



ehime

2020 Guidebook

愛媛へようこそ！

Created by Ehime JETs
for Soon-to-be Ehime JETs!

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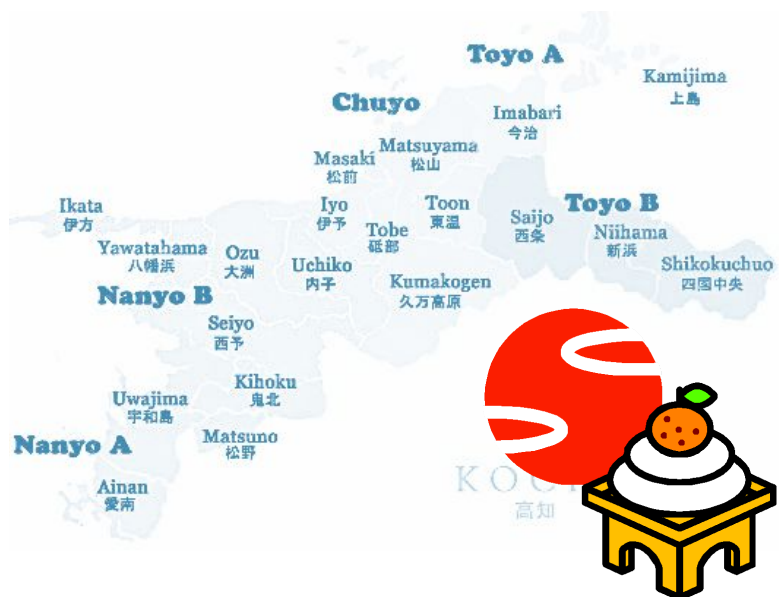
NANYO A

NANYO B

CHUYO

TOYO A

TOYO B



Welcome to Ehime!

Ehime (pronounced *eh-hee-meh*, written 愛媛) is on the northwestern side of Shikoku, the smallest of Japan's four main islands. While Ehime is largely a rural prefecture, it boasts the largest city on Shikoku – Matsuyama (over 500,000 people) – and is home to some of Japan's cultural treasures, including Matsuyama Castle, Dogo Onsen (hot springs), and Oyamazumi Shrine. The “Love Princess” (literal translation of “Ehime”) is truly a hidden treasure – a place where culture and natural beauty intertwine.

About this Guidebook

Ehime is home to a wide variety of cities and towns and this inevitably leads to very different living situations. We are spread far and wide – from the industrial cities of the east to the coastal communities of the south-west, and everything in between – like the mountainous villages of the central regions and the tiny island communities in the North! (And let's not forget Matsuyama!)

This guidebook has been created to give you an idea of what to expect (and not to expect) as you start your new life in Ehime. It has been updated and revised for 2020. Hopefully, it will answer some of the questions you may have – but if not, please feel free to get in touch one of us current JETs! Information about individual regions can be found at

www.ehimeajet.com

A big thanks to past and present JETs for contributing ideas, materials and suggestions for this guidebook – you have helped to make it what it is!

Did you know?

About 70% of Ehime is forested

Ehime has **the highest peak in western Japan**: Mount Ishizuchi 1,982m

Ehime was originally called “The Land of Iyo” (Iyo-no-Kuni) Japanese “**haiku**” originated in **Ehime**

The population of Ehime is about 1,500,000 (1.18% of the nation's population)

Ehime is famous for **mandarin oranges** (a.k.a. mikan)

Ehime's Imabari City is famous nationwide for making towels **Matsuyama Castle** is one of the only three remaining large-scale, multi-wing castles in Japan

Ehime is home to Japan's oldest hot spring – **Dogo Onsen**

Dogo Onsen was the inspiration for the bath house in the Studio Ghibli film

‘Spirited Away’

Kenzaburo Oe, who hails from Uchiko Town, is one of only two Japanese writers to win the Nobel Prize in literature.

The Climate



Summer is hot, humid, and sticky. Air conditioning is not often found in classrooms, but it's in offices and (hopefully!) your apartment. At times, Ehime has been recorded as the hottest place in Japan. Temperatures can get up to the mid-thirties (C)/nineties (F). **Always carry water to prevent dehydration..**

Autumn is beautiful. The air is crisp, but not too cool. The maple leaves change color and the fall festivals are plentiful. Autumn also brings typhoon season, which means it rains, a lot. When the rain stops, the cool weather begins to settle in.

Winter is mild and in general, there is only light snow that melts upon touching the ground...except in the mountains, where

some areas may receive up to a meter of snow! Be warned: heating is hard to find in Ehime! (This means winter can feel very cold!) Schools may not have heaters in the classrooms and your apartment may have a space heater, but not central heating.

Japan is a very weather-oriented country, with fashion, food and festivals greatly influenced by the coming and going of the seasons. In Ehime, the temperatures can vary greatly depending on what region you live in, but here's a general guide.

Spring is full of flowers, cherry blossoms and (again) rain. The weather mercifully begins to warm up, and the rains come down. Days alternate between beautiful sunshine and downpours.

Rainy Season is late spring, early summer (your Japanese friends and colleagues will tell you they have five seasons). It rains – a lot! All day, for days on end! For those of you from dry regions, expect to get wet.

Ehime JET Support Network

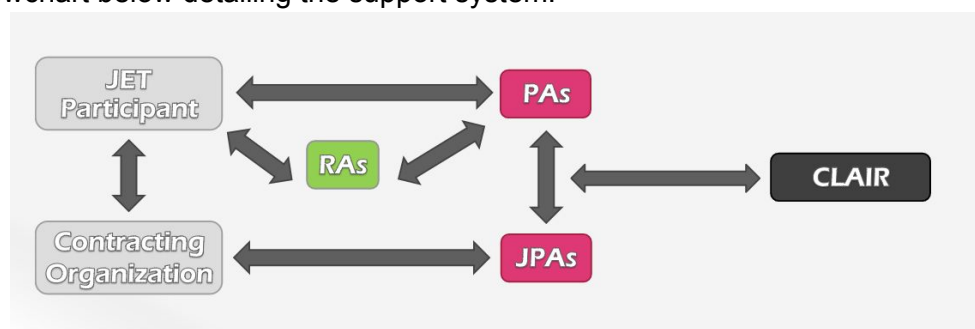
Prefectural Advisors

Prefectural Advisors (PAs) are appointed by the prefecture and are trained by CLAIR on the workings of the JET Programme. From taxes to mental health referrals to medical bills, PAs can help you with the nitty gritty parts of living abroad. For 2020-21, Ehime has two PAs.



The PAs work with the Ehime prefectural government division that is in charge of JET. Together the JET PAs and Japanese PAs (JPAs) plan seminars for JETs and their supervisors, as well as disseminate important information and announcements throughout the year. PAs are here to provide support for the JET community.

See this flowchart below detailing the support system:



Your JET PAs for the 2020-21 term will be Jordan Rocke and Makoto Schroeder. The JPAs will be Masano Nakamura and Ito Yurina.



Jordan Rocke
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 mobile: 080-863-05513

G'day! I'm Jordan, a 3rd year ALT from Canberra in Australia, and I'm also one of the two Prefectural Advisors for Ehime Prefecture. My passions include teaching, video games, terrible anime and history, and I actually used to be a history teacher before coming to Japan. I live in Hojo, on the outskirts of Matsuyama, and teach at the SHS there. If you need anything at all, just want to chat, or ever want to come visit beautiful Hojo, feel free to get in touch!
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Makoto Schroeder
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Hola Everyone! My name is Makoto and I am a fifth year CIR from southern California. I will be serving as one of your Prefectural Advisors for the year. My hobbies largely include gaming, reading and to a degree drawing (I need to force myself to do this more).
 If you ever need any help with Japanese, getting settled, finding out where to get some tacos or understanding exactly what "viking" means in Japanese (it's buffet style all you can eat), feel free to contact me. I should also be fairly accessible since I am located in Matsuyama, Ehime's capital.
 Well, as accessible as you can be in rural Japan.

Regional Advisor System

In Ehime, we also have a support network called the 'Regional Advisor System.' The JETs in Ehime have been divided into 5 groups by region: Nanyo A, Nanyo B, Chuyo, Toyo A, and Toyo B. Each region has at least one Regional Advisor (RA) – an experienced, volunteer JET who is designated to help other JETs in his/her area.

The RAs can help you with many region/job related questions, information about your area, ideas for teaching, traveling in/out of your region, services available, etc. The RAs have lived in their region for at least a year and know what it's like to be a 1st-year JET there! Feel free to contact the RAs in other areas to find out about their region.

Here are your RAs for the 2020-21 year!



Ada Smith

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Hello everyone! My name is Ada, and I'm lucky enough to be the RA for Nanyo A: the best region of Ehime. I hail from Reno, Nevada of The United States of America. After three years I'm still adjusting to the humidity and the plethora of creepy crawlies here, but I absolutely love exploring this beautiful country. The town I live in, Kihoku-cho (North of the Demon) has plenty of interesting culture and hiking trails to keep me occupied down here, but I always find time to go out and see what the other regions have to offer as well! My passions are reading, writing, and gardening; so if you are looking for a new book to read or want some fresh veggies, don't hesitate to ask! There's plenty that I don't know yet, but I'm always willing to give a new problem or question my all. I can't wait to meet you!

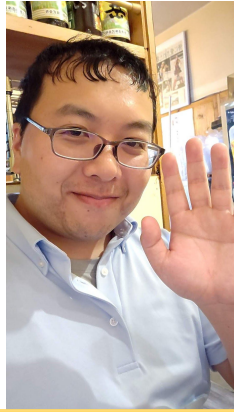


Julia Kuchle

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Hello! I'm Julia Kuchle and the RA of Nanyo B. This is my 4th year living in Ikata in Ehime. My favorite things about Japan are my friends, the clubs, the language, the onsen, and kaiten sushi. I'm from Illinois in the US. I spend most of my time watching Youtube and hanging out with my friends. I really love and value my friends and family. Some of the other things I like to do are exercising, swimming, drawing, playing games, studying Japanese, traveling, and dancing. I'm always down for exciting and good times!

Chuyo



Preston Vue

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LINE ID: suikoarke

Hello there everyone! Welcome to Ehime, land of the mikans. The name's Preston Vue. Originally from Sacramento, California and now I'm currently living in Matsuyama. I'm the RA for the Chuyo Region this year. So nice to meet ya. It's been a really bad year so far, but even so, let's make the best of it moving forward. I'm currently a third year JET working in Matsuyama teaching elementary and junior high schools. Among my hobbies, I like to play video games, read, watch movies and anime, jog, swim, do photography, and, recently, do karate. I know quite a bit about the region in general so if you have any questions, feel free to ask. I'll always be willing to help out.
Love and peace.

Toyo A



Jocelyn Montejo

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LINE ID: xochetl

Hello!! I am a 2nd year ALT. I am also one of the Toyo A RAs. I'm originally from Chicago, Illinois in the USA. While in Imabari I picked up a couple hobbies. You can find me at taiko practice every Wednesday at the castle or riding my bicycle on the weekends. If you have any questions let me know! Taiko always welcomes new members and I love riding buddies! Looking forward to having ya'll here!! See you soon! :) If you have any questions don't be afraid to reach out. I also came with zero teaching experience so if you have any questions about my experience as a 1st year ALT let me know!

Toyo A



Kathryn Shea

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Hey there! I'm the other half of the Toyo A RA team with Jocy and a 2nd year ALT. I was born in California, but grew up in Germany. I love RPGS like DnD and video games, but you can also find me cycling or hiking outside. Wednesdays are the best days because they are taiko days. I'm super excited for everyone coming, so please don't be shy about reaching out!

Toyo B



Sydney Simon

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LINE ID: sydneyssimon

I'm a second year ALT from California, USA. I'm currently teaching elementary school and junior high school in Shikokuchuo City. When I'm not dining at Sushiro, collecting Pooh merchandise, or shopping at the Aeon mall, I enjoy ikebana and volunteering. If you have any questions or need any help, don't be a stranger!

