



WELCOME GUIDE

for JETs



Table of Contents

Welcome to Gifu Prefecture!	3
Where is Gifu?	4
Mascots.....	4
Types of JET Positions in Gifu Prefecture	5
Gifu Prefecture JET Placement Map	6
JET Support System in Gifu Prefecture.....	7
<i>Your Prefectural Advisors (PAs), The Four Regions of Gifu, Your Regional Prefectural Advisors (RPAs)</i>	
<i>Hida Region, Gifu Region, Tono Region, Seino Region</i>	
Your Schedule for the First Month in Gifu.....	14
<i>Tokyo Orientation, Gifu Life Orientation, Tips for Packing For Your First 5 Days, Gifu Work Orientation</i>	
Packing for the JET Programme.....	16
<i>Clothes, Shoes, Medicine, Personal Items and Toiletries, Documents, Electronics, Other Items</i>	
Omiyage.....	21
Money Matters.....	21
Weather in Gifu Prefecture.....	22
Communication with your Predecessor.....	23
<i>Purchasing Items, Ask Your Predecessor</i>	
Your Apartment.....	24
<i>Private Apartments, Public Apartments</i>	
Vehicles.....	25
<i>“Bargain” Cars, Shaken, Documents Necessary to Get a Japanese Driver’s License</i>	
Phones in Japan.....	26
<i>MVNOs, Standard Cell Phone Plans, Calling Back Home</i>	
Inkan.....	28
Studying Japanese.....	28
Gifu JET Resources.....	29



Welcome to Gifu Prefecture!

岐阜県へようこそ!

First time abroad? First time in Japan? 100th time in Japan?

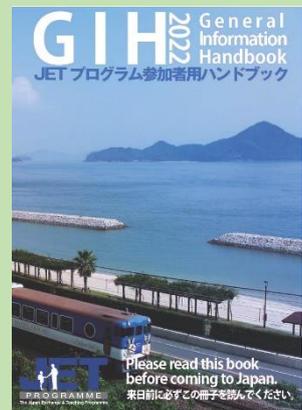
Whichever the case, no matter what your motivation is, the experiences you have in Gifu Prefecture are an important step in your personal and professional development. You have chosen to spend this chapter of your life in Gifu, assisting the local community in international relations and/or English language instruction. We are sure you will be given a lot back by the prefecture in return.

The JET Programme aims to reach the smaller communities and Gifu has its fair share. We hope you will enjoy the slow pace of life here and look forward to hearing all about your new experiences at the various conferences and social gatherings throughout the year!

Want more information about Gifu? Check out our website (often referenced in this packet)

gifujets.weebly.com

Throughout this guide, you will find references to the JET Programme General Information Handbook (GIH). The GIH is your go-to when you have questions while on the programme. Please bring it with you to Japan or you can also download the PDF version from the JET Programme website: <http://jetprogramme.org/en/gih/>



This packet was created to help you move to Gifu. More information regarding health insurance, taxes, pension, and regional guides, etc will be given to you upon your arrival. This packet only focuses on what you should be preparing when moving to Japan.

If you have any questions, feel free to e-mail gifupas@gmail.com

Where is Gifu?



If Honshu (the main Island in Japan) was to be completely balanced on a pin, that pin would be under Gifu Prefecture!

Gifu is in the region of Japan referred to as Chubu, specifically in the Tokai area. The capital city is Gifu City, towards the south of the prefecture.

Due to its central location, Gifu is an ideal prefecture for those who like to travel.

Gifu Prefecture has all the beauty and culture of the traditional countryside, combined with easy access to Nagoya City, Japan's fourth most populated city, in Aichi Prefecture, to the south.



Mascots

Minamo is the official mascot of Gifu Prefecture.



Minamo

Towns have their own mascots as well. The most popular mascot in the prefecture is the Hida mascot, Sarubobo.



Sarubobo

Types of JET Positions in Gifu Prefecture

Welcome to JET in Gifu! Currently, the prefecture is home to 87 JETs from 13 countries (although there are other non-JET ALTs running around). Here are the types of JETs in our prefecture.

Coordinator of International Relations (CIRs)

You will be placed in the Gifu Prefectural Office, at the International Exchange or Tourism Division, the Gifu International Centre, Gifu Media Cosmos Library, Minokamo City, or IAMAS. Your duties will differ according to your position.

There are 13 CIR positions in Gifu Prefecture, some of which are vacant due to COVID-19 travel restrictions:

- 1 Vietnamese CIR
- 1 French CIR
- 1 Brazilian CIR
- 1 Filipino CIR
- 6 English-speaking CIRs (Currently from Australia, Ireland, the UK and USA)
- 1 Lithuanian CIR

Municipal Board of Education Assistant Language Teacher

If your JET Placement is a city, town, or village, you are a Municipal Board of Education Assistant Language Teacher. You are employed by the Board of Education (BoE) in your city, town, or village, and your paycheck will come directly from that entity. It is likely that you will spend most of your time based in a junior high school and make visits to other schools in the area, most commonly, elementary schools. You may also teach adult night classes or adorable kindergarteners. Your supervisor will likely be a local BOE employee, overseeing all ALTs hired by your BoE. Currently, there are 25 Municipal ALTs from 10 different BoEs in Gifu Prefecture. Municipal ALT affairs are jointly managed by the local BoEs and the International Exchange Division of the prefecture.

Public Senior High School Assistant Language Teacher

If your JET Placement is Gifu Prefecture and you later received a senior high school and city placement, then you are a Public Senior High School Assistant Language Teacher. You are placed at one senior high school and teach there five days a week. In addition to a base school, some SHS ALTs may have a visiting school where they teach as requested. You are employed by the Gifu Prefectural Board of Education, which is your Contracting Organization (CO). Your base school is your workplace or Host Institution. Your supervisor will be a Japanese Teacher of English (JTE) who works at your school and with whom you will have a lot of direct contact. There are 12 Public SHS ALTs in Gifu Prefecture as of April 2021. This number is expected to increase once COVID-19 travel restrictions are lifted. SHS ALT affairs are jointly managed by their host schools and the Gifu Prefectural Board of Education.

Private Senior High School Assistant Language Teacher

You are placed at one school. Your Contracting Organization (CO) and base school are the same. You will work at this high school but may sometimes be asked to participate in events at an affiliated elementary or junior high schools. Your supervisor will be a Japanese Teacher of English (JTE) who works at your school and with whom you will have a lot of direct contact. There are two Private SHS ALTs in Gifu Prefecture. They are supported by their host schools and the International Exchange Division of the prefecture.

Gifu Prefecture JET Placement Map

The number of JETs in each region is shown below with the figures.

