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Japan

Official Name: *Japan*

LAST UPDATED: JANUARY 11, 2017

Embassy Messages

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Quick Facts

- **PASSPORT VALIDITY:**
Duration of intended period of stay
- **VACCINATIONS:**
None
- **BLANK PASSPORT PAGES:**
One page required for entry stamp
- **CURRENCY RESTRICTIONS FOR ENTRY:**
Amounts equivalent to ¥1,000,000 or above subject to declaration
- **TOURIST VISA REQUIRED:**
Not required for stays of less than 90 days
- **CURRENCY RESTRICTIONS FOR EXIT:**
Amounts equivalent to ¥1,000,000 or above subject to declaration

[Collapse All](#)

Embassies and Consulates

[U.S. Embassy Tokyo](#)

1-10-5 Akasaka, Minato-ku,
Tokyo 107-8420 Japan
Telephone: 81-3-3224-5000
Emergency After-Hours Telephone: 81-3-3224-5000
Fax: 81-3-3224-5856
Tokyoacs@state.gov

[U.S. Consulate General Osaka-Kobe](#)

2-11-5, Nishitenma, Kita-ku,
Osaka 530-8543, Japan
Telephone: 81-6-6315-5900
Emergency After-Hours Telephone: 81-3-3224-5000
Fax: 81-6-6315-5914
AOK@state.gov

[U.S. Consulate General Naha](#)

2-1-1 Toyama, Urasoe City,
Okinawa, Japan
Telephone: 81-98-876-4211
Emergency Telephone: 81-3-3224-5000
Fax: 81-98-876-4243
NahaACS@state.gov

[U.S. Consulate General Sapporo](#)

Kita 1-jo Nishi 28-chome, Chuo-ku,
Sapporo 064-0821, Japan
Telephone: 81-11-641-1115
Emergency After-Hours Telephone: 81-3-3224-5000
Fax: 81-11-643-1283
SapporoACS@state.gov
All assistance at the Consulate General Sapporo is by appointment only.

[U.S. Consulate Fukuoka](#)

5-26 Ohori 2-chome, Chuo-ku,
Fukuoka 810-0052, Japan
Telephone: 81-92-751-9331
Emergency After-Hours Telephone: 81-3-3224-5000
Fax: 81-92-713-9222
FukuokaACS@state.gov
Routine services are provided by appointment only.

[U.S. Consulate Nagoya](#)

Nagoya International Center Bldg. 6th floor,
1-47-1 Nagono, Nakamura-ku,
Nagoya 450-0001, Japan
Telephone: 81-52-581-4501
Emergency After-Hours Telephone: 81-3-3224-5000
Fax: 81-52-581-3190
AOK@state.gov
Emergency services only.

Destination Description

See the Department of State's [Fact Sheet on Japan](#) for information on U.S.-
Japan relations.

Entry, Exit & Visa Requirements

Visit the [Embassy of Japan](#) website for the most current visa information.

Entry & Exit:

- You must have a valid passport and an onward/return ticket for tourist/business "visa free" stays of up to 90 days. Your passports must be valid for the entire time you are staying in Japan.
- You cannot work on a 90-day "visa free" entry.
- "Visa free" entry status may not be changed to another visa status without departing and then re-entering Japan with the appropriate visa, such as a spouse, work, or study visa.
- Japanese immigration officers may deny you entry if you appear to have no visible means of support.
- All foreign nationals are required to provide fingerprint scans and to be photographed at the port of entry. Exceptions to this requirement include diplomatic and official visa holders, minors, and individuals covered under SOFA Article IX.2. For further information about landing procedures, please visit the [Immigration Bureau of Japan's website](#) .

Transiting Japan:

- Ensure that your passport and visa are valid and up to date before you leave the United States. Passport services are not available at the airport.
- Airlines in Japan will deny you boarding for transit if you don't have the required travel documents for an onward destination in Asia or if your passport is not valid for six months. For the entry requirements of the country you're traveling to, visit the [State Department's Country Specific Information](#) website.