Toyo B



Joshua Pires

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toyobehime@gmail.com

I'm a second year ALT from Melbourne, Australia. I'm currently teaching in elementary schools around Saijo City. Occasionally, one may find me at the plant section of a hardware store but otherwise I'm cruising around to check out different cafes, game centres, and photo spots! Please reach out if you need anything.

Before You Leave

Your Apartment

Housing arrangements vary greatly from among individual JETs (rent, furnishings, location, utilities, amenities, and so forth). If you have a predecessor, find out if they want to sell you their goods, but remember to check cost and condition. You are not under any obligation to buy anything/everything from your predecessor. You may be required to pay “key money,” which is essentially a deposit that will (probably) not be refunded. Not everyone has to pay key money, so find out if you do and how much it will be.

Clothing



If you are larger than the average Japanese person is, you will have difficulty shopping in Japan. However, the larger the city, the more options you will have. Clothing can also be quite expensive. It's a good idea to stock up a bit on those necessary everyday items, like undergarments, pantyhose, jeans, T-shirts and shoes before you leave home. In general, clothing is more reserved in Japan. If you wear revealing clothes (i.e. show a lot of skin), you will draw attention to yourself.

Big and Tall

There are stores specializing in plus sizes, especially in the bigger cities. For a start in Ehime, check out “4L” (Google: フォーエル) in Matsuyama.

For work, you probably won't have to wear a suit every day, but be sure to dress professionally. A black suit will be a must for the more official occasions, events and ceremonies. Bring a pair of indoor shoes – most schools will require you to remove your footwear at the door and put on indoor shoes (rubber sole shoes or slippers). Revealing clothing (sleeveless or low-cut tops, short skirts, etc.) is not acceptable! Also, bring one set of sports clothes; these come in handy for your school's sports days, club activities, and P.E. classes.

In summer, think cotton! Guys – cotton slacks with short sleeve dress shirts are fine, but you may need to wear a T-shirt underneath. Girls – tops with sleeves, slacks, knee-length skirts are okay (cover your shoulders!).

Modesty Tip!

Do the bend over/stretch test to see how much skin you show – you might consider buying longer shirts or wearing singlets, etc., that cover your middle no matter what you do.

In winter, think layers! Long underwear, turtlenecks, wool socks, and big cardigan sweaters all help. In the rainy season, a good raincoat can be a godsend (rain suits can be easily purchased after you're here), especially if you have to commute to work by bike.

Elementary school is often less strict. If your elementary school says it's acceptable, comfortable clothes or tracksuits are the way to go (as long as you're covered up)!

Shoes are measured in centimeters. People with larger feet will have trouble finding decent shoes that fit. This applies to women larger than 24.5cm and men larger than 29cm. It's also a good idea to bring shoes that are easy to take on/off – you'll be doing it a lot!

It is best to over-dress during the early stages of your contract, and slowly feel out what suits you and the school best. Every school is different and emulating what you see is the best way to fit in. Wearing a full suit while standing next to a teacher wearing a hoodie and trackpants is not going to help you blend in. Likewise, some schools tend to dress more colorfully, and others tend towards a more muted style. You'll find a nice balance after a few months here. If unsure, always know your co-workers are happy to help!

Things to Bring

In this modern age of internet shopping, you'll find many things are quite accessible. However, this can cause a lot of concern for many. While the guide below should help you prepare, a quick search on www.amazon.co.jp is an excellent way to confirm/deny specific products. Remember to try searching for things with their Japanese names too!

Toiletries

Deodorant: It's a good idea to bring your own, as good deodorant is hard to come by in Japan.

Toothpaste: Most Japanese toothpastes now contain fluoride, but at lower concentrations than are likely found in your home country. You may wish to bring your own simply for taste!

Sunscreen: The sun in Japan is quite strong so a good sunscreen is a must. Sunscreen is widely available as a spray, lotion, or makeup base, and are high quality, but may be expensive and sold in small quantities. Some sunscreen may also include skin-whitening agents (look out for: 美白)! Consider bringing your own, especially if you have sensitive skin.

Cold Medicine: There are many cold, allergy and headache medicines available over the counter here. Most of them are supposed to be very good, but in general the ingredients are different from Western medicines, and dosages are usually smaller. If you bring your own medicine, be careful that it does not contain any medicine that is illegal in Japan (see the CLAIR JET General Information Handbook (GIH) for more details).

Contraceptives: Although various contraceptives can be easily found, consider bringing your own for the sake of privacy. Visits to the doctor or drug store could be difficult and frustrating since small communities tend to know where you went and what you bought. Check your JET GIH about sending medication to Japan. Also, Japanese condoms run slightly smaller, so if you require a "magnum" size in your home country, it may be worth bringing your own supply.

Hair Care: Widely available, reasonably priced and generally good. As with most things, the products here are slightly different from back home, so if you are particular, you should bring your own. Dandruff shampoo in Japan will say フケ on the bottle and might be necessary during the very dry winters. Gels, sprays, foams, and mousses are different, but can be fun to experiment with. Hair colour products are designed for dark hair and may affect blonde hair differently. If you have curly hair, it's a good idea to bring moisturizer and defrizzer/curling products. Lastly, methods of cutting hair may be different. There are many sad stories and many good stories about a person's first hair cut in Japan. Consider bringing a picture of your hair after it's just been cut (or find something in a magazine you like) and asking friends or other JETs for recommendations on where to go. Some salons may also give discounts to first-timers!



Vitamins: Vitamins are available in Japan. However, if you don't read kanji, buying them may pose a problem. Again, doses tend to be small and prices high.

Contact Solution: Contact solution (such as Clear Care and Re-Nu) is available here. The ingredients may not be the same, but they work effectively. If you are concerned, the recommendation is to bring your own supply, or have it sent (especially if you live outside of Matsuyama).

Body Lotions and Moisturizers: You can easily find general moisturizers (hands & body, facial) over the counter. However, if you have certain skin care needs or allergies, bring your own. Lotions can be expensive and Japan may not have the type you want. Also, Japanese brands are designed for Asian skin, so they may take moisture out instead of putting it in. Some may also include skin-whitening agents! If you use a major cosmetic brand for skin care, you can find counters in Matsuyama at either Mitsukoshi or Takashimaya (department stores). Other skin care stores like Lush can be found in the shopping mall, Emiful, near Matsuyama.

Tampons and Pads: Widely available and well priced. Some familiar Western brands are also available. However, menstrual cups and wash may be more challenging to find.

Facial Wash: Available and good. Like back home, prices vary depending on the brand. For acne, benzoyl peroxide is not generally sold in Japan. Products generally use salicylic acid and other gentle compounds.

Shaving Cream: Available and good, however most have strong scents. Razors are also available. If you use shaving cream and are particular about the brand, consider bringing your own.

Make-Up: Although you can generally find all major brands (as mentioned previously) and lots of good Japanese brands of make-up here, it is very expensive. It is also meant for Japanese skin tones, so shades are limited.

Miscellaneous

Japan Guidebook: *Lonely Planet*, etc.

Travel-size Japanese dictionary

Laptop computer: If you travel between schools and want to be able to work on materials or have all your materials in one place, a laptop or tablet are excellent tools for keeping your productivity hassle-free.

Smartphone: Even if you intend to get a new one here, for those first few days/weeks, a pocketable digital dictionary can be of great help.

Self-Introductions

Photographs (family, home, friends, food, country, school-life, holidays, etc.). If space is an issue, you may consider scanning these items and printing copies once you arrive.

Information about your hometown/country (maps, currency, flag, famous items, postcards, etc.)



Gift Ideas

Use your judgment and don't go beyond your means to bring something for everyone when a group gift will do just as well. Keep in mind that something from your home town/state/country will be the most appreciated. You may like to save your 'special' gifts for your supervisor, principal, etc. You can also ask your predecessor for details of who best to buy gifts for. Don't go overboard and use up all your luggage space on presents! People know that you have just made an international move and even the smallest gift (like a bitesize candy) will fulfill most obligations.



Biscuits, sweets (chocolate, toffee etc.), alcohol, calendars, photo books, coasters, food from your country (Vegemite, maple syrup, etc.), key rings, magnets, macadamia nuts, dried fruit, tea, etc.



If possible, using gift-wrap that reflects the area you are from (koala printed wrapping paper; hula girl gift bags, etc.) is a nice touch. However, you may wish to wrap your gifts after arriving rather than risk having them opened by airport security!

Prizes for Students

Postage stamps, pencils, flags, postcards, key rings, stickers, erasers, pins, seals, coins, etc. Stickers from your home country themed around famous things go are popular with most kids in all grades. Self-inking stamps themed for your home country would be a good prize too.

Money

When you're deciding how much money you should bring with you to Japan, it's a good idea to contact your predecessor for advice. You may need key money, the first month's rent, cash to buy furniture or appliances, money to pay for your predecessor's things and money to live on. If you plan to buy a mobile phone before your first paycheck, you should also take that into consideration. Most carriers will discount and allow you to pay installments on your phone as part of your monthly bill, but the majority of contracts are for two years. If you only plan to stay for one year or would prefer to pay for your phone outright, budget



anywhere from 20,000 yen (basic phone) – 90,000 yen (high-end smartphone) for the purchase. You may be able to access money from your home country's bank by using an international 7-11 ATM or JP Post Office ATM. However, not all places have this.

Packing

It's not necessary for you to bring everything with you from your home country – you are able to get most things in Japan. If you want something for when you arrive and can't carry it on your flight, consider shipping it before you leave. Simply let your contracting organization know that you are shipping things. **Surface shipping** can take between 1 – 3 months (remember to pack your shipped boxes well!) Note: if you send chocolate in shipped boxes, it'll probably melt! It travels better in your suitcase. A more expensive alternative (and the only option for U.S. JETs) is sending things by **airmail or parcel delivery service** (UPS, FedEx, etc.)

Homesickness

Don't hesitate to bring **personal items** that remind you of home, family, and friends. On those inevitable days when your carefully prepared lesson is met with bored yawns, or you misread (or can't read) the kanji and get on the wrong bus, you'll appreciate having some comforts waiting for you at home. If you know your Japanese address before leaving your home country, be sure to share it with your family and friends (or send out e-mails or postcards after you've arrived). Tell people to write to you, especially after the first month or two. Once you're settled in and the newness has begun to wear off, you may begin to feel a little homesick and finding a **postcard or letter from home** in your mailbox is always a nice pick-me-up. You may even consider setting up an exchange with friends/family back home – they send you some familiar goodies (magazines, favourite foods, etc.) and you send them a box of novelties from Japan (Pocky, dried squid, plastic Gundam, etc.) Needless to say, having a computer with Internet is highly useful and advised. Keeping in touch with family and friends can really help you get through culture shock. You can use Skype or Line to call home for free or very cheaply.

Long-Distance Relationships

Long-distance relationships are very possible (though difficult) romantic or otherwise. Before departing, you will likely feel a lot of anxiety in relation to leaving your loved ones behind. However, there are many perks to long-distance relationships and being away is almost never as bad as you anticipate it to be! The Internet is overflowing with ways to keep the love going in a long-distance relationship. However, every relationship is different so take some time to figure out expectations for how often to communicate and how. Remember that because most of your communication will likely be done on the phone or over text, there is a lot of room for misinterpretation. It helps to be aware of that and adjust accordingly! You can still do things together, such as watch a movie at the same time on Skype. Sending packages or fun e-mails to each other is another great way to reaffirm the love in a relationship and let them know you're thinking of them. Remember to be creative and have fun, as a weekly phone call may not be enough for many relationships to thrive.

Journeying to Your New Home

When you arrive in Matsuyama, you'll be meeting your supervisor(s), so **dress appropriately**. Don't worry about having a big speech prepared – if you're not confident with Japanese, the following tidbits will get you through that first meeting!

JAPANESE	READING	ENGLISH
はじめまして	hajime mashite	How do you do? / Nice to meet you.
私の名前は	watashi no namae wa...	My name is...
...から来ました	...kara kimashita	I'm from...
よろしくお願いします	yoroshiku onegaishimasu	Essentially means "Please regard me favorably."

Don't be shocked if your supervisor doesn't speak English – think of it as a great way to practice intercultural communication! They'll try their best too!

