, sending or otherwise making available photos, video, images, names, addresses, academic performance, phone numbers, email addresses, etc. of students, teachers and staff, without explicit permission from the parent/guardians, teachers, and other authorities. Failure to follow this conditions violates the JET contract and the law
- Exercise caution when using Facebook, blogs, etc. Avoid insults, slander and offensive remarks.
- Discipline of student is the Japanese teacher's responsibility. In no situations should corporal punishment be used.
- No exchanging personal email addresses, phone numbers, or other personal contact info with students
- No giving rides to students

### **Gifu Prefecture Ordinance for the Sound Upbringing of Juveniles (under 18 years old)**

- No sexual harassment, sexually related dialogue or acts, showing students sexual (naked, etc.) images, etc.
- No providing a location for or serving as a mediator of any of the following:
  - ↳ Inappropriate sexual acts or harassment
  - ↳ Tattooing
  - ↳ Imbibing of alcohol, smoking
- No accompaniment of a juvenile outside of their home between the hours of 10PM-4AM by any person, without good cause

Loss of job, imprisonment and / or heavy fines may apply in these cases

## Contracts and Salary

Your JET Number

2018\*\*\*\*\*

Write it down somewhere where you will NOT lose it.

This number is required for important occasions such as:

- 1) Making claims under your accident insurance
- 2) Applying and submitting tests for the JET Japanese course

### The Basics of your Contract

Your contract is between YOU and your Contracting Organization (CO). Your host institution is responsible for your basic needs and your salary.

**For SHS ALTs**, your official CO is the Gifu Prefectural Board Of Education.

Your school is your *host institution*.

**For JETs Municipal and Private High School**, your CO and host institution are usually the same (ie: the BOE in the town or village that you work in or your private high school)

### Employment Conditions

- Statement of Agreement – please read thoroughly and understand this document
- Know your obligations and entitlements: Duties; working hours; paid leave; sick leave; bereavement leave etc. If you do not understand something, please talk to your host institution for clarification
- Keep a copy of your contract at work & at home

### Recontracting

Having just arrived, it might seem like far far too early to be wondering about whether you wish to recontract for another year. However, in some cases you will be asked for an initial indication of whether you wish to recontract in November of your first year, although you will not have to make a binding decision until January. If you are unsure about whether you will wish to recontract in November, it is advisable to say yes at that point, as it may be hard to change your mind later. In some cases, JETs will be able to re-contract up to 5 years, but some COs will limit it to 3 years.

## The JET Salary

Year	Remuneration (Salary)
1 <sup>st</sup> year	3.36 million yen
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	3.6 million yen
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	3.9 million yen
4 <sup>th</sup> year	3.96 million yen
5 <sup>th</sup> year	3.96 million yen

### Your Payslip

<b>Gross salary (annually)</b>			<b>3,360,000</b>
<b>Gross salary (monthly)</b>			<b>280,000</b>
Health Insurance	Kenkou hoken	健康保険	14000
Pension	Kousei nenkin	厚生年金	23000
Employment Insurance	Koyou hoken	雇用保険	2000
Income Tax	Shotoku zei	所得税	7000
Residency Tax	Juumin zei / Tokuchou zei	住民税 / 特徴税	6000
<b>Net Salary</b>			<b>228,000</b>

#### EXAMPLE ONLY - 1st year JET in 2014

Check your first pay to see if this is being deducted before you are paid

Monthly estimates for 1st year JETS only. These taxes must be paid from the remainder. Check with your CO what portion of these you need to keep aside

#### Other terminology used in payslips:

Base pay	Hou shuu gaku	報酬額
Deductions	Kou jo gaku	控除額

NOTE: Residency tax is paid in a lump-sum in June each year, based on your salary from the previous calendar year. Hence, 2nd year JETS and above will pay a lot more than 1st years.

### Example salary increase if reappointed

<b>Gross salary (annually)</b>			<b>3,600,000</b>
<b>Gross salary (monthly)</b>			<b>300,000</b>
Health Insurance	Kenkou hoken	健康保険	14000
Pension	Kousei nenkin	厚生年金	23000
Employment Insurance	Koyou hoken	雇用保険	2000
Income Tax	Shotoku zei	所得税	7000
Residency Tax	Juumin zei / Tokuchou zei	住民税 / 特徴税	16000
<b>Net Salary</b>			<b>238,000</b>

#### EXAMPLE ONLY - 2nd year JET in 2016

Monthly estimate for 2nd year JETS only, based on a full year of salary in 2012

NOTE: Residency tax is paid in a lump-sum in June each year, based on your salary from the previous calendar year. Hence, 2nd year JETS and above will pay a lot more than 1st years.

