

Japan Relocation Guide



By Appointment To
Her Majesty The Queen
Removals and Storage Contractor Abels

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TELEPHONE:	Country code (0081) + Area code.
STANDARD TIME:	GMT + 9 hours.
WEIGHTS & MEASURES:	Metric.
ELECTRICITY:	In Japan the power sockets are of type A and B. The standard voltage is 100 V and the standard frequency is 50/60 Hz.
INOCULATIONS/VACCINATIONS:	Recommended Hepatitis A.
PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:	1st January New Year's Day, 2nd Monday in January – coming of age day, 11th February – National Foundation Day, 20th or 21st March – Vernal Equinox Day, 29th April – Showa Day, 3rd May – Constitution Memorial Day – Part of Golden Week, 4th May - Greenery Day – Part of Golden Week, 5th May – Children's Day – Part of Golden Week, The Golden Week dates may change year on year, 3rd Monday in July – Marine Day, 11th August – Mountain Day, 3rd Monday in September – Respect the Aged Day, 23rd September – Autumnal Equinox Day, 2nd Monday in October – Health Sports Day, 3rd November – Culture Day, 23rd November – Labour Thanksgiving Day, 23rd December – Emperor's Birthday, Holiday dates falling on a Sunday will be taken on Monday.
OFFICE HOURS:	The typical Japanese workweek is Monday to Friday 9 am to 5.30 pm, although many Japanese work longer, and flex hours have become popular.
BANK HOURS:	Most Banks are open from 9 am to 3 pm Monday to Friday.
EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS:	Police 110 Fire and Ambulance 119
BRITISH EMBASSY:	1 Ichiban-cho, Chiyoda-ku Tokyo 102 – 838 1 Tel: +81: 3 5211 1100
JAPANESE EMBASSY IN LONDON:	101-104 Piccadilly Mayfair, London W1J 7JT Tel: 0207 465 6500

Part 1 – Background Information on Japan

Background

In 1603, after decades of civil warfare, the Tokugawa shogunate (a military-led, dynastic government) ushered in a long period of relative political stability and isolation from foreign influence. For more than two centuries this policy enabled Japan to enjoy a flowering of its indigenous culture. Japan opened its ports after signing the Treaty of Kanagawa with the US in 1854 and began to intensively modernize and industrialise. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Japan became a regional power that was able to defeat the forces of both China and Russia. It occupied Korea, Formosa (Taiwan), and southern Sakhalin Island. In 1931-32 Japan occupied Manchuria, and in 1937 it launched a full-scale invasion of China. Japan attacked US forces in 1941 – triggering America’s entry into World War II - and soon occupied much of East and Southeast Asia. After its defeat in World War II, Japan recovered to become an economic power and an ally of the US. While the emperor retains his throne as a symbol of national unity, elected politicians hold actual decision-making power. Following three decades of unprecedented growth, Japan’s economy experienced a major slowdown starting in the 1990s, but the country remains an economic power. In March 2011, Japan’s strongest-ever earthquake, and an accompanying tsunami, devastated the northeast part of Honshu island, killed thousands, and damaged several nuclear power plants. The catastrophe hobbled the country’s economy and its energy infrastructure, and tested its ability to deal with humanitarian disasters. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was reelected to office in December 2012, and has since embarked on ambitious economic and security reforms to improve Japan’s economy and bolster the country’s international standing.

Geography and Climate

The archipelago of Japan is separated from the Asian mainland by 160km of sea and split into four main islands, Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu and Shikoku. About 70% of the country is covered by hills and mountains, a number of which are active or dormant volcanoes, including Mount Fuji, Japan’s highest peak, reaching 3,776 m. Japan sits on major seismic fault lines and is susceptible to frequent earthquakes.

A series of mountain ranges runs from northern Hokkaido to southern Kyushu. The Japanese Alps (the most prominent range) runs in a north-south direction through central Honshu. Lowlands and plains are small and scattered, mostly lying along the coast, and composed of alluvial lowlands and diluvial uplands

Except for the Hokkaido area and the subtropical Okinawa region, the weather in Japan is mostly temperate with four distinct seasons. Winters are cool and sunny in the south, cold and sunny around Tokyo, and very cold around Hokkaido, which is covered in snow for up to four months a year.