Gift Giving

Don't know what to give? Who to give it to? When to give it? This is an issue that can stress a lot of new JETs out. Don't worry! It's not necessary to give presents on day one, or even week one. Your co-workers know that you have just arrived and have lots of things to get used to! It's okay to give your gifts (a.k.a. omiyage) once you have settled in and you know whom you work with.

A word of warning – people living in rural areas may be taken to meet the mayor (or other town dignitaries) on their first day – thus you may want to have something small with you that you can give. Check with your predecessor to see if this is the case.

Getting Your Phone

One of the first things you're likely to be taken to do is get a mobile phone. There are three major carriers in Japan – **Docomo, Softbank, and AU**. In the end, prices are similar, and it won't matter much which company you go with, but if you are in a rural location you may wish to ask around to make sure your chosen company has good reception in your area. You might be required to pay for the entire phone up front, so be prepared with cash or a credit card.

The type of phone you get is ultimately up to you, though smartphones are highly recommended. With a smartphone, you are able to keep many survival tools on the same device, including a Japanese/English dictionary, voice translator, access to the Internet, train schedules, GPS, and interactive maps of Japan. As a newcomer to Japan, you will almost certainly find yourself searching for information and it's infinitely more convenient to have it all in your pocket. Smartphone plans average between 5500 – 7800 yen a month and allow for between 2-7 GB of data. Some phones and plans also include tethering (the ability to use your phone as a

Pro Tip:
LINE is the most
popular
messaging
service in Japan.
Get LINE!

computer modem) as part of the price – very useful if you plan on bringing a laptop to work.

If you do get a smartphone, you will likely wish to download the **LINE application**. An extremely popular instant message program, it also allows you to call other LINE users for free, regardless of their carrier. And since nearly everyone in Japan uses LINE, you'll practically never have to use your phone's minutes.

Japan is prone to natural disasters, including typhoons, earthquakes and tsunamis, so it is recommended that everyone prepare an emergency kit. You may want to consider getting a handcrank charger or solar charger to add to your emergency kit to ensure your phone can be used in the event of an emergency.

If you would like to use your own phone, be prepared for some extra time as while most phone providers will allow this, many might be unsure if they can provide service for a foreign phone. You can use a site like <http://willmyphonework.net/> to check if your phone is compatible. However, buying one in Japan will be easier. Ask your predecessor for advice as previous JETs have had an incredibly difficult time getting a SIM or contracting without a phone bought in-store.

Ehime Orientation

Soon after you arrive in Ehime you will attend a two-day orientation for all new JETs in the prefecture. It's very exciting to see everyone you met in Tokyo again, but it's also where you'll receive a lot of good information about life and work specific to Ehime. Most people find that Ehime Orientation is very helpful as the presenters are from situations close to yours. The 2018 Ehime Orientation will be held from **August 16-17** in Matsuyama at the Prefectural Office (the Kencho).

Your Life In Japan



Home Away From Home

Japan can be an expensive place, but you don't need to spend a fortune setting up your new home. Check out the **100-yen shops, second-hand stores** (such as book/house/hard off), and ask your teachers if you can borrow things. Stores like **Jusco/AEON, Fuji Grand, Nitori, and DAIKI** have many things to make your house a home – and they deliver too!

In Your Neighborhood

Find a convenience store (7-11, Lawson, Family Mart, Circle K, Sunkus, Yamazaki, etc.)

Find the nearest ATM (make note of its opening and closing times, which vary by bank)

Find a grocer or supermarket (Fuji, Shopper's, Jusco, Marunaka, etc.)

Find the nearest bus and/or train station

Find the nearest *koban* (police station)

**Call 110 in an emergency for police.
Call 119 for an ambulance or fire
brigade.**

Personal Administration

Learn how to use the ATM / Bank Machines

Click on this link and save it for your reference: [Japanese ATM Guide](#)

Note that bank and ATM hours in Japan are likely much more restricted than in your home country.

Organize how you want to pay your bills. Whether cash when they are paid at convenience stores/post office, or automatic deduction (口座振込 *kouza furikomi*) from your bank account – get your supervisors to help. (Automatic deduction may not be available for all bills).

Learn how to send money home. “GoRemit Shinsei” Transferwise and the local post office are three common remittance services.

In Your Spare Time

Explore, explore, explore!

Study Japanese, including applying for the CLAIR language courses.

Read the Team Teaching Handbook or *Planet Eigo* (ask your predecessor about these)

Make contact with friends and family back home (snail mail is time consuming but it's great to get a reply)

Make contact with the JETs in your region

Relax, watch English TV, read a book, etc.

Culture Shock

Adjusting to life in another country can be quite hard and many JETs experience culture shock to some degree. It's important to be aware of the signs of culture shock so that you can find ways to counter the effects of the stress it causes. Signs of culture shock include panic attacks, loss of self-confidence, and excessive anger/anxiety. Some coping strategies include eating well and exercising, getting a good night's sleep, meeting with friends, exploring your area, and relaxing (take time out for yourself and don't feel guilty about having a lazy day!). Keep in touch with friends and keep a diary. Check out your General Information Handbook for more detailed information about culture shock.

Transport

Public Transport

IC Card: Usable on Iyotetsu buses, trains, trams and taxis (Matsuyama area). They offer a 10% discount on travel. Available at the Iyotetsu office at Matsuyama City Train station. You might find them less useful outside of Matsuyama though. *Iyotetsu refers to the name of the bus/train company.

Cars

Kei cars (yellow plates) are much more economical than a standard sized car. Fuel economy is much better, and tax and *shaken* (car inspection fees) are much less. Full size cars (white plates) generally have more space and more power, which may be useful for heavy mountain driving or long trips. If you are interested in a white plate car, try to find one with two or more years left on its *shaken*. An **international driver's license** is good for one year and usually relatively easy to acquire in your home country, so you might consider bringing one and deciding after a year if you'd like to apply for a Japanese license to keep driving.



Pedal Power



Things to consider:

Mountain or city bike?
Gears?
Basket? (good for shopping)
Mud guards? Bike fenders?

If you are placed in a city, it's likely that a cheap 'Mamachari' city bike will suffice. However, if you are placed in a more rural spot or if you enjoy cycling in your free time, it may be worth considering a mountain or sports bike, which would be much lighter and more capable of handling steep inclines. If it's possible, buy your bike with a sempai or supervisor, as they can help negotiate the necessary paperwork. However, although you may need a bike to access work, don't feel rushed into buying one.

If you are living in Matsuyama or even just visiting for the day, Matsuyama International Center (MIC) offer a free short-term and mid-term (around 2 months) bicycle rental service. All you need to do is fill in a short form (in English) and bring along ID.

Bicycle laws have recently become stricter across Japan. You are liable to receive a citation if you break cycling rules, which include riding while holding something (umbrella, etc.), passing on the wrong side, riding on the sidewalk in prohibited areas and cycling while intoxicated.

Many JETs find they will be cycling often, perhaps much more so than they expect, so be prepared for an adjustment period. Additionally, it will be very hot when you arrive. Ask if your school has somewhere to change so you can be in fresh clothes once you arrive.

Settling into Your Job

After the excitement of your first few days/weeks in Japan has settled down, you may find the amount of time you have to spend in the office (especially during school holidays) overwhelming. Here is a list of some things you could do to keep yourself busy at the office:

Go through any information/files left behind by previous ALTs.

If you are in the BOE: Ask if you can go and meet some of the teachers at your schools

Make an office name plan – ask the teachers to fill in their names (hiragana/kanji). Some schools/offices also have seating charts. This can help you match names to faces.

Introduce yourself to as many teachers as possible.

Walk around your school – chat with the students, check out club activities.
 Introduce yourself / talk to your teachers – show them pictures of your home country, etc.
 Read through your schools' English textbooks.
 Make an information display (or a newsletter) about your country in simple English for students and teachers alike (be careful not to give away all your self-intro materials! Only put in information you feel comfortable telling strangers).
 Plan your self-introductions – ask your JTEs for their opinions/ideas.
 Ask and use the school's laminator and laminate pictures for your self-intro
 Brainstorm games you can make for future lessons and **MAKE THEM!**
 Search the net for game/lesson ideas.
 Study Japanese. Asking co-workers questions about the Japanese you learn can help start conversations.
 Organize an English club for the teachers (during lunchtime or during free periods).
 Have a cooking lesson demonstrating a favorite western food for your teachers.

At School

Teachers' Meetings

Teachers' meetings are held every morning before classes for 5 – 15 minutes. It's a time for general notices and for the day's schedule to be given (ask a JTE after to tell you what was discussed). At one of these meetings, you will need to do a self-introduction for your teachers in Japanese. This is a good time to let your teachers know your interests!



Ceremonies

Ceremonies are big in Japan, and this is true for schools, too. There will be an opening ceremony following all extended vacation periods (winter/spring/summer) and a closing ceremony before vacations. There are also graduation and coming of age (junior high school) ceremonies. These will likely be in the gym and will almost certainly last for a while - try and stay focused!

As a new arrival to the school (for ALTs based at a school), you will take center stage at some point in the autumn's opening ceremony. In almost all cases, you will enter the school gym with the principal and you will be greeted by a standing ovation from the students and teachers. Do not be surprised if the students seem extremely enthusiastic at your arrival. Your entrance may be accompanied by your national anthem or any catchy tune by the Beatles. Following a rendition of the Japanese national anthem and the school song, you will be led to the stage where you will be welcomed by the school principal and the student president. Now comes the important bit: you will address the school. It is best to keep the speech short and snappy. If possible, try to prepare something in Japanese. Otherwise, one of the English teachers will translate for you. Once you finish speaking, you will receive more applause, be led to your seat and the rest of the ceremony will pass in a blur. Breathe a sigh of relief, as you will have survived the most important part of your first day at school.

School Trips & Sports Days

Many schools schedule their school trips for the beginning of September (although some do happen in spring). Try not to be surprised if you find yourself in an empty school for a few days (why not ask if you can go?). Also, most schools will have a Sports Day sometime in September (although this has been changing to spring in some areas). Leading up to the Sports Day, most classes are cancelled and you may find yourself watching marching practice and cheering practice. These seemingly endless drills overwhelm many ALTs, although the day itself is a lot of fun with many unique events. Enjoy it as best you can and be sure to join in the fun. You can join the teachers' team and race against the PTA or you can volunteer to dress in costume. Make sure to bring



sunscreen and a baseball cap as glare can be a huge problem and most schools will not allow you to wear sunglasses.

Schedules

There really is no such thing as a regular schedule. The regular schedule seems to often serve as a model that is modified according to whether the first year students need to spend a period practicing the school song or the second year students need extra swim practice or moral education, etc. Lessons are generally forty-five or fifty minutes in duration. Some schools may hold a regular morning assembly once every week and this may result in changes to the schedule. All changes to the regular schedule will appear on the blackboard at the front of the staff room. This is where the kanji for the days of the week comes in useful as you can check changes in the school timetable without bothering your JTEs. However, if you see radical departures from the norm, it might be a good idea to check if a school event or meeting has been scheduled.

Regardless of whether you work in a school of fifteen students or five hundred, your teachers will often be busy with homeroom duties, administrative work, meetings, club activities, grading tests, counseling and lesson planning. This heavy workload means that even the best-intentioned teacher will not always have time to pass along important information. There are all too many newly arrived ALTs who suddenly look up from their computers to realize that there is nobody left in the staff room. If you should find yourself in this situation, go to the school gym ASAP.

School Lunch

If you are an elementary school or junior high school ALT, you will generally embark on the thrilling adventure that is school lunch, or “**kyushoku**” as it is known in Japanese. Should you have the opportunity to eat with the students, the lunch itself is often an excellent conversation starter and this is a great way to learn Japanese. Those of you who teach in high school will be deprived of this excellent gastronomic adventure.



School lunches are portioned out by the students and can average 800+ calories per meal, which may be too much for those ALTs no longer hurtling through puberty. There are expectations that everyone – students and staff alike – should finish everything on their trays, meaning that school lunch can be a problem for ALTs with smaller appetites, picky habits, or lower caloric needs. Some schools will allow you to request smaller portions or to give some of your portion to a hungry student. However, others may discourage or forbid this behavior. Some schools might be ‘considerate’ of your needs and give you ‘American sized’ portions regardless of your nationality. If you find this to be the case, talk with your lunch staff about getting the same amount as everyone else. Speak with your predecessor to find out about your school lunch and the policy concerning it. If this sounds like it will be too much food for you, speak with someone **before** the start of the semester when you sign your kyushoku contract; it may be far more difficult to change things later in the year.

