

HANDBOOK OF JAPANESE LIFE

HOMESTAY & SCHOOL



Japan, where you will live for the next year, has unique lifestyles and common sense, which are very different from those in your country, and you may be confused.

Understanding your lifestyle in Japan in advance will make your life with your host family and school life more enjoyable, so be sure to read this before you leave your country.

Most Japanese are more polite and kind than you can imagine. Many Japanese people don't speak English, so you may be in trouble. But when you treat them with respect and openness, they treat you warmly, try to communicate hard, and take good care of you. We all hope that Japan will be your second home.



HOMESTAY #1

Basically, you should follow your host family's rules as stated in your placement materials, as there are 100 rules for 100 families.

Japanese people are not good at expressing their opinions clearly to others, and they tend to hold back in everything. Be careful not to behave freely just because your host family doesn't warn you.

The Japanese people are a people who value "Reigi (politeness)" and "wa" (harmony) the most.

"Reigi" is a way of behavior that people should observe in order to maintain order in human and social life. Among these, it refers especially to manners that show respect. If you and others act selfishly toward each other, conflicts may eventually occur, and communal life may cease to exist.

To prevent this from happening and to ensure that each person can lead his or her daily life with peace of mind, the moral principles, or basic rules of speech and behavior, to be observed by one another are called "Reigi". The basis of courtesy is said to be "putting yourself in the other person's shoes. Put yourself in the other person's shoes and try to say and do things that do not offend, but rather make the other person happy.



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HOMESTAY #2

Let's call your host father "Oto-san" and your host mother "Oka-san". When calling the host brother, "name + kun" is desirable, and when calling the host sister, "name + chan" is desirable. (For example: If your host brother's name is TAKUYA, call him TAKUYA-kun)



HOMESTAY #3

When you come home from the outside, be sure to take off your shoes at the entrance. Some households have their own slippers, so be sure to use them.

Then be sure to wash your hands with soap in the washroom. Hand washing is a daily habit in Japan.



HOMESTAY #4

If you sleep in bed, be sure to make a bed when you wake up in the morning. If you sleep on a "futon", be sure to fold the futon every morning. (Let's ask the host family how to fold it)Futon must be hung outside regularly to dry out moisture. Be proactive in helping with this task, especially on holidays. Be sure to open your bedroom curtains every morning and close them when you come home from school in the evening. Due to the nature of the climate in Japan, humidity tends to accumulate.



HOMESTAY #5

Breakfast in Japan varies from household to household. Some families have only toast, while others have a sumptuous breakfast of grilled fish, miso soup, rice, and side dishes. If the breakfast is too much for you, be sure to tell your host mother so that nothing is left over. It is common in Japan for mothers to prepare breakfast.

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HOMESTAY #6

It is very rude in Japan to open the food cabinet or refrigerator in the kitchen without permission from your host mother. You should never eat or drink any of the food in them without asking to your host mother. You should ask your host mother's permission each time you want to open a door.



HOMESTAY #7

Be sure to close the toilet lid after each use. Also, Japanese toilet seats are warm and have various buttons, including one that washes your buttocks and bidet, which many international students find very surprising. Don't worry, you will never need to use those features.



HOMESTAY #8

You are not allowed to bring snacks or food into your bedroom to eat. Leaving food packages, garbage, drink cans or bottles in your bedroom will result in cockroach infestation. In the event of a cockroach or other pest infestation, students will be responsible for the cost of extermination, which is very expensive. Be sure to eat and drink in the dining room, and dispose of your waste in the garbage can designated by your host family.



HOMESTAY #9

In Japan, there are many families where children up to junior high school and their parents take a bath together. In some households, the order of taking a bath is fixed by family rules. Be sure to wash your head and body before entering the bathtub. Some families take a bath every day, while others take it once a week. Use the shower outside the bathtub. When using the shower, stop the hot water frequently and try to take a shower in a short time.

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HOMESTAY #10

Many households do laundry every day, and it is common to dry them outdoors. Basically, your host mother will do your laundry for you, but if you have something you want to wash yourself, talk to your host mother.



HOMESTAY #11

Many homes are generally prepared by the host mother for dinner. After eating, take your used dishes to the sink and don't leave them on the table.



HOMESTAY #12

In recent years, more and more Japanese families are conversing at dinner, but there are still some families that strictly respect manners and refrain from conversation during the meal. However, every family always says "Itadakimasu" before the meal and "Gochisosamadeshita" after the meal. This is a way of thanking the meal itself and the person who prepared it. It is customary to say these words while seated at the table.



HOMESTAY #13

Japanese families do not exclusively eat Japanese food. A variety of dishes, both Japanese and Western, are prepared in the average home. Vegetarianism and veganism are not widespread in Japan. Japanese people are very careful about the nutritional balance of their meals. Therefore, many families provide a good balance of meat, fish, and vegetables. Sometimes, when host mothers are busy or tired, they use delivery food such as McDonald's or pizza, or eat out at restaurants.

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HOMESTAY #14

Your host mother often cleans the house, but you should be willing to clean your room yourself. Also, some households with a garden do weeding work, so be sure to help them as well.



HOMESTAY #15

Some host families live in apartments instead of single-family homes. Let's be careful about noise and live. Noise can cause major trouble with your neighbors.