## Remittances

During your time on JET, you will probably want to send money to your home country at some point. In this case there are a number of options available:

**Transferwise**     <https://transferwise.com/>

- allows you to exchange money at the market exchange rate (unlike most services) for a low fee and a percentage of what you are transferring (fees depend on what currency you are transferring too) and is very quick

**Go Remit**     <https://www.goremit.jp/index/en>

- 2000 yen plus intermediary bank fees

**Seven Bank (In conjunction with Western Union)**

<https://www.sevenbank.co.jp/soukin/en/fx/>

- Fees are based on the amount you send

**Your Personal Bank**

- Varies based on your bank (plus intermediary fees)

**Japan Post Bank**

- 5000yen (plus intermediary fees)

## Tax & Pensions

As an ALT or CIR working in Gifu Prefecture, you will likely (see tax exemption below) find yourself paying two main types of tax:

### **Income Tax or 所得税 / *Shotokuzei***

This is the income tax directly deducted from your salary each month and paid to the central government. This will be handled entirely by your employer, but please check to make sure it is being deducted every month. It is worth noting that the amount of income tax may vary each month (sometimes quite considerably) as tax over certain periods is increased/decreased to account for under/over-payments in prior periods and miscalculations. Depending on your home country, you may be required to pay income tax in your home country.

### **Residency Tax or 住民税 / *Juminzei***

This is the tax you pay to the governments of the Prefecture and Municipality you reside in. For example, a JET living in Gifu City will have their residency tax split between Gifu Prefecture and Gifu City. While not an immediate concern you should be aware of the following points:

- Residency tax is calculated as a percentage of your income over the previous calendar year (i.e. January 1<sup>st</sup> – December 31<sup>st</sup>) but is paid for the financial year. For example, at the start of the 2018 financial year (May 2018), you will have an amount of tax to pay calculated based on your income in the previous calendar year (January 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 – December 31<sup>st</sup> 2017).
- As the tax is calculated based on the previous calendar year, this means that most JETs will have very little to pay for the first year on the programme. A JET arriving to Japan in August, never having had an income in Japan before, will have had no previous income until the start of the next calendar year, and for the next financial year will only have had the five months of income from August to December.

- Any JETs who have been working in Japan directly prior to joining the JET Programme should be mindful that their residency tax might be considerably higher than that of JETs who are freshly arriving in Japan, even if they had previously been working on a tax-exempt basis.
- Your CO may or may not automatically deduct your tax. If not, you should be saving money each month for when the bill comes in June.
- Moving Prefectures/municipalities or leaving Japan can lead to a large residency tax bill which you will need to pay at once.

## **Tax Exemptions**

In certain circumstances ALTs from certain countries may be eligible for up to two years of tax exemption. Tax exemptions are not available to CIRs. In general, tax exemptions are available to ALTs from the following countries:

**United States**

**France**

**Ireland**

**The Philippines**

JETs are strongly advised to be research and be aware of any tax requirements their home countries may impose upon them. JETs from the United States in particular may be subject to strict requirements for reporting tax. Such arrangements are their own responsibility and PAs, while they may be able to informally offer advice or resources in certain circumstances, cannot generally be expected to advise on the requirements of countries other than Japan.

## **Pension**

As residents working in Japan, all JETs are obliged to pay contributions towards the Japanese National Pension scheme. This will be deducted by your Contracting Organization from your monthly salary. This might seem like a waste of money if you are not planning to retire in Japan, but you will be able to have refunded up to three years of pension contributions when you leave Japan.

## Health Insurance & Accident Insurance

During your time on the JET Programme, you are covered by three different types of insurance:

### **National Health Insurance**

Enrollment in the National Health Insurance scheme is compulsory for all residents of Japan and the scheme insures you against medical expenses, covering 70% of all costs for most types of medical treatment you will require during your time in the JET Programme. There are a number of key points you should be immediately aware of concerning national health insurance:

- Shortly after beginning work, you will receive a medical insurance card through your contracting organization. You are required to present this card whenever receiving medical treatment and you are **strongly** advised to carry it with you at all times.
- You are, however, covered by this health insurance even before you receive this card. In the case that you require medical treatment before being issued with your card, you are advised to pay upfront for medical treatment and then claim back the money – a process which your JET supervisor will be able to help you with.
- This insurance does cover you even outside of Japan, if you **unexpectedly** need treatment while travelling abroad. In this case, you should pay upfront and keep all receipts and records of treatment received, in order to make a claim after arriving back in Japan.
- The cost of National Health Insurance is split 50:50 between the JET Participant and their employer. Your Contracting Organization will pay their half and the other half will be deducted from your salary automatically each month.