Region

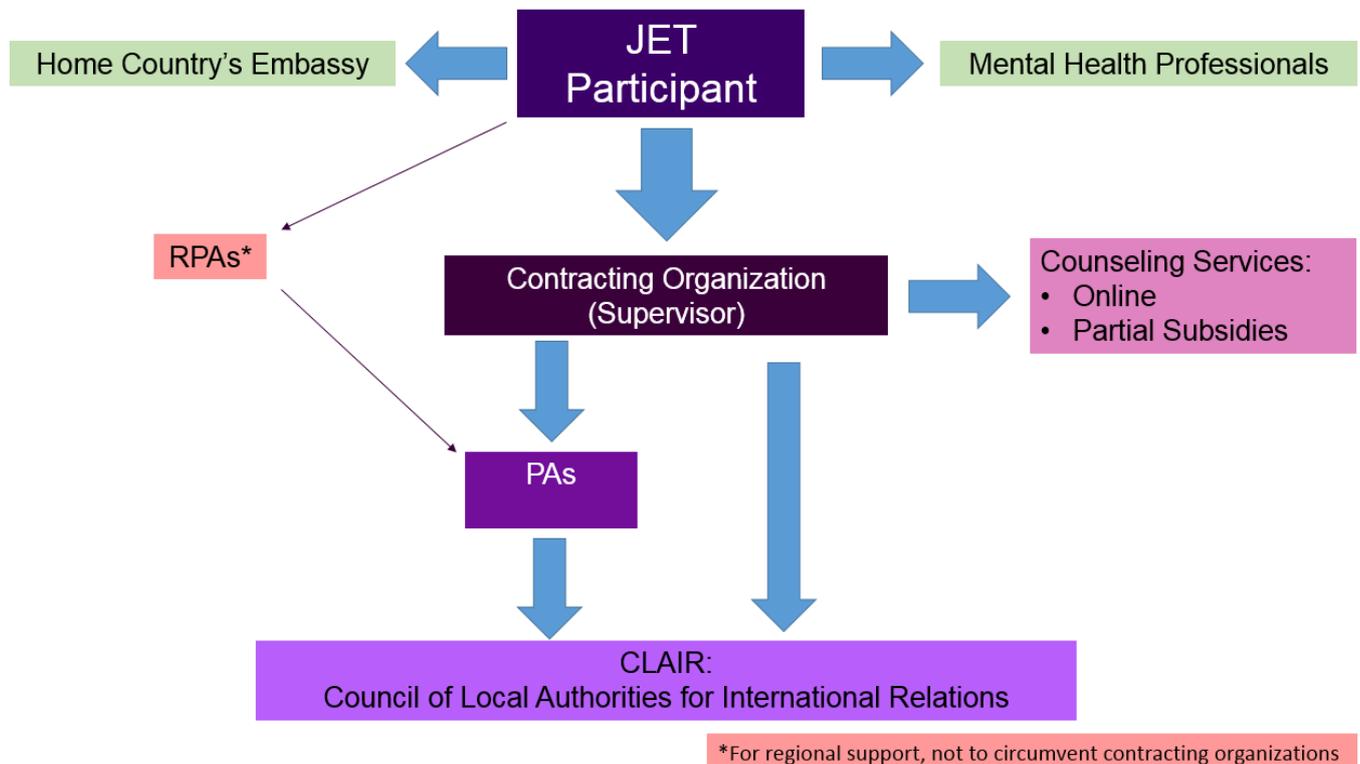
 Chuno	 Gifu	 Hida	 Seino	 Tono
8	28	20	12	19



© Chevaughn R. Whyte, June 2019

JET Support System in Gifu Prefecture

There is no doubt: living in a foreign country is a rewarding experience. However, like most undertakings of worth, it is likely to be tough and challenging at times. Due to this, the JET Programme in Gifu has an extensive support network to help you whenever needed.



Your Prefectural Advisors (PAs)

For the JET Programme, there are Prefectural Advisors in every prefecture and designated city in Japan. Their job is to be at the center of the support network that has been created to help JETs settle into their new lifestyles and also to help them with any problems that arise during their time on the JET Programme.

In Gifu Prefecture, there are four PAs: one CIR PA and one Japanese PA (JPA) who work at the International Exchange Division of the Gifu Prefectural Government and one ALT PA and one JPA who work at the Education Training Division of the Gifu Prefecture Board of Education. They are all located in Gifu City. If you have any difficulties when moving to Japan or during your time here, please don't hesitate to contact the PAs for assistance.

The Gifu PAs can be reached at: gifupas@gmail.com or you may also send your concerns or questions directly to their work emails.

For CIRs, Municipal and Private School ALTs, please contact Hayley at: wallace-hayleynoel@pref.gifu.lg.jp
For Prefectural Senior High School ALTs, please contact Gelo at: p01030@gifu-net.ed.jp or Sam at keane-samuelthomas@pref.gifu.lg.jp



Hayley Wallace – CIR PA, International Exchange Division

This is Hayley’s first year as the CIR PA for the International Exchange Division and first time with JET, but second experience living in Japan overall. She previously served as an ALT for Yachiyo City, Chiba from 2011 to 2015. In her home state of Texas, she has worked as an educator in many fields, a library reference associate, and OSCE Coordinator/SP Director for the UT Tyler College of Pharmacology. Hoping to support all Gifu JETs, Hayley is passionate on her mental health advocacies. She has too many dreams and hobbies to count, and believes that whether one’s path is all about the journey or the destination, “it’s often on life’s little detours where you discover what’s most important.”



Rie Sobajima – JPA, International Exchange Division

Sobajima-san has been working at the prefectural International Exchange Division for two years. In junior high school, she had the opportunity to apply to an exchange program and even though she wanted to participate, she hesitated at first because she could not speak English at all. Thanks to the ALT’s encouragement and support, she gained confidence, and finally applied for it and had a lovely time in Canada. From this experience, she would like to support JETs. Sobajima-san likes traveling and hiking, but because of COVID-19 travel restrictions, she has recently become interested in jogging. She would like to run a half marathon one day. She is really looking forward to seeing everyone!



Angelo Pascual – ALT PA, Gifu Prefectural BoE

Gelo joined the JET Programme in August 2018, thus realizing his dream of living in Japan. Aside from being the ALT PA, he also teaches at Gifu Senior High School of Agriculture and Forestry (Nōrin) where he can buy the freshest produce and play with farm animals. Gelo’s profile is as diverse as his home country, the Philippines. A globetrotting registered nurse who has a strong penchant for sweets, anime, history and current events, his past adventures include living in Saudi Arabia for a number of years; volunteering as an English teacher in Chile and traveling to more than 30 countries, among others. He is excited to meet the incoming Gifu JETs and be a supportive “senpai” to everyone.



Samuel Keane – CIR PA, Gifu Prefectural BoE

Sam has been part of the Prefectural BOE team since November of 2021. Having taught English in Osaka and Japanese in his home of the west of Ireland, he has always sought out ties to local international communities, including organizing welcome exchange events for Japanese students at the University of Limerick and becoming embedded in the international community in Belfast. As CIR PA, he hopes to promote a JET lifestyle based on mutual understanding, dedication, and cultural exchange. Outside of work, he enjoys cooking, visiting galleries and museums, and generally having the craic.



Kaori Morikawa – JPA, Gifu Prefectural BoE

This is the fourth year of working at the prefectural Board of Education for Morikawa-sensei who has been appointed as the Japanese Prefectural Advisor of the Educational Training Division. She believes that ALTs will encourage Japanese students to see things in a different perspective, so she sincerely wants to support and help them. Morikawa-sensei likes traveling and eating delicious food but because of COVID-19 travel restrictions, she is now thinking of practicing the ukulele. She is really looking forward to seeing you soon.

Hiromi Usui – JPA, International Exchange Division

Usui-san is the Japanese Prefectural Advisor (JPA) in the International Exchange Division of the Gifu Prefectural Government. She lives in "Ogaki City", which is known as the Water City, as it is famous for its many natural water springs. Throughout the four seasons, there are many festivals and a lot of nature for you to enjoy, and she would be more than willing to show you around if you wish! Usui-san has a son and daughter who are a similar age to many JET Programme participants and as the PA is here to listen to your concerns like a mother in Japan. She is looking forward to meeting all of you as soon as possible in Japan. She will be here to help to make sure that you can enjoy your time working on the JET Programme. Please feel free to contact her at any time!

The Five Regions of Gifu



For the purposes of the JET Programme, Gifu Prefecture is divided into five different regions: Hida, Tono, Chuno, Gifu and Seino. These five regions roughly correspond to how Gifu Prefecture administers the different Boards of Education. The regions are purely for managerial purposes, so you'll definitely be seeing people and places in all of them. Traveling between the regions is fast and easy.