Military/SOFA Travelers: While active-duty U.S. military personnel may enter Japan under the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) with proper Department of Defense (DOD) identification and travel orders, all SOFA family members, civilian employees, and contractors must have valid passports to enter Japan. Please consult the [DOD Foreign Clearance Guide](#) before leaving the United States.

See [the Immigration Bureau of Japan's website](#) for various immigration procedures.

HIV/AIDS Restrictions: The U.S. Department of State is unaware of any HIV/AIDS entry restrictions for visitors to or foreign residents of Japan.

Find information on [dual nationality](#), [prevention of international child abduction](#) and [customs regulations](#) on our websites.

Safety and Security

Crime: Crimes against U.S. citizens in Japan is generally low and usually involves personal disputes, theft, or vandalism. In addition:

- Robberies committed after a victim has been drugged from a spiked drink are increasing.
- Sexual assaults are not often reported, but they do occur, and victims may be randomly targeted. Victim's assistance resources or shelters are difficult for foreigners to access.
- Hate-related violent crimes rarely occur, although some U.S. citizens have reported being the target of discrimination because of their nationality or their race.
- Pick pocketing can occur in crowded shopping areas, on trains, and at airports.
- Police reports must be filed before leaving Japan, as Japanese police will not accept reports filed from overseas.
- In instances involving credit card theft or fraud, Japanese police often provide a report number rather than a police report. You can provide this report number to your credit card company in order to confirm the incident with the police.

Entertainment and Nightlife Districts in Tokyo:

- Use caution in all entertainment and nightlife districts throughout Japan, especially Roppongi, Kabuki-cho, Shibuya, and Ikebukuro.
- Incidents involving U.S. citizens in these areas include physical and sexual assaults, drug overdoses, theft of purses, wallets, cash and credit cards at bars or clubs, and drugs allegedly slipped into drinks.
- Drink spiking at bars and entertainment venues, especially in areas such as Roppongi and Kabuki-cho, near Shinjuku, has led to robbery, physical and sexual assaults, and credit card fraud. Some victims regain consciousness in the bar or club; other victims may awaken on the street or other unfamiliar locations.
- U.S. citizens have reported being threatened with gun or knife violence in such venues so that they will pay exorbitant bar tabs or withdraw money. U.S. citizens have also reported being beaten when they have refused to pay or hand over money.
- There have been recent reports of U.S. citizens being forcibly taken to ATMs and robbed, or made to withdraw funds after being unable to pay exorbitant bar tabs.
- Please be aware that Roppongi, Kabuki-cho, and other entertainment and nightlife districts have also been the scenes of violence between criminal syndicates.

See the [Department of State](#) and the [FBI](#) pages for information on scams.

VICTIMS OF CRIME:

You must file a police report at the nearest police station before you leave Japan. The Japanese police cannot accept reports filed from overseas. Report crimes to the local police at 110 and contact the U.S. Embassy at 81-3-3224-5000. Remember that local authorities are responsible for investigating and prosecuting the crime.

See our webpage on [help for U.S. victims of crime overseas](#).

We can:

- help you find appropriate medical care
- assist you in reporting a crime to the police
- contact relatives or friends with your written consent
- explain the local criminal justice process in general terms
- provide a list of local attorneys
- provide our information on [victim's compensation programs in the U.S.](#)
- provide an emergency loan for repatriation to the United States and/or limited medical
- support in cases of destitution
- help you find accommodation and arrange flights home
- replace a stolen or lost passport

Contacting Police, Fire and Ambulance Services: You can reach the police throughout Japan by dialing 110. Fire and ambulance services can be contacted by dialing 119. Note that English-speaking dispatchers may not be available. Please review advice on [how to call for help](#). If you need assistance, you should be able to describe your address/location in Japanese or find someone who can do so, since few police officers speak English.

Domestic Violence: Victim's assistance resources or battered women's shelters exist in major urban areas, and they are generally unavailable in rural areas. Investigations of sexual assault crimes are often conducted without female police officers present, and police typically ask about the victim's sexual history and previous relationships.