## **JET Accident Insurance**

JET Participants are also automatically enrolled in a different form of accident insurance, the premium for which is paid entirely by the Contracting Organization.

- Covers JET Participants against the remaining 30% of emergency medical treatment, which is not covered by National Health Insurance.
- There is a 5,000yen deductible – meaning that JETs are required to pay the first 5,000yen of any treatment by themselves and then the insurance will cover the rest.
- The policy does cover JETs travelling overseas, but it does not cover the JET's belongings or costs incurred due to flight delays or cancellations etc., that travel insurance will usually cover

## **Employment Insurance**

- Your CO enrolls you in this as required by law.
- It entitles you to unemployment benefits if you are deemed eligible after completion of the JET Programme and remain in Japan on a valid visa status (requires registration at Hello Work)

## Getting Set-up in Japan

Your supervisor will be picking you up and taking you around to help you get set up. Here is what you can expect to be doing:

### Registering your Address: Residence Card

This is your ID. Keep this (or your passport) with you at ALL TIMES. The card is valid for up to 7 years (though it is the length of your visa, so it will be valid for three years).

If you:

- Change your address – You must go to the Municipal Office in both your old and new region.
- Change any other item on the card – You must go to the Immigration Bureau



### My Number

Introduced in 2015, it is used as a form of social security number. You will receive this number upon registering at your local city hall. Make sure to keep it! You can



also apply for an optional My Number ID card which is a very convenient form of ID that can make your life simpler.

### Phones

**4G Service in Japan:** The Japanese government limits the amount of 4G data that can be downloaded by one person. In a three-day period, you may not use more than 1 GB; in a 30-day period, you may not use more than 7GB. If either of these limits is exceeded, your data speed will be slowed.

**Service Plans:** You need to decide between two different options, going with one of the big three service providers, or an MVOP.

### MVNOs (Recommended)

A Mobile Virtual Network Provider (MVNO) is a mobile phone service provider that essentially piggybacks on the networks of major provider. The MVNO option is by far the cheapest option, but it is also a relatively new in Japan. If you choose to do this, we recommend doing personal research before coming to Japan.

Steps for getting an MVNO:

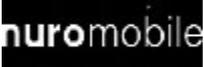
1. **If you are bringing a phone:** make sure the phone you want to use is unlocked and you can insert a SIM card into it. Check if your phone will work on a Japanese network using [www.willmyphoneword.net](http://www.willmyphoneword.net)

**If you are buying a phone in Japan:** make sure the phone is sim free (otherwise known as factory unlocked) or unlocked. You can buy sim free phones at most electronic stores or online at websites such as <https://www.amazon.co.jp>

2. **Choose an MVNO network.** Choose a plan that gives you the ability to call and text as you need a Japanese phone number to sign up for many things. Most plans do not come with calls and texting but have pay per minute/text at a small price. Most people in Japan use LINE, so these small prices usually do not add up to a great deal more a month.
3. **Sign up online** and the SIM card will be delivered to your home. While you are waiting, we suggest getting a travel sim or renting pocket Wi-Fi for your first month so you don't miss out on events.

Provider	Data + Voice Plans (Tax incl.)	Min. Contract	Cancellation	Free Contract Suspension	English Support
<b>MVNOs with English Support:</b>					
	3GB: ¥3,218 5GB: ¥4,298 7GB: ¥5,378 10GB: ¥7,214	No contract	¥0	✓	✓
	7GB: ¥6,000 (¥4,500 for students, interns & <b>teachers</b> )	No contract	¥0	✓	✓
Link Japan (JET Special Plan)	5GB ¥3,780 (ex. Tax) 20GB ¥5,980 (ex. Tax) (Free domestic phone calls)	12 mths	Incurred	×	✓

Note: JETs are eligible for the Teacher discount for Mobal, making it cheaper than Sakura Mobile. The benefit of Sakura Mobile is that you can pay at some Japanese convenience stores and purchase a larger data plan for heavy data users. Mobal requires a credit card. Most JETs don't get Japanese credit cards, thus you would have to pay from their home country bank account. Link Japan was just released, so there aren't many reviews about their services yet.