Your Regional Prefectural Advisors (RPAs)

It is difficult for the PAs to maintain close contact with all 88 JETs directly due to the number and the size of the prefecture. For this reason, the Regional Prefectural Advisor (RPA) system was created to make sure that there is someone to turn to in each of the four geographical regions.

The RPAs are experienced 2nd-5th Year JETs. They live close by if you have any problems throughout the year. With their time spent in the prefecture, they have detailed knowledge of the region and are happy to do anything they can to help.

<p><u>Seino</u> Matthew Connor</p>	<p><u>Hida</u> Liam Kevin</p>	<p><u>Tono</u> Lindsay Clint</p>	<p><u>Gifu</u> Emelie Cloe</p>	<p><u>Chuno</u> Colin</p>
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Hida 飛騨

In the northern most region of Gifu Prefecture is the Hida Region. Hida is divided into Gero City, Takayama City, Hida City and Shirakawa Village.



Takayama is the largest of the cities, boasting Takayama Matsuri, which is known to be one of Japan's three most beautiful festivals. Takayama has an array of cultural and natural delights with a thriving central hub of refined dining, dingy izakayas and everything in between. Its well-preserved historical district is among the nation's best places to admire traditional architecture.

North of Takayama is Hida City, a picturesque town which has grown immensely in popularity for international and domestic tourists since the release of the famous Japanese movie, *Kimi No Na Wa (Your Name)*.

Gero City is the southern-most part of the region, known for its hot springs that make up one of the top three onsen areas in Japan according to Hayashi Ranza (a Confucian scholar from the Edo Period).

Shirakawa-go is a village located in the north of the region. It's famous for its gassho-style houses, a style of thatched-roof housing, built from as early as the 1800s that people still live in today.



Hida RPA Profiles



Liam Arrandale – 1st Year Municipal ALT, Takayama City BoE

Liam is a first-year JET from Manchester, England, UK. He graduated with a degree in Journalism and English Literature, and is now teaching at Kuguno JHS/ES and Enako ES. After work, you can probably find him in Konishi, his favourite izakaya in Enako. He likes football (soccer for the Americans), boxing, hiking and travel. Please feel free to join him in the gym or boxing dojo whenever you like. His Japanese is so-so, but he studies every day. He looks forward to helping Hida JETs get settled and is always available to help with day-to-day concerns. Shoot him a message any time!

Kevin Sword – 6th Year Municipal ALT, Ena City BoE

Kevin is a fifth-year ALT from Vermont, USA. He enjoys sending and receiving postcards, hiking and yosakoi dance. On trips, he goes to temples and shrines to collect goshuin, a stamp and calligraphy that serves as proof of prayer. Goshuin can be very colorful and are a great souvenir to remember a place by. He also enjoys playing the piano at schools during break time. His favorite artists to play are Joe Hisaishi, the composer of the Studio Ghibli soundtracks, and the solo piano works of the late Hirotaka Izumi, of the jazz fusion band T-Square. He can help with a lot of stuff, including all about getting settled in Japan so definitely reach out!



Gifu 岐阜



Whether you are looking for a communal place to chill like Media Cosmos or want to experience something more cultural like visiting one of the three great buddha statues in Japan, admiring the traditional architecture at Kawaramachi or witnessing the Imperial Household-approved cormorant fishing on the great Nagara river – you can do it all in Gifu city! Taking

the five-minute ropeway (or hiking for an hour) from Gifu Park to the 329m summit of Mt. Kinka where Gifu Castle stands will reward you with a panoramic view of not just the entire city but also of the neighboring areas including Nagoya. At night, you can even get more cultured in Tamamiya-cho which is full of restaurants, bars, and drunk salarymen.

Outside the main city, there is even more: Kakamigahara is home to a remarkable freshwater aquarium, an outstanding air and space museum, and to one of Japan’s best cherry blossom viewing spots. The Usuzumi Zakura tree of Neo Valley in Motosu is over 1500 years old but if nature isn’t your style Motosu city is also home to one of the biggest shopping malls in the country. Just minutes from Motosu is Kitagata where you can find many small, traditional Japanese temples and some very industrial-looking architecture!



Gifu RPA Profiles



Emelie Vandenberg – 1st Year SHS ALT, Hashima Kita SHS

Emelie Vandenberg is an American from the snowy backwoods of New Hampshire. She earned a BA in Theater with a focus in dialect coaching and worked professionally as an actor, director, and dialect coach. Emelie now works as a SHS ALT in Gifu City and enjoys practicing Aikido, learning Japanese, playing DnD, and making a bundle of 1,000 origami cranes in her free time. She's looking forward to getting to know everyone and building new connections.

Cloe Ferrante – 1st Year Prefectural CIR, International Exchange Division
Cloe is a first-year CIR from France, working at the Prefectural Office in Gifu City. She first spent a year in Japan as an exchange student where she worked with JET ALTs through her part-time job. This made her discover her love for education and pushed her to study instructional design when she went home, leading her to become an e-learning designer helping university professors with their online courses during the pandemic. Now on JET, she enjoys school visits and cultural presentations the most, and she will gladly help you out with digital education tools or Japanese interpretation. When Cloe’s not running around or hyperfocusing on obscure subjects, she can usually be found playing video games or pretending to be a pop idol at her dance studio.



Chuno 中濃

In the middle of Gifu Prefecture, you will find the charming Chuno region. From the plains of the south to the mountains of the north, Chuno has everything from old-world charm to majestic waterfalls to great winter sports. Exploring this region can be done through the scenic Nagaragawa Railway, which as its name suggests, runs parallel to the Nagara river.



The journey starts from Minokamo City, which alongside Kani City, is home to a huge number of Brazilian and Filipino migrants. The train also stops in Seki City which is not only known for its knives and cutlery but also for its pond that looks like one of Monet's paintings. Mino City (not to be confused with Minokamo City) is another major stop. It is known for its Japanese washi paper and a very vibrant spring festival. If you are interested in seeing old houses and history, travel to *Udatsu no Machi*, the famous merchant district in Mino. Although the terminus of the railway is still a couple of stops further, most travelers disembark in Gujo City aka “water city” which is also famous for the food replicas that are sold and used all over Japan. The city is particularly festive in summer during the Bon Festival when residents and visitors dance in the streets for over 30 nights.

Chuno RPA Profile

Colin Jones – 1st Year SHS ALT, Mugi SHS / Sekiuchi SHS

Colin is an Argentine American first year JET from Houston, Texas. He is currently working at Mugi and Sekiuchi SH in Mino and Seki. Before coming to Japan, Colin studied at Texas Tech University, graduating with a Bachelor's in History, with a Minor in Secondary Education. In his free time, he likes to play video games, read, and study Japanese and Spanish. More recently, Colin has started to get his feet wet with photography. If there's ever anything you need help with, or if you just want a taste of Texas Sweet Tea or Argentine *mate*, just let him know!



Tono 東濃



Tono region is nestled in the southeastern mountains of Gifu Prefecture. Its main cities are Nakatsugawa, Ena, Mizunami, Toki, and Tajimi, all of which are connected by the JR Chuo train line. Tono has all the charms of the Japanese countryside, with the convenience of the Chuo Line, which will take you right into Nagoya (Japan's 4th largest city). Known for its ceramics, dance festivals, kyudo, hiking trails, and all kinds of interesting activities, Tono can best be described as the place you never realized you wanted to live until you've lived there.