For further information:

- Enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive security messages and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.
- Call us in Washington at 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or 1-202-501-4444 from other countries from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).
- See the [State Department's travel website](#) for [Worldwide Caution](#), Travel Warnings, and Travel Alerts.
- Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) .
- See [traveling safely abroad](#) for useful travel tips.

Local Laws & Special Circumstances

Criminal Penalties: You are subject to local laws. If you violate local laws, even unknowingly, you may be arrested, imprisoned, or deported. If you are arrested in Japan, even for a minor offense, you may be held in detention without bail for several months or more during the investigation and legal proceedings.

Furthermore, some laws are also prosecutable in the U.S., regardless of local law. For examples, see our website on [crimes against minors abroad](#) and the [Department of Justice](#) website.

Japanese authorities aggressively pursue drug smugglers with sophisticated detection equipment, "sniffing" dogs, and other methods. Penalties for possessing, using, or trafficking in illegal drugs, including marijuana and synthetic drugs, are severe, and convicted offenders can expect long jail sentences and fines.

You must carry your U.S. passport or Japanese Residence Card (Zairyu Kado) with you at all times. In Japan, you may be taken in for questioning if you don't have your passport or Japanese residence card to show your identity and visa status.

It is illegal to work in Japan while in tourist or visa-waiver status. Overstaying your visa or working illegally may lead to fines of several thousands of dollars, and in some cases, re-entry bans can be as long as ten years, or indefinitely for drug offenders. For additional information please see [Japan's Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act](#) and contact the Japanese Embassy or nearest Japanese consulate in the United States for more information.

Laws governing rape, sexual commerce, and other activity involving sexual relations do not apply to same-sex sexual activity. This definition leads to lower penalties for perpetrators of male rape and greater legal ambiguity surrounding same-sex prostitution.

Driving under the influence of alcohol could also land you immediately in jail. The blood-alcohol limit in Japan is approximately 0.03%, less than the amount of alcohol in a single glass of beer. Punishments can be up to 10,000 USD in fines and up to five years in prison.

Possession of a gun or ammunition is a crime in Japan. Possession of a knife with a locking blade, or a folding blade that is longer than 5.5 cm (a little more than two inches), is illegal in Japan. U.S. citizens and U.S. military personnel have been arrested and detained for more than 10 days for carrying pocket knives that are legal in the United States but illegal in Japan. The possession of lock-picking tools is illegal in Japan.

A [list of English-speaking lawyers](#) located throughout Japan is available on our [website](#).

Arrest Notification: If you are arrested or detained, ask police or prison officials to notify the U.S. Embassy immediately. See our [webpage](#) for further information.

Faith-Based Travelers: See our following webpages for details:

- [Faith-Based Travel Information](#)
- [International Religious Freedom Report](#)_– see country reports
- [Human Rights Report](#)_– see country reports
- [Hajj Fact Sheet for Travelers](#)

- [Best Practices for Volunteering Abroad](#)

LGBTI Travelers: There are no legal restrictions on same-sex sexual relations or the organization of LGBTI events in Japan. While in recent years, open members of Japan's LGBTI community have made social strides including winning elections to public office, LGBTI activists warn that Japan remains an unwelcome place for sexual minorities.

See our [LGBTI Travel Information](#) page and section 6 of our [Human Rights report](#) for further details.

Travelers Who Require Accessibility Assistance: Although Japan's accessibility laws mandate that new construction projects for public use include provisions for persons with disabilities, older buildings are not likely to have been retrofitted for accessibility. At major train stations, airports, and hotels, travelers with disabilities should encounter few accessibility problems. Note that many smaller stations are inaccessible to those who cannot climb stairs. Information on travel in Japan for travelers with disabilities is available at Tesco Premium Search Co., Ltd. website "[the Travel Guide for Wheelchair Users](#) ."

Students: See our [Students Abroad](#) page and [FBI travel tips](#) .

Women Travelers: See our travel tips for [Women Travelers](#).