Options without English Support					
	3GB: ¥1,728 5GB: ¥2,160 10GB: ¥3,240 5 hours/day: ¥3,456	12 mths	Remaining months x ¥1,000	x	x
	3GB: ¥1,728 6GB: ¥2,322 12GB: ¥3,672	12 mths	¥8,640	x	x
	3GB: ¥1,620 5GB: ¥2,063 7GB: ¥2,765 10GB: ¥3,122	12 mths	¥9,720	x	x
	3GB: ¥1,728 6GB: ¥2,398 10GB: ¥3,521	12 mths	Remaining months x ¥1,080	x	x
	3GB: ¥1,738 6GB: ¥2,463	None	None	x	x
	3GB: ¥1,890 7GB: ¥2,646 13GB: ¥3,942	6 mths	¥8,640	x	x
	3GB: ¥1,707 5GB: ¥2,139 25GB (U-Mobile Max): ¥3,111	6 mths	¥6,480	x	x
	3GB: ¥1,814 Unlimited data (slow): ¥2,894	12 mths	¥10,260	x	x
	3.1GB: ¥1,728 5GB: ¥2,322 10GB: ¥3,197	12 mths	¥10,584	x	x

\*Chart from <https://tokyocheapo.com/business/internet/japan-sim-card-options-data-voice/>

**The Big Three:** [SoftBank](#), [AU](#), and [NTT Docomo](#).

Plans cost on average about ¥ 10,000/5GB of data/month over a 24-26 month contract and include the cost of a new phone. They usually exclude text and calling to people on other providers, but you'll hardly use these anyway.

You will end up paying about ¥ 100,000 – ¥ 150,000 for your phone. This is obviously overpriced, but there are some perks that can make this a good deal. Most companies will include free insurance, which means you can get a replacement phone for **free** every 6 months. If you happen to break your phone once or twice then this option becomes much better value than the MVNO option!

Japanese phones must now be sold unlocked to a network by Japanese law, so you should be able to use your new phone when you return to your home country.

If you decide to go with one of the Big Three, be prepared to bring the following items:

- Your passport and residence card (for identification),
- A credit card, if you wish to do monthly payment installments (sometimes a debit card can work too), or the bank card and/or passbook for your Japanese bank account and the inkan/hanko used to open it (for using automatic withdrawal as your payment method) or cash

### **JET Recommended Apps to Download**

- **LINE** : Similar to WhatsApp, everyone uses LINE to text.
- **Google Translate**: Picture translation will be your best friend here.
- **Imiwa**: Download, and then available without data (iPhone)
- **Hyperdia**: Train time tables but it Isn't updated due to delays
- **Hello Talk**: An app for Japanese study, meet/chat with people in the area interested in language exchange.
- **Anki**: Flashcard app
- **Japan Taxi**: An English App that gives you the ability to call a taxi.
- **Proxy's**: Tunnel Bear, unblockUS, Hotspot Shield
- **Safety Tips**: (See Disaster Preparation Packet)

## Internet

### Wired Internet

Wired service is wired to your home. Setup can take anywhere from two to four weeks (or more in some cases). If you choose this option, don't be surprised to find that you have a bill from two separate companies; one company is your ISP, and the other is providing you the phone line to use the Internet service.

### Portable WiFi Router

The Big 3 companies offer portable WiFi routers that you can have mailed within a week which is much more convenient than the wired internet option. They should offer unlimited downloads at really fast speeds, with the only catch being that you have to purchase the actual router. But even with this, it will still only be about ¥3000 – 5000 per month for unlimited internet.

\*Note: JETs are told when purchasing that the service is noticeably slower than wired internet, but very few have ever had problems with the speed.

### Mobile WiFi

This option is available from some ISPs as well as mobile phone service providers (AU, Docomo, etc.). Some people use this as their sole source of Internet service but is not recommended for heavy users/gamers.

## Apartment Set-up

You'll be happier if you take some time to set up your apartment and make it your own. Don't feel pressured to buy things right when you get here.

