



Country Intelligence Brief

Japan

Overall Risk Rating

1.75 - Low

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Ratings Overview

Security

1.50 - Low

Civil Unrest	2.00
Crime	1.50
Kidnapping	1.00
Terrorism	1.25
Armed Conflict	1.50
Security Services	1.00

Infrastructure

1.50 - Low

Ground Transport	1.50
Cyber	3.00
Maritime	1.50
Air Travel	1.50
Utilities	1.25

Environment

3.00 - Moderate

Man-Made Hazards	2.00
Seismic	3.50
Storm Systems	3.50
Natural Hazards	3.00

Health and Medical

2.00 - Low

Disease and Health Threats	1.75
Medical Facilities and Services	2.00
Mental Health	2.75
Food and Water Safety	1.00

Political

1.75 - Low

Corruption	1.75
Government Stability	1.25
Rule of Law	2.25
Sanctions	1.50

LGBTQ Security

2.00 - Low

LGBTQ Legal Environment	3.00
LGBTQ Enforcement	3.00
LGBTQ Social Environment	2.00

FactBox

Location	Japan
Location	Northeast Asia
Government Type	Parliamentary Constitutional Monarchy
Population	~ 124 million (est. 2026)
Languages	Official Language: Japanese. Other languages that are considered official or widely spoken: None. Languages that should be used discreetly: None.
International Country Code	+81
Time Zones	UTC+9
Traffic	Drives on the left
Drinking Water	Safe to Drink

Overview

1.75 - Low

Overview

Japan presents a low security and operational risk, supported by strong state institutions, effective security services, and resilient infrastructure. Key risks for international businesses and travelers include regional military activity, tensions involving China, North Korea, and Russia, localized natural hazards, and disruptions associated with major security incidents.

- **Trend:** The security environment will likely remain stable, although military activity around North Korean weapons testing continues to create localized risks to air and maritime travel.

Current Situation

Japan remains a stable operating environment for international businesses, with major commercial centers and transportation networks functioning normally. Regional security activity presents the more significant source of disruption. Chinese coast guard and military activity around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and in waters surrounding Japan remains frequent, and Chinese and Russian forces have conducted joint activities in Japan's surrounding waters. In July, a Chinese destroyer conducted live-fire exercises within Japan's exclusive economic zone near Okinotori Island, prompting increased Japanese surveillance and concerns about the safety of nearby vessels.

North Korea continues to conduct ballistic missile launches into waters near Japan. These launches generally do not affect normal business activity, but they can trigger temporary airspace or maritime warnings, increased monitoring, and localized disruption to transportation. North Korea has also increased its opposition to Japan's expanding defense capabilities and Japan's closer security cooperation with the United States and South Korea.

Japan's expanding defense posture will remain an important factor in the regional operating environment. Tokyo is increasing defense spending and developing longer-range strike and unmanned capabilities in response to perceived threats from China, North Korea, and Russia. These changes are unlikely to affect routine travel or business operations directly, but heightened military activity could increase the frequency of temporary airspace, maritime, or access restrictions around military facilities and southwestern Japan.

Elevated Risk Areas

The southwestern islands, particularly Okinawa and the islands extending toward Taiwan, face greater exposure to military activity and regional tensions than mainland Japan. Areas around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands also carry a higher risk of maritime incidents involving Chinese and Japanese government vessels.

Northern and western Japan can experience greater exposure to North Korean missile activity, particularly areas facing the Sea of Japan/East Sea. Major cities such as Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, and Fukuoka remain broadly accessible for international business and tourism.

Outlook

Japan's operating environment will likely remain stable over the next three to 12 months. Chinese military and coast guard activity around Japan is likely to continue, particularly around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and Japan's southwestern approaches. North Korea will probably continue missile testing and military signaling, creating periodic airspace and maritime safety concerns rather than sustained disruption to commercial activity.

Japan's expanding defense cooperation with the United States and South Korea, combined with increased Chinese and Russian military activity around Japan, could produce more frequent encounters between military forces. A serious maritime or air incident, particularly near the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands or southwestern Japan, could result in temporary restrictions, increased security measures, or localized disruption to commercial traffic.

Triggers

- A North Korean missile launch that prompts temporary airspace or maritime restrictions affecting commercial routes or airports in northern or western Japan.
- A sustained increase in Chinese coast guard or military activity around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands that results in a maritime confrontation, navigation restrictions, or increased Japanese military deployments.
- A serious incident involving Chinese, Russian, or Japanese military aircraft or vessels that results in sustained deployments or restrictions affecting commercial air or maritime traffic.