Tono RPA Profiles



Clinton Bragger – 3rd Year SHS ALT, Tajimi Kita SHS

Clinton-Khile Brägger is a half-Swiss, half-American boy from Los Angeles. He graduated from the Film and Television program at University of California, Los Angeles, where he majored in film production and directing. Now he is putting his film skills to use on his YouTube channels, where he chronicles his life in Japan, as well as makes tourism content for Mizunami City. Upon arriving in Japan, Clint quickly found a passion for Kyudo — a traditional form of Japanese long-bow archery — and has recently passed his second level skills test. Clint’s dream after JET is to open a Swiss fondue and raclette restaurant in the heart of Nagoya and continue working on his film passion projects in his free time.

Lindsay Lamp – 2nd Year Municipal ALT, Mizunami City BoE

Lindsay Lamp is from St. Louis, Missouri, home of Budweiser, Fitz's, Imo's Pizza, Ted Drewe's, toasted ravioli... probably some non-food things, too. She majored in Psychology at Truman State University, and minored in Asian Studies. Before she came to Japan, she was working (and far more often, playing) as a behavioral therapist for children with autism. Lindsay moved to Japan in August of 2019, so she is currently a first year JET. She lives in Mizunami (same as Clint), and teaches at three different junior high schools in the area. She usually cooks or plays video games, and she also loves hiking, music, watering her plants, and wandering around Nagoya. She looks forward to getting to know everyone, so please feel free to contact her.



Seino 西濃

Seino is the westernmost part of the prefecture, providing a buffer between Shiga and Fukui prefectures and the Gifu region. It is made up of four districts and two cities. The name is a long established amalgamation of the kanji for “west” (西) and Mino (美濃, the ancient name for southern Gifu).

Gifu is known as the land of clear waters, and this is nowhere more obvious than in Seino. It lays claim to all of the Ibi River, one of the three major rivers in the prefecture, and the other two, the Kiso and Nagara rivers, both gather in Seino before they flow out to sea.

Ogaki, the main city of the region, is also known as the “water capital(水京)” of Japan for its clean and ever flowing springs that liter the city. It’s other major claim to fame dates all the way back to 1690, when the famous Japanese poet, Matsuo Basho, walked from Edo (modern-day Tokyo) to Ogaki.



Seino is also the site of arguably Japan’s most famous battle in Sekigahara. Fortunately very few battles take place in Seino nowadays, though Fukui could decide to invade at any time (not really, this is Japan after all.) Luckily, Ogaki is on the Tokaido JR line, the main train line through the prefecture so you can easily evacuate to other parts of Japan quickly.

Seino RPA Profiles

Matthew Beaven – 1st Year SHS ALT, Ogaki Commercial SHS

Matthew is a first year ALT from Perth, Australia, teaching in Ogaki City. Before coming to Japan, Matthew worked as a tennis coach whilst he studied a degree in international relations. He loves having conversations for hours on end on just about anything. He is also a big fan of sport (tennis, cricket, cycling, Australian Rules Football), music (mainly 80s), movies, books and politics. He looks forward to meeting new JETs and helping with any issues people may have.



Connor Keane – 1st Year Municipal ALT, Sekigahara BoE

Connor is a first year municipal ALT from the east coast of the U.S. currently working in the Seino region at a junior high school in historic Sekigahara, just west of Ogaki. He enjoys cycling, creative writing, befriending stray cats, and eating entire watermelons in one sitting. His Japanese skills are weak, but his vocabulary is growing! He's pretty new here and is still learning the ropes, but he's excited to provide whatever support he can to the JETs of Seino.

Your Schedule for the First Month in Gifu

Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions and changing circumstances, information regarding your arrival and stay in Tokyo will be provided directly by CLAIR and the respective Japanese Embassy or Consulates in your home country.

Your PAs will organize three online meetings during your quarantine in Tokyo for status check-ins, orientations, consultations and information about your arrival in Gifu. Further details will be given soon.

For any questions or concerns, please send a message to gifupas@gmail.com or to: Sobajima-san for Municipal ALTs, CIRs and Private School ALTs (sobajima-rie@pref.gifu.lg.jp) Gelo for Prefectural SHS ALTs (p01030@gifu-net.ed.jp)

Tokyo Orientation

<p>Group A Monday, July 29th Wednesday, July 31st</p>	<p>Sunday – Arrive in Tokyo! Depending on when your plane arrives you might have some time to explore. <u>Dress code:</u> N/A (comfortable clothes for the plane)</p> <p>Monday – Day one of Tokyo Orientation and your first day of work as a</p>
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	JET Programme participant. This conference is organized by CLAIR and will go over basics to prepare you for JET. That night there will be a welcome reception where you will get to meet the other JETs heading to Gifu.
<p>Group B Monday, August 5th Wednesday, August 7th</p>	<p><u>Dress code:</u> Business formal (change of casual clothes for after work)</p> <p>Tuesday—Day two of Tokyo Ori. During the afternoon you will meet two of your Gifu PAs who will give you detailed information about how they will take you to Gifu the next day.</p> <p><u>Dress code:</u> Business formal (change of casual clothes to go explore Tokyo at night, or smart casual clothes if your country’s embassy is holding a welcome party [most non-American JETs]).</p>

Gifu Life Orientation

<p>Group A Wednesday, July 31st Thursday, August 1st</p>	<p>Wednesday—In the morning your PAs will meet you at the hotel and will bring you to Gifu by train (transport arranged by the PAs). Expect approximately 4 hours of travel time.</p> <p>Upon arrival in Gifu you will meet your other two PAs and begin day one of Life Ori, your prefecture specific orientation. You will spend the night in a hotel in Gifu City (arrangements made by the PAs).—</p> <p><u>Dress code:</u> Smart casual, suitable for travel and to attend Life Ori upon arrival (a change of casual clothes for after work)—</p>
<p>Group B Wednesday, August 7th Thursday, August 8th</p>	<p>Thursday—Day two of Life Ori. At midday you will be picked up by your supervisor and they will take you to your new home.</p> <p><u>Dress code:</u> Business formal to meet your supervisor. You will receive any luggage you sent ahead upon arrival at your school.</p>

Accommodation Costs and Transportation Arrangements:—

There is no need to worry this, it will all be arranged for you. Just show up and we will take you!—

Tokyo Ori Accommodation and Transportation: Paid for by your CO. However, at a later date, some COs may ask their JETs to pay the bill from CLAIR, and then will reimburse the money afterwards.

Life Ori Accommodation: You will need to pay for your room (about 7000¥) upon arrival at the hotel. Your CO will reimburse the cost in a later paycheck. Take this into account when budgeting startup costs.—

Tips for Packing for your first 5 Days

- We recommend packing everything you need for your first 5 days in **one carry on sized luggage**. You will travel from Tokyo to Gifu by train, then *shinkansen* (bullet train) and then finally in a private mini-bus. This trip can be difficult if you have large or heavy luggage.—
- You can send your large suitcase(s) from Narita Airport (Tokyo) upon arrival. Freight cost is to be borne by the JET. Anything sent from Narita, you will not see again until the following Thursday at your new workplace. This is arranged by CLAIR and easy to do upon arrival at the airport—no prior research necessary.—
- Once you arrive at the Keio Plaza Hotel in Tokyo for Orientation, you may elect to send further luggage to your destination in Japan at your own cost. This again, is arranged by CLAIR and easy to do—

if you so wish.—

- Given the heat in summer, you are unlikely to be able to wear the same shirt two days in a row and get away with it, nor will you be able to do laundry easily.—
- Along with work clothes and after work casual clothes for each day(see dress codes), we recommend that you pack:—
 - Plug adaptors for electronics—
 - Appropriate pajamas (you will have roommates in Tokyo)
 - Toiletries—
 - Formal shoes (you will not need your indoor shoes until later)
 - Comfortable shoes for exploring Tokyo/traveling to Gifu.—