If you are a vegetarian, have specific dietary needs, or find that you dislike the quality, contents, or portion size of your school lunch, you may prefer to bring your own lunch from home. Once again, be sure you make this decision clear to your school or else you may find yourself required to pay for school lunches you haven’t eaten. If you do decide to bring your own lunch, don’t worry – you can still eat with the students. In fact, you’ll likely find your food choices to be a constant source of conversation!

School Cleaning

Either after lunch or before club activities, everyone in the school participates in the school-cleaning period (or “**souji jikan**”). You will be assigned a location and you will clean that area with some other teachers and students. Even the school principal takes part in the daily

cleaning ritual. If you are not assigned an area don't just sit at your desk! Ask for a spot to clean or just pick up a broom and get to it!

Self-Introductions

As a newly arrived foreign teacher, the students and teachers will be anxious to know all about you. At this stage, most of you will have to make self-introduction speeches to your classes. The important thing here is to make your introductions as dynamic as possible. Most classrooms have televisions (many even have smart boards now!) and you may be able to create a Powerpoint or digital photo album to show in class. Before you commit to the high-tech approach, make sure it will be available to you and that your computer of choice will link properly to the TV. Or just play it safe and go analog.



Use lots of photos of family, friends, pets, and vacations, and try to involve the Japanese teacher and the students as much as possible. Pass the photos around, but be aware that some classes may tear and rip things in their excitement. With this in mind, it might be a good idea to get some materials laminated or make large color copies and glue them onto sturdy cardboard. Also, try to vary the content of your materials. For example, you might play some of your favorite music and then ask the students what music or popular singers they like. Also, while most schools won't let you give students food to try due to allergy issues, it may be a good idea to bring a food item famous in your region as seeing and smelling it makes your home country a lot more tangible. In terms of language, it is good to check what English has been taught and try to use this where possible in your self-introductions.

SELF-INTRO HINTS

Whatever you talk about remember to do it **SLOWLY** and **CLEARLY** while using **SMALL WORDS**. Avoid jargon, slang, and expressions, as even very experienced non-native English speakers may not know their meaning. If your audience can't understand you then they'll lose interest. Just remember how much interest you pay to what is said every morning at the staff meeting and you'll get the idea.

Try to stick to **topics that you have props for**. Where you live, your family, their jobs, the family pet, etc. General facts about your country, some brief notes on its history, geography, weather, culture, holidays, etc., is usually enough. The rest you can tap dance your way through.

Relate facts back to Japan. To say that Australia is 7,682,300 km² with a population of 18,173,600 is not as meaningful to a thirteen-year-old Japanese student as saying; Australia is twenty times larger than Japan, but has only one-sixth the population (and even that statement might need a blackboard demonstration).

Think of **VERY SIMPLE questions** that you can throw back to the students or teacher. The trap to avoid is you talking about yourself for fifty minutes.

One easy technique is to **make the class work for the answers to their questions**. Opening with, "Hello everyone. Guess which country I'm from!" generates more interest and activity from the students than them passively sitting there while you state "Hello everyone. I'm from New Zealand". You can easily waste a few minutes by choosing someone, making them stand (actually, they'll do that themselves) and then letting them whisper in consultation with their friends before coming to the (hopefully wrong, so you can do this again) consensus on your country of origin. **Don't overuse questions**, and try to keep things moving as prolonged silences can also get pretty tedious. Involving the students in your talk from the start is more fun for them (they get to try English) and it provides a little variety for you.

Finally, expect questions. From the obvious “What food do you like?” to the unexpected. You could be asked, “Do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend” or what your “size” is. Humor is usually the best defense for some of these questions. Answers such as “one hundred and eighty centimeters” (in reply to a boy’s “size”) or “bigger than a sumo wrestler’s” (in reply to a girl’s “size”) will generally get a laugh and move the conversation along. Many LGBTIQ JETs can find the endless questions about partners particularly off putting. But please remember these questions come from a kind place of honest curiosity. Prepare for likely uncomfortable questions as much as you can.

Club Activities

Apart from teaching academic subjects, Japanese schools offer many different clubs (*bukatsu*). Students learn to be good citizens through club activities and these activities often take absolute precedence over everything else in their lives. Depending on the school and the club activity, some students may do club activities all seven days of the week. Many of us find the absolute importance of these clubs difficult to relate to but they can also be useful in helping you to settle in and develop a rapport with your students. If you have an interest in a sport, you may be allowed to join the students in their practice sessions. Alternatively, you might wander from club to club and observe the various activities on offer. However, if you officially join a club, you will be expected to attend at the expense of your social life.

Teaching

After your self-introductions, you’ll settle into your ‘regular’ teaching. You may have to plan games for all your lessons OR your teachers could plan everything and then just tell you what to say OR you may get to plan with your teacher. There is a lot of variation from teacher to teacher, and from school to school. Try and make the most of yours! Talk to your JTEs and find out what they want from you. Communicate with your students; study their textbooks so you know exactly what words and grammar they know. They usually don’t know too much outside of this. You’ll probably feel a bit like Jane speaking to Tarzan, but it’s important that they can understand you through easy English and gestures.



Spare Time?

Again, there is a lot of variation across schools. You may be an ALT who has to teach 5 lessons a day with little time to prepare, or you could be an ALT who is averaging less than 5 lessons a week. If you find yourself with time on your hands – for whatever reason (scheduling changes, no classes ever scheduled, exams etc.), try and make yourself useful – this will help your sanity. Below are some ideas for filling your empty work hours:

Let your teachers know you want to shadow some of their lessons!

Ask if there is anything you can do to help

Join other classes – PE, home economics, homeroom

Talk to the teachers

Walk the corridors

Study Japanese (and ask the teachers for help!)

Make a regular newsletter or bulletin board about yourself (your adventures, home country, etc) or something else!

Make activities to accompany the textbook and ask if they can be used in class. If at first you don’t succeed – try, try and try again!

Enkai

What is it?

Enkai (party) is a very important part of the Japanese work culture – this is one of the few occasions that your co-workers can let their hair down and relax with one another. Because so much alcohol is involved, you will see a different side of your co-workers. You may find yourself having conversations with teachers you've barely shared two words with, or may discover that beer causes your principal to magically speak nearly-fluent English. This is the quintessential Japanese bonding experience and a great chance to build a relationship with the other teachers and school staff.



Paying

In most cases, you'll simply pay for the event in full (2000 yen and up), either ahead of time or at the venue. However, your school or office may instead take a monthly collection of around 2000 or more yen per month to be applied to the next *enkai*. This is something that your Japanese co-workers pay without hesitation, so they may be a little shocked if you choose not to contribute. Keep in mind that the money you contribute is for more than parties – it also goes towards staff room coffee, snacks, and gifts for things like births, deaths, marriages and retirements.

Attire

Wear clothes that you are comfortable sitting down in (business attire is usually worn) as *enkais* are often on tatami (you'll also have to take off your shoes so make sure to check your socks for holes!). The big end- and start-of-year *enkai* will usually have a more formal dress code.

At the Enkai

The official *enkai* (which everyone will go to) lasts for about 2 hours. You will get a set meal and a steady flow of alcohol. If you don't drink, let your colleagues know and ask for tea or soft drinks. People rarely eat all of the food they are given as they are busy socializing with co-workers. It is commonplace at *enkais* to go around and pour drinks for other people (don't pour your own!) and have a chat to them. You will notice that the *enkai* will begin with a few speeches and typical office deference, but quickly become more relaxed as the evening proceeds. Everyone will do 'kanpai' (cheers) together before taking their first drink. During the next 2 hours you will see a change in the people around you. At first people might be too shy to speak to you, but after about half an hour, you might find that shyness quickly vanishing, and if you are lucky they might try out their English with you. Don't be afraid to try out your Japanese either! If you are finding the conversation isn't flowing, try asking them to teach you the region's dialect (Iyo-ben).

Non-Drinkers

Japan has a big drinking culture and your colleagues may be surprised to find out you don't drink. Be prepared for endless questions as to why at each *enkai*. If you drink but don't wish to get drunk, just take small sips and never let your glass look empty – this is usually an invitation for someone to fill it up. It is very unlikely that you will be the only person at an *enkai* who isn't drinking, so don't worry about it.

Safety

With the amount of alcohol that flows during *enkais*, it is no wonder people start acting very differently. People may comment on your appearance and ask you personal questions. Answer the ones you feel comfortable answering. Try and keep your wits about you and if you find yourself in a situation you don't like, try and remove yourself from it as diplomatically as you can. One idea might be to carry a bottle of beer with you as an excuse to leave a situation (so you can go and pour for someone else).

The Nijikai - “Second Party” (and Sanjikai... and Yonjikai...)

Once the *enkai* is over, many people often wish to continue partying. This is called *nijikai* or the ‘2nd party’. There is no obligation to go to this, but it’s a good chance to socialize with your co-workers and hopefully build some friendships. Popular places for after-*enkai*-parties include karaoke, drinking bars, darts, dessert, etc. Your *enkai* fund does not cover this – you will have to pay!



Business as Usual

The day after the *enkai* is just like any other. Don’t be surprised if the person you were best buddies with the night before barely acknowledges you. At the same time, you may also find that you get a lot more people saying ‘ohayoo gozaimasu’ or ‘morning’ to you. Either way, you will have shown yourself to care about your co-workers and to be part of the group, which is appreciated by everyone involved!

Studying Japanese

What better time to learn Japanese than when you are living in Japan? If you are looking for something to motivate you, why not take the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)? There are 5 kyus, or levels. Level 1 is the hardest and Level 5 is the easiest. Tests for all levels are held every year on the first Sunday in December and July. The application deadline for the December test is in early September the deadline for the July test is in April. The JLPT fee is 500 yen for the application, and 5,500 yen for the test.

JET now offers a small grant for those who pass level 3, covering the application fee. You can find more information here <http://jetprogramme.org/en/jlpt/>

Also, the Ehime Prefecture International Center (EPIC) in Matsuyama and Niihama offers intensive courses during Summer and Spring. Ask your supervisor for details when you get here. Please bear in mind that not all supervisors are able to let their JET attend **without** requiring that the JET use paid leave. Larger towns may also have their own language courses or private tutors (ask at EPIC). EPIC also maintains a list of organizations offering Japanese lessons and tutoring across Ehime Prefecture: <http://www.epic.or.jp/english/japanese.html>

Japanese Sign Language

Want to learn something a little different while in Japan?

How about Japanese Sign Language?

Ask at your local community centre and see if they have a **shuwa saakuru** (sign language circle)

TEFL Certification

If you enjoy teaching English, this is also a great time to become TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) certified. There are many online programs that you can complete in your free time to improve your teaching skills and gain valuable credentials to help you continue to teach after your time with JET. The JET Programme now offers 200 partial grants toward TEFL programs of 100 hours or more each May, so keep an eye on your email for more information when spring rolls around!

Useful Websites

One way Ehime JETs stay in contact with each other is over the [Ehime AJET Facebook page](#). It’s a place for JETs to ask questions, let people know about festivals and to give/receive JET Programme info (and much more!). Feel free to join as soon as you’d like!

Life as a JET

Ehime AJET
National AJET
CLAIR
JET Programme

<http://www.ehimeajet.com/>
<http://www.ajet.net/>
<http://www.clair.or.jp/e/>
<http://www.jetprogramme.org/>



Life in Ehime

Ehime Government
Town Website Database
Matsuyama City

Ehime Prefecture International Centre [EPIC]

(The **“Guide to Living in Ehime”** has lots of useful sections including how to get your Japanese drivers license!)

Matsuyama International Centre (MIC)

What's Going On?

(MIC's publication for foreigners with information about local events!)

Outdoor Japan

(With information on surfing and other outdoor activities!)