Conditions at Prisons and Detention Facilities: Japanese prisons and detention facilities maintain internal order through a regime of very strict discipline. U.S. citizen prisoners often complain of stark, austere living conditions and psychological isolation. Heating in winter can be inadequate in some facilities, and access to specialized medical care, particularly mental health care, at detention facilities and prisons is sometimes limited. Additional [information on arrests in Japan](#) is available on our embassy website.

Special Circumstances:

Customs Regulations: Please contact the Japanese Embassy or nearest Japanese consulate in the United States, or [visit the Japanese Customs website](#) for specific information regarding import restrictions and customs requirements.

Japanese customs authorities encourage the use of an Admission Temporaire/Temporary Admission (ATA) Carnet in order to temporarily import professional equipment, commercial samples and/or goods for exhibitions and trade fairs into Japan. For additional information, please call (212) 354-4480, or [email the U.S. CIB](#) for details.

Confiscation of Prescription Drugs and Other Medication: It is important to note that some medications that are routinely prescribed in the U.S., including Adderall, are strictly prohibited in Japan. The Japanese government decides which medications may be imported legally into Japan. The Embassy and consulates of Japan in the United States have limited information available and do not have a comprehensive list of specific medications or ingredients. Please see more [information on importing medicines](#) into Japan.

Pets: The Japanese [Animal Quarantine Service](#) (AQS) sets procedures for importing pets. At a minimum, the process will take seven to eight months,

though the process can take up to a year before a pet may enter Japan. Advance planning is critical. You can find more information about [importing a pet into Japan](#) or information about [exporting a pet from Japan](#) on our embassy website.

Employment Issues: U.S. citizens should not come to Japan to work without having the proper employment visa arranged ahead of time. Teaching English, even privately, and serving as hosts/hostesses are both considered "work" in Japan and are illegal without the proper visa.

Some U.S.-based employment agencies and Japanese employers do not fully or correctly represent the true nature of employment terms and conditions. A minimum requirement for effectively seeking the protection of Japanese labor law is a written and signed work contract. If there is no signed contract, Japanese authorities are not able to act on behalf of foreign workers. If you're coming to Japan to work, carefully review your contract and the history and reputation of your Japanese employer before traveling to Japan. Complaints against U.S.-based employment agencies or recruiters may be directed to the [Better Business Bureau](#) or the Office of the Attorney General in that particular state.

Disaster Preparedness: Japan is prone to earthquakes and, possibly, tsunamis. See [the U.S. Embassy's American Citizen Services \(ACS\) website](#) for disaster preparedness tips.

Radiation: Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant: The Government of Japan continues to closely monitor the conditions at and around the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. You should observe all travel restrictions put into place by the Government of Japan for areas surrounding the plant. U.S. citizens considering travel to affected areas in Fukushima Prefecture should follow [current guidance](#) on expected levels of radiation and recommendations for reducing exposure to radiation in these areas.

Additional information about radiation and its effects on human health may be found at the following websites:

- [Radiation, Health and Food Safety Information Post-Fukushima](#)
- [CDC Radiation Emergencies](#)
- [EPA Understanding Radiation: Overview](#)

Health

We do not pay medical bills. Be aware that U.S. Medicare does not apply overseas.

Medical Insurance: Make sure your health insurance plan provides coverage overseas. Most care providers overseas only accept cash payments. See our webpage for more [information on insurance providers for overseas coverage](#).

We strongly recommend [supplemental insurance](#) to cover medical evacuation.

If traveling with prescription medication, check with the government of [Japan's Ministry of Health](#) website to ensure the medication is legal in Japan. Always carry your prescription medication in original packaging with your doctor's prescription. U.S. prescriptions are not honored in Japan, so if you need ongoing prescription medicine, you should arrive with a sufficient supply for your stay in Japan or enough until you are able to see a local care provider.