Gifu ALT Work Orientation

<p>Group A & B ALTs Tuesday, August 20th— Wednesday August 21st</p>	<p>After a little time spent settling in at home and work, we'll be seeing all the new ALTs again in Gifu City for Gifu ALT Work Orientation! This will be two full days of workshops about Team Teaching and other work-related scenarios you might encounter. You will meet the other group of first year JETs, as well as the 10 Regional Prefectural Advisors who will be presenting at the orientation.—</p> <p><u>Dress code:</u> Cool business (see next page)</p> <p><u>Accommodation:</u> No need to worry about hotel arrangements, they will be made by the PAs. However, you will have to pay upfront about 7000¥ which will later be reimbursed to you by your CO.</p> <p><u>Work Orientation Enkai</u>— There will be an optional dinner and all you can drink party on Tuesday night. Details and sign-ups will be given at Gifu Life Orientation (New CIRS welcome as well).</p>
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Accommodation Details

Tokyo Ori: Assigned shared rooms (usually about three people per room)

Life Ori: Single rooms

Work Ori: Single rooms

Packing for the JET Programme

Before you go on a shopping spree, many things you already own can most likely be used. Take into consideration that Japan is a developed country, so you will be able to buy many of the things that you can buy in your home country while you're here and save on shipping costs. If not readily available at stores, there is a good chance you can still get them through <https://www.amazon.co.jp>

If you are going shopping: pay attention to material! Cotton and linen are breathable materials which will make the summer heat much more bearable than materials such as silk or polyester.

Clothes

Cool Business (Cool Biz) Work Clothes:

This is the standard professional dress code during summer, promoted by the Japanese government so people can dress weather appropriately and save on energy costs.

Cool Biz is more casual than business dress. Items suitable for Cool Biz include:

- Short sleeved button down shirts without a neck-tie or sometimes short sleeved polo shirts.
- Knee length skirts, dresses, and capri pants.



Cool Biz Formal
(Usually more appropriate at JHS/SHS level)



Cool Biz Casual
(Usually more appropriate at ES/JHS level)

Japanese sizes

- Sizes are generally smaller. Larger sizes can be harder to find.
- Men's clothing is made for slim body types (especially pants).
- Women's clothing usually goes up to about a UK/AUS size 10-12, or US size 8. If you are above 165cm (5ft. 6in.), pants may often be too short.
- The things most people have most trouble finding in larger sizes are undergarments and shoes, though the internet is great resource.

Bring:

- A **black** suit for formal work occasions and conferences. You might want to bring a second suit depending on your situation. The second suit does not necessarily need to be black, but we recommend a dark color. For ALTs, suited events are rare but are required for some school events. If you wear a skirt suit, the skirt should be at least to the knee. At graduation ceremonies, white

neckties are worn by men and pearls are often worn by women but are not a must.

- Warm weather clothes such as shorts and T-shirts to wear during your free time.
- A tracksuit or knee length shorts for outdoor sporting events. Short-shorts are not considered appropriate. (In particular, Japanese women opt for capri-length or full length track pants).
- Pantyhose if you plan to wear skirts (Japanese women always wear pantyhose, but whether you do is up to your discretion).
- Bike shorts or leggings if you plan to wear skirts and commute to work by bike. Take into consideration that pencil skirts are difficult to bike in. Many ALTs who commute by bike choose to wear gym clothes on their way to work and change at work (you'll get really sweaty riding to work over summer)!
- Unpadded bras (if you care for them) as they are hard to find in Japan. Note: Japanese bra sizes run smaller in Japan.

Sending things you don't need right away by sea is slow, but cheaper:

- Winter clothes. It gets cold here but not for a while. If you don't own winter clothes, they can be purchased here. They are also available on thrift shops or secondhand stores if you do not mind pre-loved items.
- Snow sports gear if you already own it. Gifu Prefecture has fantastic skiing and snowboarding. If you don't already have gear it is easy and fairly cheap to rent or buy here.
- Extra supplies, for example, if you need a year's supply of special brand organic soap that you just can't live without. (More on toiletries further in the packet.)

Do Not

- Do not go on a buying spree for formal work wear as you most likely won't need it. In most situations, business casual is more than fine. Make sure to ask your predecessor for recommendations (more about this later in the packet).
- Do not depend on sleeveless tops and tops with low cut neck lines as workplace attire as they are not acceptable here. However, light cardigans are easily paired with tops to be made workplace appropriate.

Shoes

Like clothes, shoe sizes in Japan are smaller:

- Women's up to 24.5 cm (about US size 8).
- Men's are generally up to 27.5 cm (About US size 10^{1/2}).
- Larger shoes are hard to find in Japan.

Bring

- Indoor shoes (check if needed with your predecessor). We recommend shoes that are easy to slip on and off quickly and are comfortable. Opt for laces-free options for ease. These are not to be worn outside and do not need to be formal. You must be able to wear socks with your indoor shoes. If you have larger feet, consider bringing warmer winter indoor shoes as well.
- Outdoor formal shoes for orientations and conferences.

- There will no doubt be a time to wear:
 - ☞ Rain boots/waterproof shoes
 - ☞ Hiking boots
 - ☞ Sneakers
 - ☞ Indoor sports shoes (if you go to the gym)
 - ☞ Sandals

However (depending on your shoe size) if you don't already own them, they can probably be purchased here without too much inconvenience. When purchasing shoes, take into consideration that many places, for example some restaurants, require you to take off your shoes, easy to slip on and off shoes are ideal in Japan.

Examples of indoor shoes used by current Gifu JETs:

Women



Men



Medicine

Check what type of medications are allowed *well in advance* of departure and be aware that you are only allowed to bring in up to one month's supply of each medication.

Most medications can be found at Japanese pharmacies, but to tide you over until you settle in, consider bringing some of these over with you:

- Pain relief tablets like ibuprofen or acetaminophen/paracetamol
- Motion-sickness tablets
- Cold and flu tablets are good to bring (as long as they don't have pseudoephedrine in them).

- Be careful with the limits you bring or send, see the GIH (Pg 27 - 1.4.7 Medication) for details.
- Insect repellants or bite lotion (there will be mosquitoes upon your arrival)

Personal Items and Toiletries:

Once again, most things can be bought here, or at the very least, order on the internet.

We recommend bringing hard to find or expensive items such as:

- Good antiperspirant deodorant (Japanese deodorants have a reputation of being weak.)
- Make-up (shades differ to back home)

Please note:

- Tampons are not as common as sanitary pads. The selection of tampons is very limited, expensive, and there are some stores that don't carry them.
- Contact lenses are very popular here and readily available everywhere – you will need to have an eye examination the first time but this is subsidized by the national health insurance scheme. Glasses are much cheaper here than in other countries.
- Birth control pills are available, however they are ~¥7000/3 months, not covered by general health insurance, and clinics around Gifu are unlikely to have English speaking staff. You will most likely need to visit the doctor every 1-3 months to renew your supply. If you decide to bring them/have them sent to you from your home country, Japan's medication quantity restrictions limit you to only 1 month's supply unless you get a *Yakkan Shoumei* certificate.
- Condoms are generally smaller-fitting in Japan, but you can find larger ones if you search.
- Nowadays, you can find toothpaste with fluoride in Japan. Though slightly harder to find, it is very doable, so you do not need to bring a year's supply of toothpaste.