Japan Meteorological Agency Weather, Natural Disasters, and Emergencies

Medical Centers in Ehime

Medical Centers (Japanese)

Cinemas

Click on the theater name to go to that area's movie listings.

Tip! If you have a Fuji (the supermarket) card, you get a slight ticket discount.

Movies are discounted on the 1st day of each month and women may receive discounts on Wednesdays.

Location	Cinema
Emiful	Cinema Sunshine
Imabari	Independent Theater
Kinuyama	Cinema Sunshine
Matsuyama	Cinema Sunshine Independent Theater Cinema Lunatic
Ozu	Cinema Sunshine
Shigenobu	Cinema Sunshine
Niihama	Toho Theater

Travel

Need to get around? Need to get away? Check out the travel services below!

Air Travel	
Matsuyama Airport	Domestic and International flights
JAL	Japanese Air Lines
ANA	Air Line
Jetstar	Offers cheap flights from Matsuyama to Narita Airport and beyond
Peach	Offers cheap flights from Matsuyama to Kansai International Airport (Osaka); good jumping-off point for international travel

Buses and Trams	
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Iyotetsu	Bus, train, and tram information; Japanese only
Setouchi	Bus service for the Toyo area as well as night buses to major cities; Japanese only
Uwajima Bus	Bus service for the Nanyo area as well as night buses to major cities; Japanese only

Train and Ferry	
Hyperdia	A great resource! Type in your starting and finishing destinations and Hyperdia will find the best trains for you!
Jorudan	
Ekikara	Japanese only
JR Shikoku	English version.
Ferries	A guide to ferries around Japan.
Setonaikai Kisen	A ferry service offered between Matsuyama and Hiroshima. There is currently a discount offer for tourists if you show your passport when you buy tickets at the ferry terminal.

Travel Agencies	
STA Travel	Offers special deals for JETs!
Number 1 Travel	Flight search focused
Rakuten Travel	Many supported languages
AB-Road	Japanese only
Willer Travel	Bus travel

Online Shopping

Can't find what you need at Daiso or the town co-op? Try looking online!

Food Shopping	
The Meat Guy	Every kind of meat you can imagine from cow to crocodile to kangaroo! There are special sections for organic and halal meats, as well a selection of cheeses and frozen veggies.
The Flying Pig	Resells Costco products within Japan
Foreign Buyers Club	Australian/British focused products.
Yo Yo Market	

Miscellaneous Shopping	
Amazon Japan	Great for getting English books; has an English interface; fast shipping
Play Asia	Video games
Shurui	Alcohol and liquors; Japanese only
iHerb	Vitamins and health supplements; cheap shipping to Japan
Victoria's Secret	Women's clothing; bras in additional sizes
ASOS	Clothing and shoes in Western sizes; free delivery to Japan
Nissen	Clothing online shop. Have larger sizes although entirely in Japanese.

Sending Money Home/Accessing Money From Home

Financial Services	
GoRemit	Remittance service; send money back home to your main account
Japan Post Office Bank	Offers international ATM service
Transferwise	Much like goremit, some find it easier to use.

Japanese and English Education Resources

Resources to help you become a better teacher and a better student.

Japanese Study Resources	
Jisho.org	Online Japanese-English dictionary
Rikaichan	Browser plug-in that translates Japanese text on mouse-over
WWWJDIC Online Japanese Dictionary	
Space ALC	
JLPT Website	Includes information, testing dates/locations, and online registration for the Japanese Language Proficiency Test
JLPT Study Resources	
Japanese Drills	
Tofugu Guide to Learning Hiragana	
Tofugu Guide to Learning Katakana	

English Teaching Resources	
Cross Currents	Bilingual Japan & USA info
Dave's ESL Café	Lesson ideas, tips, and job listings
Engllopedia	Great forums and lots of activities
ESL Galaxy	Powerpoint templates for games
ESL Kids	Flashcards and worksheets
GenkiEnglish	Elementary School Activities
JTR: Japanese Teaching Resources	Facebook page started by a Shikoku ALT
The English Resource	Online bookstore
Ultimate Camp Resource	Good listing of games and ideas for the classroom
ALTInsider	A lot of advice about how to make the best of your time as an ALT
"Hi Friends!"	Vocabulary flashcards suitable for elementary and lower level classes
Miscellaneous	Bring junk mail like catalogues as they are useful if you have to plan for English clubs, etc.

English Language Newspapers	
The Daily Yomiuri	
Asahi Shimbun	
The Japan Times	
News on Japan	

Grocery Shopping

There are entire aisles at Japanese grocery stores devoted to seaweed or just-add-water ramen bowls, as well as the expected fish section and the number of unidentifiable (at first) ingredients that look strange and complicated to use. Things are almost the same once you get used to the labels and realize that slight differences are mostly irrelevant. Check out all the stores over time to

find ones that carry most of the things you eat or cook with. You may be watched a bit as you shop. Some people are curious what you'll want to buy, but if you have a problem, people are mostly happy to help, especially if you try out your Japanese. You can also order foreign foods from a number of places. **Flying Pig** is a branch of Costco (wholesale foods store) selling mostly American foods (think macaroni and cheese, popcorn, and chips), refrigerated and frozen goods, as well as a selection of miscellaneous other goods. **Foreign Buyers Club** is similar, but may carry more Australian and British foods as well as some teaching aids. They all ship to your home and

buying in bulk is advantageous, so get some friends together and order away! **The Meat Guy** is great if you're looking for a particular type of meat you can't find at your local store (turkey, lamb, venison, big steaks, proper sausages, organic, halal, etc.)



Living in Ehime

AJET

Ehime AJET is a volunteer, non-profit organization that services the local JET community. Our aim is to enrich your experience in Japan by keeping you informed of important and fun things happening within the prefecture and the JET Programme at large. We are the prefectural branch of National AJET (the Association for Japan Exchange and Teaching) and make up one of the four prefectures in AJET Block 8 (along with Kochi, Tokushima



and Kagawa). Through social, sporting, volunteering and cultural events we aim to create a strong JET network, providing opportunities for you to meet other JETs and get involved in your local communities. Ehime AJET also hosts [The Mikan Blog](#) and maintains a great website which contains lots of useful information about living and teaching in Ehime. Find it at ehimeajet.com.

Ehime AJET has formed the Ehime AJET Scholarship Committee, which provides an annual scholarship of 200,000 yen to help send one high school student from Ehime on an English-speaking study abroad program. We have fundraising events and activities throughout the year and need your help to make this year's scholarship as successful as the last.

We look forward to seeing you at one of our events! If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, or want to get involved in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us at ehimeajet@gmail.com. We are also on Facebook, you can search [Ehime AJET](#).

Inaka Living

The word **inaka** (田舎) in Japanese means *rural* or *countryside*. And just like everywhere else in the world, country folk tend to be more conservative and provincial, but also warmer and not as formal. For many new JETs arriving from urban areas, the combination of Japanese life and rural life provides a double shock. Living in Ehime inaka, however, presents the unique opportunity to see traditional Japan close-up and become part of a community unavailable in an alienating metropolis.

Standing Out

The Japanese word for foreigner is **gaikokujin** (外国人), more commonly shortened to **gaijin** (外人) and literally meaning “outside person.” You will learn this word quickly. You may hear it whispered as you walk down the street, or shouted when you arrive at school. Since Japan is relatively homogeneous, any difference really stands out. And while the Japanese are shy about many things, they may not be shy about staring at you. You may also find that people you have never met before will know your name, where you work, what country you are from, and what day you do your washing. This might be surprising at first but it soon becomes one of things that amuse you about living in Japan. Yes, it can be irritating sometimes, but try to enjoy bring a celebrity. It comes from a genuine curiosity and neither malice nor rudeness is intended. You are in a place where people just want to know you.

Invisible Identity

With the exception of race, most differences in identity or lifestyle, from religion to LGBTQ status to veganism, are neither expressed nor discussed in public life in Japan. For JETs who are used to navigating the volatile world of identity politics back home, this can be a source of both relief and frustration.

The *inaka* is more conservative and more homogenous than the cities, but there is little need to worry about your dress, customs, or mannerisms triggering an existing prejudice as such actions do not communicate difference the way they do back home. In Japan, they will almost without fail be read as personal or “foreign” quirks. The downside is that you may feel a meaningful part of yourself has become invisible, and being in a foreign country can lessen your opportunity to connect with a broader community. Speak with the PAs or understanding friends in your area (or online) if you need to let your identity “breathe” and be sure check the [national AJET website](#) for relevant special interest groups and organizations.

Getting Away

When it all gets a bit claustrophobic it's a good idea to get out of town for the weekend. To see some new scenery but also be somewhere where everybody doesn't know your name. The transport system in Japan makes this really easy. The ferry routes in particular make it cheap and easy to get out of Ehime to **Kyushu, Hiroshima and Osaka** for those times when you crave urban life. Getting in touch with other JETs is essential to happy living in Japan. Everyone here understands the ups and downs of rural life and getting to know your fellow JETs provides you with empathy and a place to nip off to for a weekend. The rural towns of Ehime hold a variety of festivals in the summer. These range from the traditional to the outright strange. The festivals in your area offer a good opportunity to invite some JET friends to your town for some fun.

Going to the Store

In a small town you're bound to run into someone you know at the grocery store once in a while. You may find your inaka neighbors inordinately curious about what you are buying. They may ask you ‘what are you



buying?’ or just have a look in your basket. No matter what you are buying, they will be surprised; either to find that *gaikokujin* use soy sauce, or that for breakfast some of us eat cereal.

If you live in the *inaka*, be prepared to go without some things. There may not be a video store in your town. Some places will have restaurants that close around 8 p.m. This may take some getting used to, so use the opportunity to discover the people and places around you. Also, get an Internet connection and do some online shopping. Foreign food, English books, video games, etc., can all be shipped to your cozy, country home. Things that seem elusive at first can usually be found with some effort. As you get to know your area and other people around you, you will find sources for most of the things you crave.

Minding Your Business

In rural Ehime, it can seem like every move you make is town news. From whom you had over to your house to what illnesses you have had. It’s not necessarily that people are nosy; it’s more that having a *gaikokujin* in their midst is exciting. If you are seen with someone of the opposite sex, foreign or Japanese, you will be asked if they are your boyfriend or girlfriend. And despite your answer (“this is my friend/colleague/father”) you may not be believed. **Don’t worry!** No one really cares about your social habits; it’s just something to make conversation about.

If you get sick, it may be big news in town. Folks will immediately wonder why you weren’t at school. And your supervisor, the doctor and nurses will tell them exactly what you had. Don’t be surprised if when you return to work, someone asks, “How’s your diarrhea?” This isn’t just the treatment for foreigners. When it comes to conversations about health in Japan, there is no such thing as too much information and doctor/patient confidentiality is most likely not at the levels you’re used to! However, it is at times of ill health and such problems, that the kindness and generosity of *inaka* people is displayed. You will have a whole hoard of office secretaries and school nurses ready to take your temperature, visit you and fluff your pillow.

Mental Health

Living in a foreign country, not to mention in a rural area, can be very stressful. Culture shock, seasonal depression, and homesickness are issues that many JETs face. Remember that you are never alone and that there are places you can go for counseling.

A few years ago, CLAIR has rolled out a new mental health counseling system for JETs through an online counseling company. As this program is still new to the JET Programme, there may be some difficulties getting it off the ground at first, but it is expected to be a marked improvement over the former counseling system. Through this service, you will be able to e-mail or Skype with licensed mental health professionals. You will receive detailed information about this service at Tokyo Orientation and again at Ehime Orientation. Note: This service is not meant to be a long-term solution, and the professionals you speak with might recommend therapy and other treatment.

PAs and RAs are not trained to provide mental health counseling. However, PAs are able to assist you in finding help with the resources listed in this section.

In most cases, mental health counseling is **not covered** by your national health insurance in Japan. However, if you are considering counseling, CLAIR offers a one-time subsidy for counseling of up to 10,000 yen that must be applied for through your Contracting Organization. However, if you need to see a psychiatrist, it is likely that insurance **will** cover your costs, and the JET Accident Insurance can be used as well. Make sure to check before you proceed with your treatment.