Summer ranges from warm to very hot with high levels of humidity in many areas. Typhoons, or tropical cyclones, with strong winds and torrential rains often hit Japan during August and September, but can occur through May to October. Spring and autumn are generally mild throughout the country, and offer spectacular views of pretty sakura cherry blossoms and colourful autumnal leaves respectively. Rain falls all over Japan throughout the year, but June and early July is the main rainy season.

Currency

Japan uses the Japanese yen, with the international symbol being ¥.

Currently, there are 1000 yen, 2000 yen, 5000 yen and 10,000 yen banknotes in circulation.

Coins come in one-yen, five-yen, 10-yen, 50-yen, 100-yen and 500-yen denominations.

Economy

Over the past 70 years, government-industry cooperation, a strong work ethic, mastery of high technology, and a comparatively small defense allocation (slightly less than 1% of GDP) have helped Japan develop an advanced economy.

Japan enjoyed an uptick in growth in 2013 on the basis of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s “Three Arrows” economic revitalization agenda - dubbed “Abenomics” - of monetary easing, “flexible” fiscal policy, and structural reform.. To help raise government revenue, Japan adopted legislation in 2012 to gradually raise the consumption tax rate. However, the first such increase, in April 2014, led to another recession, so Prime Minister Abe has twice postponed the next increase, now scheduled for October 2019.

Scarce in critical natural resources, Japan has long been dependent on imported energy and raw materials. After the complete shutdown of Japan's nuclear reactors following the earthquake and tsunami disaster in 2011, Japan's industrial sector has become even more dependent than before on imported fossil fuels. Reforms of the electricity and gas sectors, including full liberalization of Japan's energy market in April 2016 and gas market in April 2017, constitute an important part of Prime Minister Abe's economic program.

In October 2015, Japan and 11 trading partners reached agreement on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a pact that had promised to open Japan's economy to increased foreign competition and create new export opportunities for Japanese businesses. Japan was the first country to ratify the TPP in December 2016; the United States signaled its withdrawal from the TPP in January 2017, and in November 2017 the remaining 11 countries agreed on the core elements of a modified agreement, which they renamed the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

Education

Education is compulsory and free for 9 years, high school (koukou) is not compulsory, high school enrolment is still high: over 96% nationwide and nearly 100% in the cities.

Although education in Japan is also free for expat children, most attend international schools. This is usually due to the fact that international schools are better equipped to deal with the needs of foreign students and allow them to continue studying the same curriculum as they did back home.

Religion

Shinto and Buddhism are Japan's two major religions. Shinto is as old as the Japanese culture, while Buddhism was imported from the mainland in the 6th century.

Language

The most widely spoken language is Japanese, which is separated into a large number of dialects with Tokyo dialect considered standard Japanese. Most Japanese learn English for at least six years in school.

Population

As at February 2019 the population was estimated to be about 126,982,200.

Healthcare

Japan has universal health coverage, which means everyone is covered by the public health insurance program.

Anyone who lives in Japan must pay into the system according to their income level. And when people go to the doctor they pay about 30 percent of the cost of treatment and drugs out of their own pockets. Some people pay less and a few pay nothing.

Although every care is taken to ensure that all information in the Abels Relocation Guide is accurate and up to date Abels cannot accept liability for any inaccuracy.

Part 2 – Japan Import Customs Regulations

To the best of our knowledge, the following is required to import household and personal effects into Japan.

General Information

- You will need to complete Customs Declaration Form C. No. 5360 (import declaration), which can be obtained on your flight over to Japan. You should request two copies of the form, as you need to complete in duplicate.
- On arrival at your airport in Japan you must hand the completed forms to the Customs Officials. They will stamp the forms and one copy will be returned to you whilst you wait.