Documents:

Bring:

- Extra passport photos if you have them, but passport photo booths are readily available here.
- Original and/or copies of your:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✎ Emergency contacts at home ✎ Credit cards ✎ Driver's license (UK JETs bring Paper Licenses) ✎ International Driver's Permit ✎ Bank account details ✎ Personal loans ✎ Student loans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✎ Statement of earnings and tax for the year (even if you are tax exempt in Japan, you will still need to file anything you made before your arrival) ✎ Passport and visa ✎ Marriage Certificate ✎ Birth certificate
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- Even if you don't think you will drive here, **we recommend you bring the documents needed to get a Japanese driver's license.** JETs frequently change their minds and the documents are hard to gather from abroad (see the Vehicles section of this packet).

Electronics:

Electronics in Japan run on 100V compared to the United States which runs on 120V and most of Asia, Europe and Australia that run on $\geq 200V$. These days, most computers can handle different voltages, but many of your other electronics will not work properly. Electronics are easy to find here. We recommend buying electronics, such as hair dryers, while in Japan rather than bringing them.

If you are bringing electronics from your home country, take into consideration the plugs in Japan. For those from North America and the Philippines, electronics with two pronged flat plugs will work without an adaptor. Those from other countries will need to buy a plug adaptor.

Other Items:

Bring:

- A backup copy (memory stick or external hard drive) of important files and software.
- Lots of pictures or videos to use for classes of friends, family, famous people, souvenirs, documentaries (either physical or digital so you can print them here).
- Souvenirs (*omiyage*) to hand out upon your arrival.

Omiyage

Omiyage is the Japanese word for “souvenirs”. It is customary in Japan to bring small things for your co-workers when you begin working in a new place. Food *omiyage* is the most common type of *omiyage*. When buying *omiyage*, remember that Japan will be very hot upon your arrival in July or August. Things such as chocolates have a high likelihood of melting. Instead we suggest things like tea and non-melting sweets as they are always a hit! For hygiene reasons, individually wrapped snacks is recommended.

Tip: Consider bringing a bunch of post cards from home, which can be used throughout your stay as nice thank you cards or even as introduction messages to give to your new neighbors.

Money Matters

Your first salary will come nearly a month after arrival close to the end of July. This means that you must cover all your moving and living expenses up until payday with money earned prior to the JET Programme. CLAIR used to estimate that you would need a total of ¥250,000 to last you until your first pay day, however, since this varies greatly (factors depend on such things as cars, personal expenses, etc.), they have now gotten rid of that number, but we find that it is helpful to keep this number in mind, especially if your predecessor doesn't pay much attention to finances.

This amount may sound large, however depending on your situation, you may be required to pay a bond for a private apartment, or decide to install the internet / purchase a cell phone at an upfront cost within your first few weeks. Again, **this is a VERY ROUGH estimate, so please check with your contracting organization and/or your predecessor before you come.**

We do not recommend traveler’s cheques, as it can be very difficult to find a bank that can exchange them for cash. You will find that your credit card could be extremely useful during this period. However, be aware that Japan is still a predominantly cash-based society, and credit cards are not always accepted. This is particularly true at smaller local shops, which are numerous in Gifu Prefecture. By far, the best payment method for just about anything in Japan is cash. This means, people won’t even bat an eye if you purchase a ¥100 box of mints with a ¥10,000 note.

Most bank ATMs often close at 21:00 and sometimes on weekends. ATMs at convenience stores are open 24/7 but they may charge an extra fee after 19:00. Due to these factors, people are far more comfortable carrying cash on them in Japan. Many find themselves comfortably taking out ¥20,000-¥50,000 when they go to the ATM. JETs have had their lost wallets returned to them with more than ¥60,000 still in them (although JETs have also had their lost wallets never returned, so please don’t use this as an excuse to be any less careful than you would be in your home country.) Keep your money concealed and in a safe place, and you are very unlikely to have it stolen.

Weather in Gifu Prefecture

JET participants in Gifu Prefecture feel the extremes, given that they most often work in a public institution that promotes energy-saving practices. The charts below show how quickly the temperatures drop from October.

2020 Monthly Weather Data in Gifu Prefecture

https://www.data.jma.go.jp/obd/stats/etrn/view/monthly_h1.ph?p?prec_no=52&block_no=00&year=2020&month=&day=&view=p2

Summer is hot and very humid, particularly in the south of the prefecture. You are likely to spend the summer months sweating profusely while searching frantically for your *uchiwa* (fan) and umbrella (more popular than raincoats here). Japanese offices are reluctant to turn on air conditioners given efforts to save electricity. Luckily *tsuyuu* (the monsoon season) will be ending (June-mid July), but mid-summer (July-August) can still bring heavy rainfall and some typhoons. The Honshu mainland is hit by several typhoons each year, which can lead to strong winds and flooding in Gifu, but Gifu is located inland enough that it rarely becomes very dangerous.

Gifu City				Takayama City			
Month	Average	High	Low	Month	Average	High	Low
January	7.6°C	11.9°C	3.7°C	January	2.4°C	7°C	-1°C
February	7°C	11.5°C	2.8°C	February	1.6°C	7.4°C	-2.5°C
March	10.5°C	15.6°C	6°C	March	5.1°C	12.1°C	-0.1°C
April	13.1°C	18.6°C	8.2°C	April	7.8°C	14.9°C	1.8°C
May	20.4°C	25.7°C	15.9°C	May	16.8°C	24.1°C	10.6°C
June	24.6°C	29.4°C	20.8°C	June	21.1°C	27.6°C	16.1°C
July	25.4°C	29.4°C	22.9°C	July	22.1°C	26.8°C	19.4°C
August	30.3°C	35.9°C	26.2°C	August	25.9°C	33.3°C	21.1°C
September	25.4°C	30°C	22.1°C	September	21.6°C	28°C	17.7°C
October	18°C	22.8°C	14°C	October	12.7°C	18.6°C	8.8°C
November	13.9°C	19°C	9.4°C	November	8.4°C	15°C	3.5°C
December	7.2°C	12°C	3.3°C	December	1.5°C	6.3°C	-1.6°C

Winter is cold, particularly up in the north of the prefecture. This is compounded further by the lack of

insulation and central heating in most buildings in Japan (something you probably are not used to even if you are from a snowy climate)! We recommend compromising fashion for clothing that is thermal and thick. Particularly in the mountains, you can expect heavy snowfalls, but also great conditions for skiing and snowboarding.

Communicating with your Predecessor

Your predecessor will provide you with an official 'Predecessor Handover Pack', which gives you an overview of your new job, the surrounding area and apartment you live in. Read it carefully and do not be afraid to ask any extra questions. If they don't e-mail it to you, please ask them or your PAs. If your predecessor has not contacted you two weeks prior to your arrival in Japan, e-mail gifupas@gmail.com and your PAs will send you the information or make sure your predecessor gets in contact with you.

Because of the dramatic increase in the number of prefectural SHS ALTs, please note that not all ALTs will have a predecessor. In this case, your supervisor will complete a 'General Information Sheet for Incoming ALTs' which contains some pertinent information about your school, housing and neighborhood. Should you have more questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch with your supervisor, Gelo, Sam, Hayley or to gifupas@gmail.com .

IMPORTANT: Purchasing items from your predecessor

Your predecessor may be willing to sell/give you furniture, appliances, etc., that can make your transition to life in Japan easier. If you do buy/receive things from your pred, ask for pictures and negotiate prices. Be careful: there have been situations in the past where departing JETs ask for more money than things are worth. Often, you are actually doing your pred a favor by taking their belongings as it costs money and effort to dispose items in Japan. We advise against taking over contracts (cellphone/internet) from your pred as there have been issues in the past where JETs haven't been able to cancel/change their contracts because it was not in their name.