HOMESTAY #16

Mosquitoes occur from June to October in Japan. When you open the window of the room, do not open the screen door. If you leave the windows open in the summer, mosquitoes will attack you at night and you will not be able to sleep well for the whole family. For that reason, most homes use air conditioners and fans instead of opening windows as a measure against the heat.



HOMESTAY #17

Pay for your own supplies, and expenses incurred during outings with your host family out of your own pocket money. Never ask your host family for money or goods. If your host family gives you a kind gift, such as on your birthday or at Christmas, be sure to thank them for their hospitality.

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HOMESTAY #18

Always observe your host family's curfew. Your host family is taking you in under their responsibility to keep you safe. If you repeatedly fail to keep your curfew, your program will be involuntarily terminated and you will be required to return to your home country.



HOMESTAY #19

In Japan, it is basically taboo to leave food behind. Japanese children are trained from kindergarten onward to be grateful for food and its producers, even if they do not like it, and to say "Itadakimasu" before eating. Leaving food served by a host family or eating with reluctance is one of the most unbecoming attitudes in Japan, and is a major cause of the wall that is built between you and your host family.



HOMESTAY #20

Japan has a very detailed garbage separation system. Whether at home or in a food court at a shopping mall, you have to separate plastic, burnable garbage, bottles, cans, etc. when disposing of garbage. Until you get used to this, ask your host family to teach you.



HOMESTAY #21

While studying in Japan, refrain from staying in touch with family and friends in your home country by staying in your bedroom on a daily basis. Try to make the most of your limited time in Japan with your host family.

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SCHOOL LIFE #01

Japanese high schools have their own classrooms decided in April every year, and study in the same classrooms and seats until March of the following year. You study every day with all your classmates and school-determined subjects. The number of students in one class is about 40. Basically, the teachers of each subject will come to your classroom and give lessons. Some subjects are difficult for you to take classes in Japanese, so you will spend the time for those subjects in another classroom for self-study of Japanese. Please decide the details with your school teacher after you arrive in Japan.



SCHOOL LIFE #02

Each classroom is assigned a "class teacher". If you have any questions about your school life, please consult with your class teacher. At school, let's call the teacher "last name + sensei". (For example: If your teacher's name is Ken Tanaka, call it "Tanaka-sensei")



SCHOOL LIFE #03

In school life, eating sweets, snacks, and food is prohibited except during lunch (during class, during breaks). Even if you're hungry, be patient until lunch time.

The use of smartphones during class is also prohibited. When you arrive at high school in the morning, be sure to turn off the power except during breaks.



SCHOOL LIFE #04

For lunch with your classmates at school, eat the lunch box your host mother made in the morning or the one you bought on your way to school.

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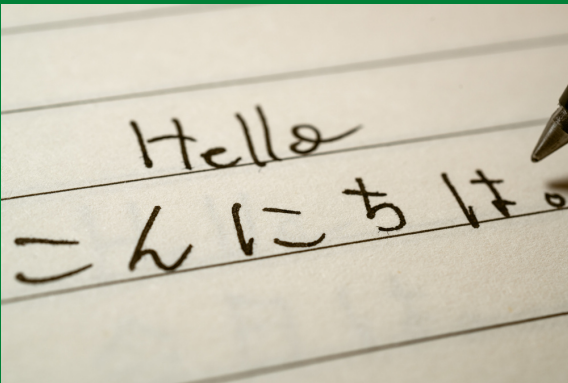
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SCHOOL LIFE #05

You go to high school in uniform. Wearing jewelry such as earrings, rings, necklaces and bracelets is prohibited.

Only your natural hair color will be allowed in school. If you have dyed your hair color, please return it to your natural hair color when you decide to come to Japan to study.



SCHOOL LIFE #06

Japanese high schools do not strictly require Japanese language proficiency for your admission, but you will enjoy your school life more if you can speak a little Japanese during your actual school life in Japan. Make every effort to learn Japanese before you leave your home country.



SCHOOL LIFE #07

Major high school club activities:

Examples: soccer club, basketball club, baseball club, tennis club, table tennis club, track and field club, volleyball club, kendo club, Japanese archery club, art club, brass band club, tea ceremony club, photography club, English club, etc.



SCHOOL LIFE #08

Major high school subjects:

National Language, Modern Sentence, Classic, World History, Japanese History, Geography, Modern Society, Ethics, Politics and Economy, Math, Science, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Earth Science, Science Research, Physical education, Health, Music, Art, Crafts, Calligraphy, English, Home Economics, Information Science, etc.

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OTHERS #01

If you have any problems, talk to your host family, regional rep, school teachers and friends. Basically, your regional rep speaks English and will do a lot for you.



OTHERS #02

Your regional rep will prepare a monthly report on your life in Japan and send it to your agent and your family.



OTHERS #03

You will be absent from school while your high school is on a regular exam. During that period, you will volunteer with regional rep and host families, and you will take Japanese culture experience classes, and you will have a social studies tour.



OTHERS #08

Once a month (for programs of six months or longer) or twice a month (for programs of three months), your regional rep will take you on a field trip on the weekend. We plan various trips and cultural experiences so that you can relieve your daily stress. Make lots of wonderful memories for you.