Vaccinations: Be up-to-date on all [vaccinations recommended](#) by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Further health information:

- [World Health Organization](#)
- [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC)

Japan has a national health insurance system which is available only to those foreigners with long-term visas for Japan. National health insurance does not pay for medical evacuation. Medical caregivers in Japan require payment in full at the time of treatment or concrete proof of ability to pay before they will treat a foreigner who is not a member of the national health insurance plan.

U.S.-style and standard psychological and psychiatric care can be difficult to locate in major urban centers in Japan and generally is not available outside of Japan's major cities. Extended psychiatric care for foreigners in Japan is very difficult to obtain.

Travel & Transportation

Road Conditions and Safety: Driving in Japan is complicated and expensive. Traffic moves on the left side of the road. Those who cannot read the language will have trouble understanding road signs. Highway tolls can be very high. City traffic is often very congested. A 20-mile trip in the Tokyo area may take two hours. There is virtually no legal roadside or curbside parking; however, traffic is commonly blocked or partially blocked by those illegally parked curbside. In mountainous areas, roads are often closed during the winter, and cars should be equipped with tire chains. Roads in Japan are much narrower than those in the United States.

Traffic Laws: Japanese law provides that all drivers in Japan are held liable in the event of an accident, and assesses fault in an accident on all parties. Japanese compulsory insurance (JCI) is mandatory for all automobile owners and drivers in Japan. Most short-term visitors choose not to drive in Japan. Turning on red lights is generally not permitted.

Japan has a national zero percent blood-alcohol-level standard for driving, and drivers stopped for driving under the influence of intoxicants will have their licenses confiscated. If you're found guilty of "drunken, speeding, or blatantly careless driving resulting in injury" you are subject to up to 15 years in prison.

All passengers are required to fasten their seat belts.

See our [Road Safety page](#) for more information. The National Police Agency (NPA) oversees the administration and enforcement of traffic laws in Japan. You can find further information in English on the [NPA's website](#) . Information about roadside assistance, rules of the road, and obtaining a Japanese driver's license is available in English from the [Japan Automobile Federation \(JAF\) web site](#) . See [the Japan National Tourism Organization's website](#) for car rental and driving in Japan.

Emergency Assistance: For roadside assistance, please contact the Japan Automobile Federation (JAF) at 03-5730-0111 in Tokyo, 072-645-0111 in Osaka, 011-857-8139 in Sapporo, 092-841-5000 in Fukuoka, or 098-877-9163 in Okinawa.

International Driving Permits (IDPs): An international driving permit (IDP) issued in the United States by the American Automobile Association (AAA) or the American Automobile Touring Alliance (AATA) is required of short-term visitors who drive in Japan. You must obtain an IDP issued in your country of residence prior to arriving in Japan. The U.S. Embassy or its consulates do not issue IDPs. IDPs issued via the Internet and/or by other organizations are not valid in Japan.

Residents in Japan who use an international driver's license may be fined or arrested. In practice, the term "resident" involves more than simply visa status or length of stay in Japan and is determined by the police. In short, an international license is not a substitute for a valid Japanese license. See our [website for more information on driving in Japan](#).

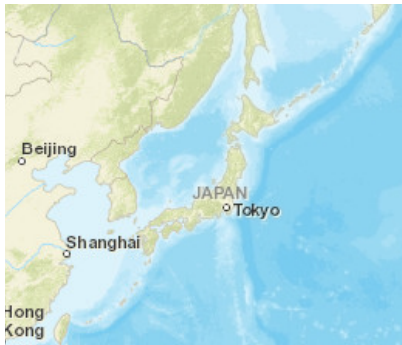
Aviation Safety Oversight: The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has assessed the government of Japan's Civil Aviation Authority as being in compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation safety standards for oversight of Japan's air carrier operations. Further information may be found on the [FAA's safety assessment page](#) .

Please see Fact Sheet for this country.

Assistance for U.S. Citizens

[U.S. Embassy Tokyo](#)

1-10-5 Akasaka, Minato-ku,
Tokyo 107-8420 Japan
Telephone: 81-3-3224-5000
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Fax: 81-3-3224-5856
Tokyoacs@state.gov



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