If you have any issues with a predecessor, please contact your supervisor about the problems.

Ask Your Predecessor (or Supervisor if you don't have a pred):

Not quite sure what to ask your predecessor? Here is a list of our recommendations

In regards to housing:

- What amenities are close by? (for that night when you just don't want to cook for yourself)
- Are there any monthly communal cleanings, grass cutting chores, etc, involved?
- What are the apartment rules? (pets, overnight guests, etc.)
- Can I have pictures and prices of anything you're willing to sell?

In regards to school

- How many people are on the staff at your schools/ many people should you bring omiyage for?
- How often do you run into students when you are not at work?

In regards to a car:

- Do I need a car? Are you selling yours?
- When will the car need *shaken*?

-
- What is your car suitable for? (Road trips? Around town?)

In regards to clothing:

- How formally does the staff dress in summer? What about winter?
- Are indoor shoes worn? If so, what kinds of shoes do teachers wear?
- How casually do you find yourself dressing around your town outside of work hours?

Ask them what they wish they had asked their pred!

Your Apartment

It is highly likely that you will be offered your predecessor's apartment to move into, meaning the apartment will likely be furnished. However, you are under no obligation to take their things and can request your predecessor to dispose of their furnishings as a rule when they vacate their apartment. You are also free to search and find your own living accommodations without the help of your BoE. The types of apartments are as follows:

Private Apartments

Many ALTs will be housed in privately owned apartments. These are contract-based and sometimes require a large deposit ("*shikikin*") to be paid when first moving in, as well as a guarantor.

Shikikin: the deposit to be paid to the landlord when entering into a rental contract. It is equivalent to 1-4 months' rent and is paid at the beginning. This is collateral, generally used in the case of non-payment of rent or to repair any damage caused by the tenant during their stay in the apartment.

The four scenarios:

1. The JET pays with his/her own money
2. Your Contracting Organization (CO) may pay it on your behalf as a "loan", and you pay them back at a later time.
3. Your CO may pay it for you and not require you to repay them at all.
4. Not required

Private contracts may require *Reikin*, a one-time set-amount payment thanking the landlord for renting to you. It is non-refundable.

Public Apartments

In some situations prefectural or municipal staff housing is offered.

These are nice because the rent is cheap and *shikikin* is not required. However, the buildings tend to be old and often in not as nice condition as a typical private apartment. For these, you must get permission

from the governmental division that runs the apartment to make any major changes to the unit. However, these buildings tend to have traditional tatami floors and sliding paper doors for a very cool traditional Japanese feeling!

The condition and amenities of apartments vary, and their current condition will depend on your predecessor.

Vehicles

Often, if a placement is in a rural area, a car is necessary to commute to school. In some cases, you will have the opportunity to purchase your car from your predecessor. In this case, your school will help in the transfer of ownership from the previous ALT to the new ALT. If this is your situation, it would be a good idea to confirm with your new supervisor about the condition of the car and the price your predecessor is asking for it, rather than rushing into purchase. In some cases, your predecessor may have purchased a car on their own and the school was not involved in the purchase. If the school is not helping in the name transfer, **exercise caution**. There have been instances where an unscrupulous predecessor has taken advantage of their successor. Check the condition of the car before purchasing with both your predecessor and your supervisor. For more information about cars and driving in Japan, please refer to our website at: <https://gifujets.weebly.com/driving-and-vehicles-128070.html>

“Bargain” Cars

Warning: If you are buying or taking your predecessor’s car for free or what appears to be a bargain price, please be careful. In Japan it is not necessary to get a roadworthiness test done before transferring the title of a car and so the only guarantee you have about the current condition of the car is your predecessor’s word (but they do require such a test every two years to pass registration). If you inherit a car with problems you could be in for a shock. Large repairs and disposal of a car in Japan costs a lot of money.

Shaken

Shaken is a roadworthiness pass test certificate required every two years. It is illegal to drive a car with an expired *shaken*. Depending on the condition of the vehicle, getting shaken often costs more money than the cost of an old car.

It costs about ¥70,000- ¥150,000 (possibly more if you have to get lots of repairs). How much *shaken* is left on a car will have a large effect on the car’s price which can lead to the range in prices from bargain cars (little to no shaken left) to what seem like really expensive ones (close to 2 years of shaken left).

Documents Necessary to Get a Japanese Driver’s License

Some JETs find that they do not originally plan to drive here but later change their mind. Even if you do not currently plan to drive here, it will save you **a lot** of trouble if you have already gathered the documents.

- Check your driving license immediately – does it have a date of issue printed on the license?
 - If **yes**, that's great – and don't forget to bring your license with you as well as your International Drivers Permit (IDP).
 - If **no**, this makes things trickier. You won't be able to switch to a Japanese license unless you get an official record from the road and transport authority that issued the license verifying the date of issue. There is absolutely no compromise on this condition – when you apply for your license if you don't have proof of your license's date of issue, your application will be declined. Also, make sure that it is not a photocopy and that it has any sort of official signature on it. **Tackling this from Japan is an extremely arduous process, so plan ahead now!**
- If you have had your passport renewed and still have your old passports, then bring these with you to Japan as well. You may be asked to provide them when applying for your license.
- If your passport doesn't have re-entrance stamps to your home country (unlikely if you have a new passport with an electronic chip) you should contact your Immigration Bureau to get a record of your entrance and exit dates from your home country. This will help get you a "Regular" license rather than a "New Driver" license.
- You will need proof that you were in your home country for at least 3-12 consecutive months (preferably at least 12) while your full level license has been valid (either from your license or license certificate date of issue). This proof can come from:
 - Having a re-entrance stamp to your home country in your passport and then no exit stamp for at least 3 or 12 months. (If you have a new passport with an electronic chip in it, you will unlikely have any re-entrance stamps to your home country, making this option impossible).
 - Official details of your departures and arrivals to and from your home country from your country's immigration department.
 - The date of issue of your first passport if you got it at least 3-12 months after you'd had your full license (but you have to remind/convince them that this means you were obviously in the country for the time prior to getting the passport).
 - Your academic transcript (this must be the original, not a photocopy).
 - You can try any other documents you think might work, but the options above are the only proof we've heard of being accepted.

Phones in Japan

When it comes to mobile phone companies, you have two options: (a) a Mobile Virtual Network Operator (MVNO), or (b) one of Japan's three major providers (SoftBank, AU, NTT Docomo). We

recommend you research both options, and have an idea of which you would prefer prior to arriving in Japan. Your supervisor, will likely be ready to set you up with one of Japan's three major providers, however we highly recommend MVNO's, as they are often cheaper and don't have cancelation fees.

MVNOs (Recommended by most JETs)

A 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. Since your supervisor will likely not have much information about MVNOs, research prior to arrival, and have a clear idea which one you would like to be set up.

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.willmyphonework.net
If you are buying a phone in Japan: make sure the phone is sim free or unlocked. You can buy sim free phones at many electronic stores or online at websites such as <https://www.amazon.co.jp>
2. **Choose an MVNO network.** You will want a plan that gives you the ability to call and text as you need a Japanese phone number to sign up for many things and to be enrolled in your placement's disaster contact list. Most plans do not come with calls and texting but have pay per minute/text at a small price. Generally, people in Japan use the messaging app LINE, so these small prices should not add up to very much per month. For a comprehensive comparison chart: <https://tokyocheapo.com/business/internet/japan-sim-card-options-data-voice/>
The popular MVNOs with English support are Sakura Mobile (recommended because you can do convenience store payments, where you will be paying most of your bills, so you won't need to use your home credit card), and Mobal (recommended because you can sign up prior to arrival and have cell service start right when you get here).
3. **Sign up online.** Most of the long term plans require a residence card which you will receive when you arrive in Japan and your supervisor will take you to register your address. In these cases you will not be able to order your sim until you get here. After, they will deliver it to your home (generally within 2-4 weeks). 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. Some plans allow pick up in Japan, do not register for pick up at Narita Airport, as you will be moving with the JET group and will not have time to go through the airport to run personal errands.