- Duty free entry provided you have all the correct documentation and also the consignment consists of household and personal effects which have been used by you overseas and are for your continued use in Japan.
- You must have arrived in Japan prior to Customs clearance of your effects, and your effects must be cleared within 6 months of the date of entry on your Customs Declaration form C. No. 5360.
- If you have not obtained your form C.No.5360 on arrival an original Apology letter to Customs must be arranged.
- All new items are taxable

Documentation required for returning Japanese citizens

- Your original Import Declaration Form C. No. 5360.
- Detailed Packing List in English or Japanese.
- A good clear copy of your passport showing the picture page and the information page.
- A good clear copy of your overseas Visa.
- A good clear copy of your most recent entry stamp into Japan, and the date should be the same as the stamp on your Form C. No. 5360.
- A good clear copy of your departure stamp from Japan when you flew out to the Country where your effects are being shipped from.
- A good clear copy of your entry stamp into the overseas Country.

Documentation required for Foreign Residents (new residents) (Holders of Foreign Passports, Employment Investors, Self-Employed, Spouse and those with Residents Permit

- Your original Import Declaration Form C. No. 5360.
- Detailed Packing List in English or Japanese.
- A good clear copy of your passport showing the picture page and the information page.
- A good clear copy of your Japanese Visa (working visa), and if your Nationality is different from the Country where the effects are being shipped from, we will need a copy of your Visa from that Country.
- A good clear copy of your most recent entry stamp into Japan, and the date should be the same as the stamp on your Form C. No. 5360.
- If your Visa is not available a letter from your Company in Japan must be sent to Customs in lieu of the Visa. The letter must be an original. The letter must be sent well in advance of shipping the effects and confirmation obtained.

Diplomats Removals

- A good clear copy of your passport showing the picture page and diplomatic information.
- Your original Import Declaration Form C.No. 5360.
- Simplified customs clearance request form for diplomats issued by Foreign Ministry. If this form is not available, documentation and procedure will be the same as removals of Foreign Residents.
- Your Embassy will inform you of the quantity of alcohol you are allowed.

Motor Vehicles

General Information

- Cars, boats and other vehicles may be included with your household goods shipment provided you have owned and used the vehicle for more than 1 year prior to shipping.



- Cars and other vehicles may be imported temporarily free of duty and tax provided they will be re-exported.
- Cars must comply with Japanese exhaust emission control and safety regulations.
- A test of emission control and safety regulation will be given (SHAKEN).
- Please note it can be expensive for an imported car to be examined, modified and registered.

Documents Required

- Original Passport.
- Vehicle registration document.
- Application for duty exemption on automobiles.
- Proof that you have owned and used the vehicle for one year.
- Sales/Purchase receipt.
- Insurance Certificate.
- Original Customs declaration form C-5360.
- KANGI form which can be obtained from the Foreign Ministry in Japan.

Alcohol

Only persons over the age of 20 can import 3 bottles maximum duty free. All other alcohol is dutiable.

Please do not include alcohol without contacting us, and we strongly recommend alcohol is not included.

Food

Again we recommend that foodstuffs are not included in your shipment. Customs are strict with the import of food, and an inspection will be done at clearance which will incur extra handling fees.

Prohibited Items

- Opium, ether, narcotic drugs and utensils for opium smoking, and stimulants (including Vick inhalers and Sudafed).
- Psychotropic substances.
- Counterfeit, altered or imitated articles of coins, paper money, banknotes or securities.
- Books, drawings, carvings and any other article which injures public security or morals (obscene or immoral materials, pornography etc).
- Articles which infringe upon rights in patents, utility-models, designs, trademarks, copyrights, neighborhood rights or layout design or integrated circuits.
- Firearms (pistols, rifles, machine guns etc) and ammunition (bullets) thereof, and parts of firearms.
- Weapons (swords, daggers, bows and arrows etc (all blades more than 15 centimeters in length)).

Wood Packaging

The Japanese Government adopted ISPM-15 (International standards for Phytosanitary Measures Publication 15) Guidelines for Regulating Wood Packaging Material in International Trade (aka NIFM-15) to standardise the treatment of wood packing materials used for the transport of goods.



Pets (dogs, cats, etc.)

We work with a number of Pet Relocation Companies who can help you Import your pet to Japan.

Please contact us if you wish to be put in contact with our partners.

Endangered Species

A CITES certificate is normally required. There is a worldwide ban on the movement of Ivory without a CITES Certificate. **Please note old pianos usually have ivory keys and a CITES certification will be required.**

For information on obtaining a CITES certificate please visit:

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/endangered-species-application-for-import-and-export-permit>

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