Remember: Exercise, proper nutrition, consistent rest and a stable routine are effective natural remedies and proactive measures you can employ to prevent many cases of mental stress.

There are other ways to find the help you need, such as talking to a close friend or someone you trust.

AJET Peer Support Group (PSG) is a confidential listening and referral service that operates from 8pm to 7am, 7 days a week. You can reach them at **050-5534-5566** or on Skype.

Tokyo English Life Line (TELL) is a free and confidential counseling available for to everyone (you don't have to be a part of JET). They are available from 9am to 11pm every day. You can contact them at **03-5774-0992**.

Keeping it Together

There are many ways to cope with the absence of urban distractions and many ways to take advantage of living in the country. It helps to have something to fill your evening, rather than another night of Japanese TV and bean paste ice cream. The first few months you will have less to do, but as you find things of interest and get invited along to clubs and groups, you will be wondering when you will have the time to go to sleep.

Hiking

Ehime has hundreds of kilometres of beautiful coastline and thousands of acres of mountain forest. It is usually only a short walk or bike ride from your town to some really spectacular scenery.

Local Sports

It should be no problem to ask to join your favourite sports club at school. Schools offer a wide range of clubs for the students such as tennis, volleyball, basketball, aikido, kendo and many other things. If eight hours with the students is enough for one day, you can join similar sports in the community and meet like-minded Japanese people in the process.

Cultural Activities

If sports aren't your thing, take up a Japanese art form. There are many opportunities to learn Japanese culture. For example: **woodblock printing**, **ikebana (flower arranging)**, **sho-do (calligraphy)**, **sa-do (tea ceremony)** as well as an array of traditional Japanese music including **taiko drumming and koto playing**. Taiko drumming is popular in Ehime and many JETs in this area belong to a Taiko group. Most groups are delighted to have a foreigner join their number and people will go out of their way to make you feel part of the group.

Keep an ear out for any opportunity that relates to what you love. We've had Ehime JETs perform in local musicals, join dance troupes, and even lose miserably at video game tournaments in arcades. You might even find a group for the card game you like. Despite being in the *inaka* you might be surprised what amount of clubs and groups are around you.

Drinking



If you like alcohol you are at an advantage in the *inaka*. Drinking in bars and in people's homes is a popular pastime here. Alcohol loosens inhibitions and someone who was too afraid to speak to you in the office will suddenly throw his arm round you and tell you about his wild college days. Going to the same bars on a regular basis is a good idea. You will get to know the staff and they will introduce you to an array of interesting people. It's much easier in Japanese society to make friends through a third party introduction. So, it is good if you can make your face well known in a few local places. As always, please remember to drink responsibly.

Taking Advantage

All in all, living in the *inaka* presents a unique opportunity. You will be surprised each day by the kindness of people and by their genuine interest in the most banal aspects of your life. Living in Ehime is what you make of it and it's a great chance to get an inside view of Japan.

Note to Matsuyama ALTs

While many of the Ehime JETs will be placed in the countryside, some of you will find your new home in Ehime's biggest city, Matsuyama. There are two groups of ALTs residing in Matsuyama – Matsuyama City ALTs (junior high ALTs) and Ehime BOE ALTs (senior high ALTs). In total, there are about 20 JETs living in Matsuyama. Each group of ALTs is run differently as they are looked after by different contracting organizations. Matsuyama City ALTs have monthly meetings with their chief supervisor and occasional *enkais*, whereas the SHS ALTs deal with their school-based supervisor and don't have the opportunity to meet up with other SHS ALTs through work.

There are many things to do in Matsuyama to keep you occupied – something to keep in mind if you are disappointed to not be in a more rural place. You can create your own sense of community while living in the big city – it just takes a bit more time and effort.

A great thing about living in Matsuyama is the support network you have right at your fingertips, as there are many other ALTs nearby.

Health

In Japan, people go to a hospital when they want to see a doctor. On days when you are sick, your school may expect you to go to the hospital to be seen by a doctor and (more often than not) get a medical certificate. Talk with your supervisor as to what protocols they expect you to follow when you are sick and what steps are needed in order to take **byokyu (sick leave)**.

MIC offers an otasukeman services for free, so if you have a health issue you would rather not speak to your supervisor or BOE about, they can accompany you to appointments and offer their translation services. This may be especially useful for any sexual health needs. The otasukeman service isn't just limited to doctors' visits. You can use it for bank visits, dentists and any occasion when you may need translation services and feel unable to ask anyone else. Contact details and further information can be found on the MIC website:

<http://www.mic.ehime.jp/MIC/Foreigner/ExchangeSupportCommunity.html>

For more information on locating hospitals within Ehime, check out the link in the Useful Websites section of this guidebook.



There is also a HIV testing service available in Matsuyama. They are offered free of charge and privacy is assured. The test is simple, but you must return one week later to the health centre in person to ask for the result. They will not tell you over the phone. You can take the test three months after the time you think you might have been infected. For locations, check out the **Ehime AJET site**.

Finding a good dentist in Japan may be difficult, so it's probably a good idea to get a general check-up before you leave.

Who do you need to see?

Kanji	Reading	English
内科	Naika	internal medicine (general practitioner)
外科	Geka	surgical (breaks/sprains etc)
胃腸科	Ichouka	stomach/intestinal medicine
眼科	Ganka	optometrist

Women's Health

If you want or need to be seen by a doctor, please visit your local hospital or the women's health center attached to the main hospital in Matsuyama. If you have a rural placement and privacy is essential, you may wish to visit another city for your examination. Privacy levels in medical care are not the same as you may be used to at home, so if you need to talk about a sensitive matter, this may be your best option. It is important to note that hospital doctors – even gynecologists – in Japan do not generally handle basic contraceptive health. If you would like to talk to a doctor about contraceptive options or begin a prescription, you will need to go to a private women's health clinic. Most Ehime JETs use the for regular check-ups and prescriptions - they even have friendly, English-speaking staff! In addition, MIC offer a volunteer otasukeman service, as mentioned above, so someone can accompany you to an appointment to assist with translation.

Some women in Japan tend not to go for check-ups (such as for the pill and gynecological tests), preferring to wait until they are at home. However, for infections or other immediate concerns, please visit your local hospital or the women's health center attached to the main hospital in Matsuyama. If you have a rural placement and privacy is essential, you may wish to visit another city for your examination.

Traveling

There are many places within Ehime to check out (see the sections on each town on the [AJET website](#)), but if you are planning on touring Japan (or other countries), you first need to get out of Ehime. There are a few different ways to get out of Ehime and they are at different locations.

Plane

Ehime has one airport, and that is in Matsuyama. There are domestic flights to just about anywhere and international flights to Korea and China. Catch bus #52 from Okaido, Matsuyama City Station (Shieki) or JR Station. Birthday specials are available – check out the airlines for their specials. In addition to bus #52, you can take the blue limousine buses; they're quicker and more frequent.

Bus

Bus travel is available to all prefectures in Shikoku and to several different destinations on Honshu. If you can sleep sitting up, you might want to consider an overnight bus (Kyoto, Kobe, Osaka, Fukuoka or Tokyo). Not only is it an inexpensive way to cover long distances, but it also lets you start early in the day without having to pay for a hotel the night before. Overnight buses leave from Uwajima, Yawatahama, Saijo, Niihama, and Matsuyama. In general, you have to make reservations for overnight buses, but you can show up at the bus center and hope that someone cancelled. One overnight bus to Osaka and Kobe also runs through Ainan, Yoshida, Unomachi and Ozu.

Train

The train is generally more expensive for trips out of Shikoku. *Tokkyuu* (express) tickets can be purchased from vending machines or at the ticket window of any large train station. Note that you will need two tickets, a 乗車券 *joushaken* and a 特急券 *tokkyuiken* to board express trains. One covers the basic fare, and the other covers the extra charge for riding an “express” train.

There are also two types of tickets, reserved (指定席) and non-reserved (自由席). Each car is labeled with the appropriate kanji, so be sure to check when you get on the train. The Shinkansen works more or less the same way. The train can offer you a smoother ride and save you from having to reserve a ticket. You can get a Shikoku schedule for free by asking at the Matsuyama station ticket window. The word for schedule in Japanese is *jikokuhyou* (時刻表) and once you learn the kanji for place names they are not hard to use.



To find out train schedules for anywhere in Japan, including some subway systems, go to [Hyperdia](#). You can also get a Hyperdia application for iPhones and Android capable phones.

Ferry

From various ports in Ehime, you can take a ferry to Kyushu, Hiroshima or the Kansai area.

Accommodation

An inexpensive option for accommodation is a youth hostel. Prices average around ¥2500-¥3000 per night, plus an additional charge if you are not a youth hostel member. For more information, visit the following websites:

Hostel Sites	
Japan Youth Hostels	

Hostel World	
Hostel Bookers	
K's House	Hostels in Tokyo, Kyoto, Mt. Fuji, Hiroshima, and Nagano
J-Hoppers	Hostels in Kyoto, Hiroshima, Osaka, Takayama
KHAOSAN	Hostels in Tokyo, Kyoto, Beppu, Fukuoka

An alternative is a **ryokan** (旅館), or traditional Japanese inn. Prices can be as low as ¥3000-¥4000 per night for a single room and can provide more of a “Japanese-style” experience. Business hotels are also available. “Ladies hotels” catering to women also exist. <http://www.ryokan.or.jp/> is a good resource, especially for Kansai area *ryokan*. Remember that tipping is not customary in Japan. If you decide to stay at a ryokan and are not familiar with Japanese etiquette for shoes, bathing, etc., research the customs before you go. Have a look at <http://www.sentoguide.info/etiquette> for more on this subject.

Yet another place you can find reasonably priced accommodation is a capsule hotel. They are cheap and many have great accommodations. This is a good idea if you don't mind using a locker room to store your things and sleeping in a small “capsule” with only a curtain separating you from the rest of your floor. If you are a light sleeper, however, this may not be the best option.

For more information on any of the above, check out the website section or go straight to the [Ehime AJET](#) site for additional links.

The Outdoor Report

Go outside! You are among the chosen few with a unique opportunity to enjoy what rural Japan has to offer. You already live in a scenic part of Japan, and with a few tips it is easy to enjoy.

Much of Shikoku is planted forest (sadly), but this is a unique opportunity: the loggers need to get the timber in and out so most of Japan's mountains have some sort of road access. It's not trail hiking but it is an easy way to get out and enjoy nature. Be sure to tell someone roughly where you are going or, better yet, invite a friend.

There are also hiking trails throughout the island for more seasoned hikers. Try the *Lonely Planet* hiking guide for more details or try asking about hiking around town. You can also try saying, “*haikingu ni ii basho wa doko desu ka?*” (Where is a good hiking place?) to coworkers and friends for recommendations. The mountains are pretty safe, although there are wild boar and monkeys in a few areas. Try not to startle them, as you are on their turf. Be careful during the typhoon season, as the planted cedar forests have made the mountains very prone to landslides. Ishizuchi, the highest peak on the island, is a good hike with cool climbing chains and is right here in Ehime. Public transit from Saijo Station is possible, but finding someone with a car is ideal.

Shikoku has some of the better surfing in Japan, though the majority of surf spots are in Kochi. [The Outdoor Japan website](#) has maps of all the major breaks in Japan along with information about their levels. The whole site gives an overview of the possibilities in Japan. Surf beaches are a good place to camp as they tend to have public bathrooms and sometimes coin showers. The coastline from Ashizuri Cape to Nakamura (now Shimanto City) is wonderful.

Camping is popular throughout Japan, and as such, there are many campsites available. Many also offer free tent pitches and, sometimes, even cabins. Below is a small selection of campsites in Ehime, and further afield on Shikoku.

Ehime Camping Facilities

Ehime Forest Park Camping Ground

Address: Kamimitani, Iyo, Ehime Prefecture 799-3104

Phone: 089-983-3069

Hojo Kashima Camp-jo (北条鹿島キャンプ場)

Address: Kashima Park, Tsuji, Hojo, Matsuyama-shi, Ehime Pref.

How to get there: 3 min. by boat from Iyo-hojo Pier, which is a 5-min. walk from Iyo-hojo Sta. on the Yosan Line.