The Big Three: [SoftBank](#), [AU](#), and [NTT Docomo](#) plus [Rakuten Mobile](#)

If you choose to go with the big three, there is not very much preparation you must do. In your first week in Japan, your supervisor will take you to a store and help you set up a contract.

Plans cost on average a little more than ¥ 10,000/month over a 24-26 month contract and include the cost of a new phone. Because of these contracts, JETs are likely to have to pay to break contract with the provider at the end of their JET term (this is true for many even if they stay two years as the contract will not start the first day of JET). 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 six months. If you are likely to break your phone once or twice then this option could become better value than the MVNO option.

Recently, Softbank, Docomo and AU have started offering cheaper plans with 20gb monthly data allowance, limited voice call minutes and basic customer service that is limited to online Japanese support (no in-store support). They offer both a contract-free sim-card only option or a 36-month contract that comes with device. Monthly fees may range from ¥2000-5000. Softbank offers these plans as “Linemo and Y!mobile” Docomo named theirs as “ahamo” and AU has “povo” as its cheapest monthly plan. Please be aware that these services are mostly in Japanese and no support is given at their stores. All transactions are online to reduce the costs.

Rakuten Mobile also offers a very competitive unlimited data plan that is worth considering. Their phone selection however is quite limited, and signal is still erratic compared to the big three phone companies.

Finally, Japanese phones must now be sold unlocked to a network by law, so you should be able to use your new phone when you return to your home country. For more about setting up cell phones, please see our website page: <https://gifujets.weebly.com/setup-128070.html>

Calling Back Home

There are low cost services available in Japan, such as buying Skype and LINE credits for as little as ¥2/minute, which make calling back home affordable.

Pre-departure pro-tip: Download LINE (a similar service to WhatsApp, we can promise you will be using LINE when you move to Japan) on your grandmothers’ phone now and teach her how to use it, so you can call her for free using data.

Google Voice (Canada and USA only): Before coming to Japan, sign up for Google Voice. This will give you free calling back home. It is hard to set up once in Japan so make sure to do this *before* departure.

Inkan

Inkan, or personal identification seals, are still used widely used and are very important in Japan for making and breaking contracts, such as for bank accounts, mobile phones, work time cards and taking paid-leave holidays.

Your supervisor will help you make your *inkan*. Most JET supervisors will make your *inkan* before you arrive in Japan to help you manage the tremendous Japanese paperwork more efficiently. Therefore, if you have a preference about using your first name/surname or *katakana* /*kanji*, ask your supervisor about this before arrival.

Studying Japanese

Whether you are well on your way to being fluent or never studied Japanese a day in your life, take some time to study before you arrive! As most of Gifu is fairly rural, English is neither widely spoken nor understood here. Although your supervisor will help you with important and difficult tasks (ex. setting up a bank account), being able to speak simple Japanese will help you out in daily life.

Japanese is quite different from English. There are three writing systems in Japanese: *Hiragana* (phonetic alphabet), *Katakana* (phonetic alphabet used mostly for foreign words) and *Kanji* (logographic characters adopted from Chinese). If you haven't ever studied Japanese before, we recommend starting to study the *kana* (syllabary) and a basic self-introduction, so you can impress your new work place.

For our more extensive list of JET recommended study resources (various Japanese levels), see our website: <https://gifujets.weebly.com/online-resources-128070.html>

Please also check this Japanese learning guide that Judas, our Chuno RPA, has prepared for us: https://gifujets.weebly.com/uploads/2/5/1/9/25199933/judas_japanese_learning_advice_-_memory_misconception_resources.pdf

Hiragana					Katakana				
あ a	い i	う u	え e	お o	ア a	イ i	ウ u	エ e	オ o
か ka	き ki	く ku	け ke	こ ko	カ ka	キ ki	ク ku	ケ ke	コ ko
さ sa	し shi	す su	せ se	そ so	サ sa	シ shi	ス su	セ se	ソ so
た ta	ち chi	つ tsu	て te	と to	タ ta	チ chi	ツ tsu	テ te	ト to
な na	に ni	ぬ nu	ね ne	の no	ナ na	ニ ni	ヌ nu	ネ ne	ノ no
は ha	ひ hi	ふ fu	へ he	ほ ho	ハ ha	ヒ hi	フ fu	ヘ he	ホ ho
ま ma	み mi	む mu	め me	も mo	マ ma	ミ mi	ム mu	メ me	モ mo
や ya		ゆ yu		よ yo	ヤ ya		ユ yu		ヨ yo
ら ra	り ri	る ru	れ re	ろ ro	ラ ra	リ ri	ル ru	レ re	ロ ro
わ wa			を wo		ワ wa				ヲ wo
			ん n						ン n
Self-introduction									
Romaji	Hiragana		English						
Hajimemashita. _____ (name) to iimasu.	はじめました。 _____ といます。		Nice to meet you. My name is _____.						
Shusshin wa _____ (country) no _____ (state/ province/etc).	しゅっしん は _____ の _____。		I am from _____, in _____.						
Shumi wa _____ (hobby) desu.	しゅみ は _____ です。		My hobby is _____.						
Kore kara yoroshiku onegai shimasu.	これからよろしく おねがいします。		I am looking forward to working with you.						

*There are many ways to introduce yourself. This is only one simple example.

Gifu JET Resources

The Gifu JET Homepage: <http://gifujets.weebly.com/>

Your go-to resource for JET life in Gifu Prefecture managed by the Gifu PAs. All materials from Gifu Orientations and Skills Development Conferences will be posted here, as well as updates in the Gifu blog.

The JET Programme General Information Handbook: <http://jetprogramme.org/en/gih/>

Your go-to guide released by CLAIR containing details about the JET Programme.

Gifu International Center: <http://www.gic.or.jp/en/>

Encourages cultural exchange in Gifu Prefecture. The website includes resources such as Japanese language classes around Gifu, information about multilingual consultation services and more!

Gifu Tourism Blog: <https://gogifu.wordpress.com/>

Run by the Gifu JET CIR working at the Gifu Prefectural Tourism Division, and a great way to stay updated on events around Gifu Prefecture.

JNTO Medical Institutions Database: https://www.jnto.go.jp/emergency/eng/mi_guide.html

Managed by the Japan National Tourism Organization, you can use this database to search for hospitals and clinics that may provide foreign language support.

Association of JETs (AJET): <http://ajet.net/>

↳ **Connect Magazine:** <http://ajet.net/ajet-connect/magazine-issues/>

By JETs for JETs. Connect Magazine is a monthly publication filled with all the things that JETs are interested in. It also provides JETs plenty of opportunities to get involved whether it's submitting a photo once to volunteering to be on the Connect Team.

↳ **Gifu AJET:** Search on Facebook.

Add both the group and the person to receive invites to the AJET events. A group of Gifu JETs who arrange social and cultural activities for JETs. Any JET in Gifu prefecture can get further involved.

↳ **AJET Block 5:** Search for the group on Facebook

Gifu, Aichi, Fukui, Ishikawa and Toyama. Connect with JETs from other prefectures and get updates about National AJET, including participation in their bi-yearly report that is presented to CLAIR.