Some useful places to check out when furnishing your apartment are:

Recycle (2 <sup>nd</sup> hand) shops:	100 yen shops:	Home Goods Shops	Online
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Santa</li><li>● Second Street</li><li>● Hard Off</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Daiso</li><li>● Seria</li><li>● Can Do</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Nitori</li><li>● Valor Home Center</li><li>● Kahma</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Amazon.co.jp</li><li>● Jmty.jp (2<sup>nd</sup> hand)</li><li>● Facebook Groups: Chubu Treasure Trove, Gifu Garage Sale</li></ul>

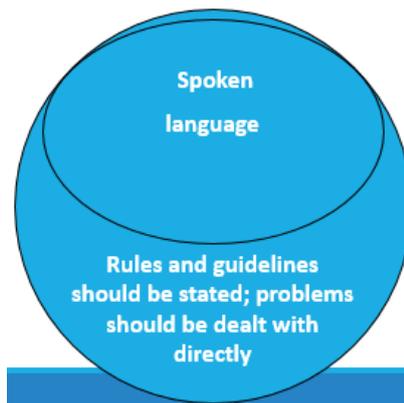
There are more area-specific locations for furnishing your apartment. Ask your RPA for suggestions on where to go.

## Japanese Work Culture

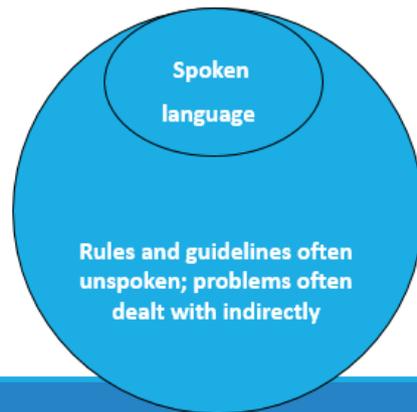
### Differences in Communication

---

#### Sample Western View:



#### Sample Japanese View:



### Japanese Office Etiquette

As a general rule, in your new Japanese office you should not:

- Move objects in the office (or anywhere) with your feet
- Chew gum
- Throw your rubbish out without checking where it should go
- Put your hands in your pockets when speaking / greeting
- Be concerned if somebody does not talk to you – it does not mean they dislike you

**根回し – Nemawashi – Literally meaning ‘to go around the roots’**

You should not be surprised if whenever you suggest a new idea to your supervisor, it seems to be immediately shot down. In Japanese offices, it is considered good practice to suggest ideas informally in chats with your co-workers, feeling out people’s opinions casually and trying to obtain a consensus behind you before explicitly proposing something to your supervisor or boss.

People may be reluctant to go with your ideas at first if you just directly suggest them, but getting a feel for the opinions of your coworkers (which they may be hesitant to offer bluntly) and gradually convincing them of the merits of your idea will help

## Overtime and Daikyu

There is no official monetary compensation but it is possible to get substitute time off, or *daikyu*, in some circumstances; if you are asked to work outside normal hours, please discuss the issue of compensatory time off beforehand! Keep written record of extra work & get it signed by supervisor. If they do not plan to give you Daikyuu, you are not obligated to do the work.

## Sick leave - Byokyu

Depending on your host institution/CO, you may require a medical certificate (*shindansho*), which can be acquired by a simple doctor visit.

## Paid Leave – Nenkyu

Use your holidays before the end of your contract – leaving early can significantly inconvenience your employer and is generally frowned upon. However, try to save some of your holidays for an emergency – in case you have to fly home for some unexpected reason.

Good times to request nenkyuu:

- ✓ End of year / New Years
- ✓ Golden Week : A grouping of several public holidays in late April/Early May
- ✓ Obon (commemoration of deceased ancestors): Aug 13 – 17 (M-F)
- ✓ Spring Vacation (Late march, early April)

## Work Parties

Etiquette:

- Wait for the *Kanpai* (cheers)
- Grab a beer bottle and pour for others teachers. This is a good excuse to chat with teachers you have never talked to before.
- Don't feel forced to drink alcohol. If you are done drinking leave your glass full. Non-Japanese are often stereotyped as 'heavy drinkers'. You are well within your rights to politely refuse. There is always an option to drink tea if you are driving, or just don't feel like drinking

**Be conscious of your drinking:**

Living by yourself in a foreign country can often lead to a change in your drinking habits. 'Binging' and becoming reliant on alcohol at home can happen.

## Essential JET Programme Vocabulary

There are some terms related to the JET Programme it would be best to be familiar with. Do not worry much about learning the Japanese; it is just provided here in case it might help in communication at work.

**Contracting Organization** – 任用団体 – *Ninyo Dantai* – An organization to which a JET is contracted.

**Supervisor** – 担当者 – *Tantoshu* – Your official boss at your Contracting Organization. Note that this may be different to the actual member of staff or English teacher who supervises your work on a day-to-day basis and you may or may not have daily contact with them.