Kumakogen Furusatoryokomura Camping Ground

Address: 〒791-1212 Ehime Prefecture, Kamiukena District, Kumakogen, 下畑野川乙 4 8 8

Phone: 0892-41-0711

Nagasoike Camping Ground

Address: 〒791-2205 愛媛県伊予郡砥部町総津

Phone: 089-969-2111

Mawariwa Camping Ground

Address: 〒791-3522 愛媛県喜多郡内子町中川国有林地内

Phone: 0892-52-2384

Shikoku Camping Facilities

Kyuka-mura Sanuki Goshikidai Camp-jo (休暇村讃岐五色台キャンプ場)

Address: Oyabu-cho, Sakaide-shi, Kagawa Pref.

Phone: (0877)47-0231

How to get there: 30 min. by free bus leaving at 15:30 from Takamatsu Sta., Kotoku Line & Yosan Line to Kyukamura Bus Stop

Dutch Pancake Camping (ダッチパンケーキキャンプ)

Address: 1765-7, Nishimura-otsu, Shodoshima-cho, Shodo-gun, Kagawa Pref.

Phone: (0879)82-4616

Directions: 30 min. by bus from Tonosho Port or Ikeda Port of Shodo Island to Olive Koen Mae Bus Stop (Pick-up service is available from Tonosho; ¥1,200 & Ikeda Port; ¥700)

Cotton Field Kamiyama (コットンフィールド神山)

Address: 272, Uetsuno, Jinryo, Kamiyama-cho, Myozai-gun, Tokushima Pref.

Phone: (0886)76-0803

Directions: 1hr. by bus from Tokushima Sta., Tokushima Line & Kotoku Line to Kamiyama Onsen Bus Stop

Ebisuhama Camp-mura (恵比須浜キャンプ村)

Address: Tai, Aza, Ebisuhama, Minami-cho, Kaifu-gun, Tokushima Pref.

Tsumajiro campsite

Address: Tsumajiro, Tosa-Shimizu-shi, Kochi Pref.

Nagasoike Camping Ground

Address: 〒791-2205 愛媛県伊予郡砥部町総津

Phone: 089-969-2111

Skiing and Snowboarding

General Winter Sports Info

Ehime is the southernmost prefecture in Japan with a number of ski slopes to choose from. While they won't satisfy true powder hounds, they are great for learning, fine-tuning your skills, and snow sport people who just need to get back on a slope. They are also a way of getting outside and having some fun in the cold, harsh winter.

There are two snowboard-only shops in Matsuyama/Tobe:

Home Grow Materials near Fukuon Elementary School and Fukuonji Station. They can organize multiple trips to various slopes throughout the season.

Voltage next to the Tobe Grand Fuji. Snowboard and skateboard-focused shop. Voltage will set you up with all the gear you need for your first time on the slopes (except for gloves) for free if you call them to set it up. Will organize multiple trips to various slopes throughout the season.

Additionally Murasaki Sports and Xebio Sports in Emiful Masaki sell a limited selection of gear for boarders.



For skiers, gear can be bought at Alpen and Himaraya in Matsuyama near Kinuyama Cinema Sunshine or Xebio Sports in Emiful Masaki

Ishizuchi

Highest field (steep and narrow). Ishizuchi ski slope has the most natural snowfall due to its elevation but the runs are quite short and the access is limited. It's the closest ski resort to Saijo, Niihama, and Shikokuchuo.

All-day lift ticket: 5000 yen

Half-day: 3900 yen

Night ski: 2000 yen

Kuma Ski Land

<http://www.kumax.co.jp/04sl/framepage2.htm>

Convenient access via the Kumakogen Line (久万高原町線) of the JR Shikoku Rosen Bus (JR四国路線バス). Get off at the Rokubudo teiryujou bus stop (六部堂停留場). Once you're off the bus give a call to the staff (0892-21-0100) and they'll send a van down to pick you up. There are three runs (plus a beginners slope that can be used free without buying a lift pass) that are short but wide and vary slightly in the incline of the run. They have a small mogul run and a technical flag course as well. The snow park is small and limited. Kuma is the recommendation for those brand new to snow sports as its cheap, wide, and not too challenging which allows a beginner to progress and build confidence while practicing the basics.

Entry: 1000 yen, 4-hour lift pass: 3300 yen, 6-hour lift pass: 3800 yen, 8-hour lift pass: 4300 yen,

Lift (Per trip) 270 yen

Ski/board set rental: 3500 yen

Sol-Fa Oda

Three slopes: beginner is short, narrow, and next to the trick park, and the intermediate run can be very difficult for beginners. The intermediate run is longer with many jumps and/or moguls along the way on the side of the run. The advanced run is only open if there is enough fresh snowfall covering it. There is a wide variety of different sized kickers and boxes and/or rails for the snow park junkies. Basically Sol Fa Oda is great if you already have the basics down and/or want to progress to bigger and bigger jumps. It's better (and cheaper) to learn at Kuma Ski Land if it's your first time strapping in.

Other places to hit the slopes in Japan:

Geihoku and Mizuho (Shimane Prefecture), numerous resorts in Hiroshima Prefecture, Daisen in Tottori, Dynaland/Takasu in Gifu Prefecture, and of course there are the most famous resorts located in Nagano Prefecture (Hakuba, Nozawa Onsen, Shiga Kogen) and Hokkaido (Niseko).

Being Vegetarian

Staying vegetarian in Japan can be a daily challenge. The concept is not commonplace and many people will simply not understand your restrictions or convictions. Even seemingly innocuous veggie dishes may contain *dashi* (a type of fish stock) or meat-based roux, and the Japanese person you are asking may not consider this meat. As a general rule, **even if meat is an invisible ingredient and not a feature, the Japanese will probably call it "vegetarian."** However, with careful diligence and patient explanation, it is possible to remain a successful vegetarian or even vegan in Japan.



School Lunch

School lunch in Japan is a fixed meal prepared in bulk for the entire school. Meat will be a daily, unavoidable staple and the menu cannot be altered to accommodate your diet. Establish as soon as you arrive that you will be bringing a **bento** (outside lunch) to school instead, invest in a lunchbox, and start curating a selection of recipes you can prepare in the mornings or the evening before.

Books and Catalogues

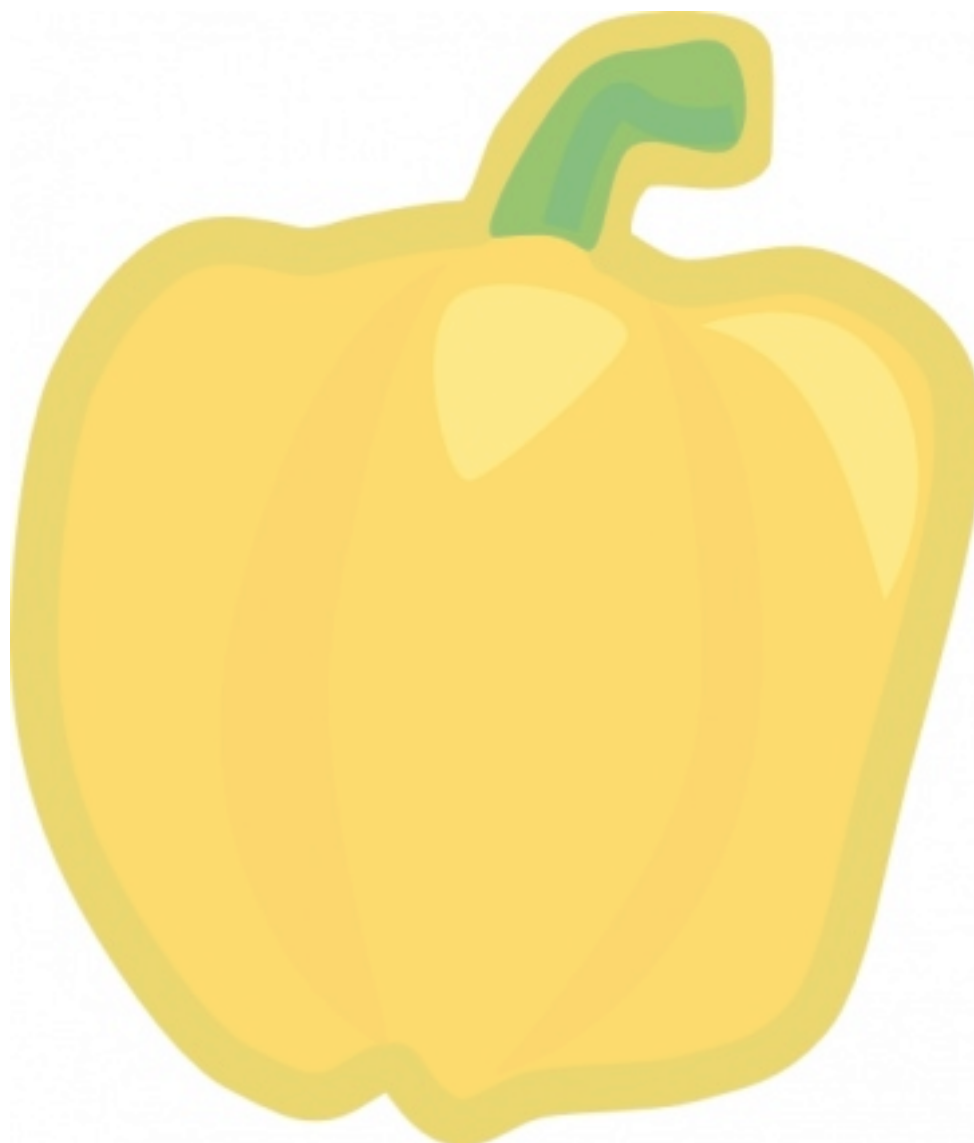
[Japan's Vegan Restaurant Pocketguide](#)

A good guide to eating out as a vegan in the larger cities of Japan. When you are traveling this is well worth the money. It can be used in Kyoto, Nara, Osaka, Tokyo, and even the one listing in Shikoku for Magnolia (see below). Great recommendations and the maps are actually useable.

Hokkaido AJET's Veg Out Guidebook

Has some good recipes, and information about food. Some of the restaurants are quite outdated and the directions are not always the best, but still fun to look through. It can be ordered from the [Hokkaido AJET website](#) but the easiest way to get it is at AJET Centre during Tokyo Orientation.

Local



Vegetarian Cafés and Restaurants

Matsuyama	
Fumikaden	
Kanjirushi	.
“Deutches Café Bluhén” German Bakery	.
Four Seasons Thai Restaurant	
Takashimaya Basement	
Charlie’s Vegetable	.
Indian / Southeast Asian Restaurants	

Ozu	
Sosaku Italian Restaurant	

Imabari	
Magnolia	


Yoshida	
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Tandoor Indian Restaurant (Tandoru)	
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Shopping for Vegetarian Foods

Great places around the prefecture to stock up on all your vegetarian cooking needs!

In Ehime	
Natural Greens	
Pantry	
Kaldi <i>(Locations at Fuji Grand and Emifull)</i>	
Your local grocery store	

Online	
iHerb	
Yoyo Market	
Tengu Natural Foods	
Warabe Mura	
FBC	
The Flying Pig	

Useful Phrases

“I am a vegetarian. I do not eat pork, beef, or chicken.”

→ Watashi wa bejitarian desu. Butaniku ya gyuniku ya toriniku o taberaremasen.
(To add more, ‘sakana’ means fish, ‘ebi’ means shrimp, etc etc...)

“What do you recommend from this menu?”

→ Kono menyū de o-susume wa nan desu ka?

“Does this have X meat in it?”

→ Kore wa X niku ga haite imasu ka?

“Can you make it without meat?”

→ Niku o irenai de tsukuremasu ka?

“Can I substitute X for Y?”

→ X no kawari ni Y o koukan dekimasu ka?

“Without X”

→ X nashi de



Vegetarian Kanji

The following is a list of the common kanji and hiragana for meats and animal products to aid in shopping and reading menus. It is, however, by no means comprehensive (there are hundreds of types of fish, for example), so please be careful and use a dictionary when unsure.

魚: Fish This will rarely be on a menu, but the kanji is used as a basic radical for many other fish kanji, such as 鮪 (tuna), 鰹 (mackerel), or 鰯 (sardine). Learn the basic kanji and then double-check anything in which it appears.

子: Child Many times when this appears, it refers to eggs, such as 玉子 (chicken egg), 鱈子 (pollock roe), or 白子 (cod milt). However, it also appears in lovely vegetarian options such as 唐辛子 (red pepper) and 茄子 (aubergine/eggplant). In short, this kanji should be a warning to investigate, but doesn't necessarily mean a non-vegetarian item.

牛	beef
豚	pork
鶏, チキン	chicken
肉, にく	meat
海老, えび	prawn, shrimp
かに	crab
まぐろ	tuna
さけ, サーモン	salmon

だし	fish stock
ルー	roux
卵, 玉子, たまご	egg
チーズ	cheese
牛乳, 乳	milk, dairy
ゼラチン	gelatin

LGBTQ Life in Ehime

Compared to your home country, you may find that sexuality and LGBTQ issues are brought up much less in Japan. Because of this, some people who identify as LGBTQ may feel as though they do not have much of a support system in Japan. But the truth is, coming out here is not much different from coming out in your home country. Think about it, and if you feel comfortable coming out to certain people, then by all means, do so! Coming out will always be your own decision.

Below are some support networks within the JET and Japanese communities with lots of resources.

AJET Stonewall is a community of LGBTQ and ally JETs. They have discussion forums and information on LGBTQ communities in cities around the country.

Japan: <http://stonewalljapan.org/>

Ehime: <http://stonewalljapan.org/shikoku/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/stonewalljapan/>

Ehime Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/shikokustonewall/>

For those who identify as transgender, Stonewall Japan has some very useful information here.

<http://stonewalljapan.org/transgender-life/>

Hokoishi Clinic in Matsuyama provides hormone therapy in conjunction with the Okayama University Hospital's Gender Center.

Rainbow Pride is an active and well-regarded LGBT organization in Ehime. They have outreach programs to schools across Ehime and lots of useful links on their website. However, the website is in Japanese: <http://rainbowpride-ehime.org/Site/TOP.html>

They also have a LGBT Center called Nijikara Space in Matsuyama:

<http://rainbowpride-ehime.org/Site/nizikaraspace.html>

Kagoshima (Kyushu) also has a great website on being LGBTQ in

Japan: <http://kagoshimajet.com/living/social-inner-life/lgbtq/>

Much of the LGBTQ scene in Ehime is centred around Matsuyama and tends to be small bars as opposed to the dance clubs you might expect. Generally bars are not mixed, meaning men or women only, but not both. They often will say "members only" but being a member is simply being LGBTQ. Unfortunately Matsuyama, like much of the greater LGBTQ scene in Japan, is male focused. Ladies will have to venture much further to find something that suits them.

Gay/Lesbian bars in Matsuyama		
Seek	松山市二番町2-6-5 2 nd Floor http://www2.ocn.ne.jp/~barseek/barseek-top.htm	Men only, staff speak a little English. Karaoke okay.
Happy Dragon		Bear Bar, men only. No English. The master is an excellent source of LGBTQ info in Ehime.
Flock Cafe	松山市二番町2-6-5 3 rd Floor http://www1.ocn.ne.jp/~flock/	Mixed, Younger crowd, no English.
Tug	松山市三番町2-10-10	
Now2	松山市二番町1-11-9	

Religious Groups

Compared with your home country, religion somehow manages to play both a larger and smaller role within Japan than you might expect. While Buddhism and Shinto are the core religions of Japan, the Christian faith is quite hearty and always manages to survive and be present where ever you go in Japan. Even though it might take some looking. Those of other faiths may find it much more challenging to find a place of worship.



Here is a list of some of the Churches and Mosques in Ehime. While there are only two mosques, there are many churches available. In addition to those listed below, you can ask leaders at these congregations for information on any other churches closer to you.

Chuyo	
Dogo Catholic Church	7-25 Dogokitamachi, Matsuyama, Ehime Prefecture 〒790-0848 Phone:+81 89-924-7522
Catholic Church, Sanbancho	4 Chome-5-5 Sanbancho, Matsuyama, Ehime Prefecture 〒790-0003, Japan Phone:+81 89-921-1849
Praise Fellowship Matsuyama - Protestant Christian Woship Group	Matsuyama Fukuin Center 1-6-6 Heiwadori Matsuyama, Ehime Prefecture 〒790-0807 http://praisefellowship.seesaa.net/ 089-925-1008
Matsuyama Islamic Cultural Centre (MICC)	2 Chome-6-3 Heiwa-dori, Matsuyama City, Ehime Prefecture 〒790-0807

Nanyo A	
Tsutako Nakamura (good local contact, hosts a monthly women's group and attends in Uwajima)	tsutakko@hotmail.com
Uwajima Alliance Church	〒798-0050 Ehime Prefecture Uwajima Horihata cho 2-27

Nanyo B	
Daiichi Puraza Kyoukai	In Yawatahama seems to be the most alive church and the pastor and his wife know a little bit of English and their daughter is quite fluent.
Catholic Church	In Yawatahama, near the Yawataham City hospital.

Toyo B	
Saint Maria Catholic Church 聖マリアカトリック教会 (Saijo)	〒793-0030 Ehime-ken, Saijō-shi, Ōmachi, 716-1
Saijo Alliance Christian Church 西条アライアンスキリスト教会	〒793-0010, Ehime-ken, Saijo-shi, Iioka, 1505-9 http://www.saijyou-alliance.com

United Church of Christ in Japan - Niihama Church 日本キリスト教団新居浜教会	〒792-0041, Ehime Prefecture, Niihama, Nakamuramatsugi, 1 Chome-13-50, www.uccj-e.org (has many branches all around Toyo B)
Niihama Mosque 新居浜マスジド	Ehime Prefecture, Niihama, Ikkuchō, 2 Chome-2-43, 2f

Natural Disaster Emergency Preparation

While Japan is overall a safe and peaceful country, it does experience a variety of natural disasters, which include earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons, landslides, and volcanic eruptions. In this section, we will provide information and resources in the event of an emergency.

119 – Fire, Ambulance, Emergency Rescue 110 – Police

Earthquakes (地震, *jishin*)

The 2011 Tohoku Earthquake and 2016 Kumamoto Earthquakes are recent examples of how destructive and deadly earthquakes are. Japan is located on the Pacific Ring of Fire and earthquakes frequently happen; however, due to their frequency, Japan is perhaps one of the most technologically advanced in its earthquake prevention, preparation and response.

There are two ways of measuring earthquakes: magnitude and *shindo*. The first Kumamoto earthquake was a magnitude 6.4 and a *shindo* 7. A magnitude rates the amount of energy released in an earthquake, while a *shindo* (as designated by the JMA) measures the amount of shaking on the surface from one point. This earthquake ranked the highest on the *shindo* system (Shindo 7 which was given to the 1995 Hanshin Kobe Earthquake), but its magnitude was lower. This earthquake's epicenter was shallower, and the shallower an earthquake is means a stronger *shindo*. In addition, soil, building type, etc. have an influence on how bad the damage is. You can read more about the [JMA Shindo System here](#).

Before an Earthquake (Preparation)

Make sure you have a phone warning system installed on your cell phone. All smart phones bought in Japan should have this warning system. You can check that it is enabled by going to settings > notifications > government alerts/emergency alerts. It sometimes does not warn before the earthquake, but it certainly did with this one! For those who do not have a Japanese cell phone, install the app Yurekuru ([iTunes](#), [Android](#))

Ask your supervisor or JTE about your evacuation center (避難所 *hinanjo*) for your residence and workplaces. Walk to the evacuation centers to see how long it will take you. Find the routes that work best for you.

Make and Check Your Emergency Bag (aka Bug-Out Bag)

Here is a list of things to do provided by the US Embassy of Japan.

- You can find many emergency preparation supplies at your local Fuji.
- Put this bag at your front entrance in an easy to find spot.
- Have photocopies of important IDs, bank information, small yen notes and coins, and other essentials and put it in your bag.
- Create email drafts on your phone informing of your safety to family, your CO, and your PAs

Participate in local emergency drills (避難訓練、*hinan kunren*)

Your town usually announces emergency drills happening via the PA system or the newsletter. Talk with your supervisor or JTE about how to participate in these emergency drills. Many people

who passed away in the 3/11 Earthquake and Tsunami disaster did not know their evacuation locations or how to respond. EPIC also holds emergency prep drills and has resources available in English (http://www.epic.or.jp/epic/documents/English_000.pdf).

During an Earthquake

- Stay calm! If you're indoors, stay inside. If you're outside, stay outside.
- If you're indoors, the best place to go would be under heavy and sturdy furniture, such as a table or desk. If there is not one available, you should stand against a wall near the center of the building, or stand in a doorway (though whether or not a doorway is a safe place has been subject to debate).
- If you're outdoors, stay in the open away from power lines or anything that might fall. Stay away from buildings (stuff might fall off the building or the building could fall on you).
- Don't use matches, candles, or any flame. Broken gas lines and fire don't mix.
- If you're in a car, stop the car and stay inside the car until the earthquake stops.
- Don't use elevators (they'll probably get stuck anyway).
- DO NOT RUN OUTSIDE while the earthquake is happening.

After an Earthquake

- Check JMA (<http://www.jma.go.jp/jma/indexe.html>) for information about the earthquake as well as tsunami warnings. If you have TV or radio, tune it to NHK for further reporting.
- Check your immediate surroundings for fire, gas leaks, broken glass and other hazards.
- Open up doors and windows in the event of aftershocks to help out with an escape.
- If damage is bad or in the event of an incoming tsunami, report to your designated evacuation center (避難所, *hinanjo*) or get to higher ground. Higher is better - so if you can go up higher, go higher!
- Be aware that aftershocks (余震, *yoshin*) are a possibility, especially after a strong earthquake. Some could be as equally as strong as the initial earthquake. They can also last for a week or more. Some people feel a bit nauseous from it.
- Contact loved ones, confirm to CLAIR, CO, and your PAs of your safety as soon as possible, but **conserve your phone's battery**. Do **not** use Facetime, Skype, or LINE video chats excessively.

Tsunami

If you live nearby the coast or in the low-lying regions nearby the coast and an earthquake has hit, check your TV (NHK news), listen to the PA announcement system, or check JMA's website (<http://www.jma.go.jp/en/tsunami/>). Here are some tips in relation to tsunamis:
<http://japan.usembassy.gov/e/acs/tacs-tsunami.html>

Typhoons

Typhoons are easily forecasted compared to earthquakes and tsunamis. As a part of your daily routine, try to find out about the weather forecast for your area as well as Japan in general via website or TV news. You can also check for information on the JMA website (<http://www.jma.go.jp/en/typh/>). Here are some tips in relation to typhoons:
<http://japan.usembassy.gov/e/acs/tacs-typhoon.html>

Landslide

During the rainy season and typhoons, the risk of a landslide increases. You can check out your area's website for hazard maps. If it is heavily raining and causing flooding and you live in front of a huge hill, it may be best to evacuate to your local emergency shelter. There is also a real time landslide risk map (<http://www.jma.go.jp/en/doshamesh/>)

Volcanic Eruptions

While Shikoku does not have any live volcanoes, our neighbors to the West in Kyushu have a number of active volcanoes (i.e. Mt. Aso, Mt. Unzen, Sakurajima). When making travel plans nearby or to these volcanoes, be aware of any issues or warnings. You can check these out here: <http://www.jma.go.jp/en/volcano/> and <http://www.jma.go.jp/en/ashfall/>

If a volcano does erupt and you are in an area that will be affected, here is a general resource guide of what to do before (<http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/volcanoes/before.asp>) and during (<http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/volcanoes/during.asp>) a volcanic eruption.

thank you!



Congratulations! You have read through the entire Ehime JET Guidebook. Hopefully you now have an idea of what to prepare for and expect. We recommend you visit the [Ehime AJET website](#) to find out more and if you haven't already, [join the Ehime AJET facebook group](#).

If you still have any additional questions or suggestions for the guidebook, please feel free to contact your RA or email the PAs at ehimepa@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing you soon!