**Host Prefecture / Designated City** - 取りまとめ団体 – *Torimatome Dantai* – The Prefecture or Designated City in which a JET's Contracting Organization is included. This is Gifu Prefecture for everybody here.

**Recontracting** – 再任用 – *Saininyo* – The process of being recontracted to continue your term on JET past your initial year. You will typically be asked about this in November, but any response will not be binding until January.

### Japanese Language for the Office (Mainly used by CIRS)

**Kairan** - 回覧 – the cornerstone of the Japanese office; the *kairan* is the system used for circulating information or documents around staff members. Typically, each person will stamp a copy of the office layout attached to the document being circulated to indicate that they have seen and are aware of its contents. Depending on the JET's confidence in Japanese, they may or may not be included in the office *kairan*.

**Kessai** - 決裁 – formal approval for a document being sent out or published. Particularly when working for a local government organisation, any document published in your capacity as a JET is being published on behalf of your Contracting Organisation and so should be approved by them.

While the *kairan* and *kessai* are ubiquitous throughout Japan, some of the other vocabulary used will vary between individual organisations, and so do not be surprised if the examples below are not used exactly as written below:

**Ukagaisho** - 伺書 – Business trip request; generally in Japan you are required to submit some form of document in advance of any business trip to notify your workplace of where you are going. Depending on your school, they may let you write them in English, they may write them for you, or they may make you write them.

**Fukumeisho** - 復命書 – Business trip report; after going on a business trip, generally you will be required to submit a report. Again, your school may write these for you or you might have to write it yourself (ask if it is okay to write in English or if you must write them in Japanese).

**Shuccho** - 出張 – Business trip; in Japan any time you leave the office or your regular school(s) during work time to do something is generally considered a business trip or *shuccho*.

**Daikyu** - 代休 – Holiday ‘in lieu’; this is the term for extra holiday you accumulate as a result of working overtime. JETs are generally not allowed to be paid overtime over the standard JET salary, so this is the standard way of compensating JETs for any time they work beyond normal hours.

**Nenkyu** - 年休 – Yearly leave; this is the yearly holiday you are allowed to take by your contract. Procedures for applying to use it will differ between workplaces, but generally you should apply for it as far in advance and keep everybody as informed as possible!

**Byokyu** – 病休 – Sick leave; these are days off you are allowed to take as a result of illness or injury. Customarily, sick leave is not available for minor conditions such as colds or flu in Japan and taking sick leave will typically require a signed Doctor’s note attesting your condition.

**Tokkyu** – 特休 – ‘Special’ leave; these are the days your contract allows you for certain special circumstances. Bereavement leave for the loss of a close-family member or a number of days off for marriage are typical examples of this type of leave.

# The Lazy Mans Guide to Feeding Yourself: That Conbini Life

A note from Meryl J., ALT PA (2016-2018)

Whether you're tired from moving, or just too lazy to cook (like yours truly), Japan has you covered. Though the take away options are more limited here than in many of your home countries, there are some restaurants that do take away. However, what you will really find useful is the magic of the conbini: from after school snacks like onigiri (rice balls) or string cheese, to pre-made salads, and pasta dishes, conbini's have a wide range of food.

## **If there was a zombie apocalypse, a conbini is a good place to hide:**

Not only do conbini's have a variety of snacks and pre-made food that they will warm up for you, but they also have EVERYTHING ELSE. Out of trash bags? You can get those at a conbini. Caught in an unexpected storm and your socks got wet on your way to school? Conbini it up for a dry pair. It is also worth noting that conbini's also stock a variety of reasonably priced "it's-cooking-because-I-used-my-microwave-and-combined-different-packets-of-things,-right-guys?" food such as microwavable rice and curry packets (though you can find these for cheaper if you make a trip to a supermarket).

## **It's a trap...**

Do not fall prey to the misconception that all Japanese food is healthy and just by living in Japan you will lose weight. Many JETs find they actually gain weight when they arrive due to the fact that living conditions are different to what we are used to. Though less unhealthy than other fast food options like McDonalds, and having the occasional meal will certainly not kill you, eating conbini food every day is probably not great as a long term plan unless you are very careful about what you buy (greens, yogurt, fruit, natto and stay away from the donburi's).

### **Restaurants**

Though there are fewer restaurants that do takeaway than in your home country, you can find some that do. When at a restaurant you may be asked "**Ten nai de O-meshi agari desu ka?**

This means "Will you be eating here?" If you want the food to go, you can say "**O mocha kaeri de**", simply meaning "to go".