Security

1.50 - Low

Japan presents a low security risk profile, with limited exposure to conflict, terrorism, crime, and civil unrest. There is no active armed conflict in Japan. Territorial disputes with China persist as a long-term geopolitical concern but do not translate into direct security impacts on the ground. The risk of terrorism remains very low, with no credible or sustained threat currently assessed against domestic or international targets. Crime levels are low by global standards. Petty and opportunistic offenses such as pickpocketing or theft may occur in urban and transport hubs, but violent crime is rare, and overall incidence remains limited.

Small-scale demonstrations occur regularly in Tokyo and other major cities, typically in response to socio-economic, political, or environmental issues. These gatherings are generally peaceful and result in only minor, localized traffic disruptions. Larger protests are less frequent but can cause temporary congestion around government buildings and major thoroughfares, with minimal risk of escalation.

Civil Unrest

2.00

Current Situation

Japan experiences regular small-scale demonstrations in Tokyo and other major urban centers. These events are typically peaceful and result in limited disruption, most commonly minor road closures and localized traffic delays. Large-scale protests are less frequent but can cause more significant congestion for both vehicular and pedestrian movement, particularly in central districts.

Demonstrations are generally concentrated around government buildings, foreign diplomatic missions, and major thoroughfares. Most remain orderly, with a low incidence of violence or property damage.

Triggers

Protests are most commonly driven by political, security, and socio-economic issues, including:

- Proposed constitutional amendments and major legislative changes
- Trade agreements and economic policy decisions
- US military base presence and broader security alignment issues
- Media regulation and perceived censorship concerns
- Environmental policy and nuclear energy reliance

Escalation is more likely when issues attract sustained public attention or coincide with major periods of political decision-making.

Background

Japan maintains a relatively low propensity for violent civil unrest compared to its regional peers. Demonstrations are typically organized by

political groups, labor unions, and civil society organizations, and are heavily policed when occurring near government or sensitive installations.

While most activity remains peaceful, large gatherings can still generate localized congestion in central Tokyo and other major cities, particularly when staged along main roads or near administrative districts. Violence and significant property damage are uncommon.

Crime

 1.50

The general threat from crime is minimal across Japan, and is likely petty and opportunistic in nature, including pickpocketing, bag snatching, and credit card and phone scams. Petty theft is prevalent in crowded areas of major cities, particularly in Tokyo.

Incidents of sexual molestation of females on subways are occasionally reported, whilst cases of "drink-spiking" in bars and nightclubs that usually precede sexual or physical assault are periodically recorded by police. These drink spikes typically occur in nightlife areas of urban centers like Tokyo and Osaka. A common pattern involves English-speaking "Street touts", known locally as "kyakuhiki," approaching visitors and encouraging them to enter bars or clubs. Street touting is illegal in Japan but remains common in certain nightlife areas, including the high-risk areas mentioned above. Street touts may misrepresent services, entry fees, or offers such as free drinks. Travellers may be charged an entry fee after entering a venue and may find it difficult to leave freely once inside.

Japan has strict laws regarding illegal drugs. If police detect an illegal substance in a person's bloodstream, that person may be charged regardless of whether they knowingly or willingly consumed the substance. Refusing a police-requested test may result in arrest or detention for obstructing police duties.

Violent crime does occur in Japan, although it rarely affects foreigners. Stabbings and firearm-related crimes have sporadically occurred, though such acts remain rare and have not been directed at foreigners. Japanese mafia or Yakuza clans are associated with extortion, but seldom target foreign companies operating in Japan.

Kidnapping

 1.00

The threat of kidnapping in Japan is minimal. Kidnappers are more likely to target locals. The most common types of abduction in Japan include high net worth individual kidnap-for-ransom or kidnappings by organized criminal groups, typically related to illegal business dealings or gambling. Victims are usually released unharmed.

Terrorism

 1.25

There are no known terrorist organizations operating in Japan, although the Middle East-based militant Islamic State (IS) has targeted and killed Japanese nationals in other countries. Japan has also enacted several counterterrorism measures, including heightened surveillance and anti-terror laws, to mitigate the threat, although there have been concerns over a perceived lack of experience by Self-Defense Forces (SDF) in responding to terror attacks.

It should also be noted that Japan has experienced terrorist-style attacks by mentally challenged or disgruntled individuals, including a knife assault at a facility for disabled people south of Tokyo that left at least 19 people dead. These attacks are difficult to predict, although the level of frequency is very low.

Armed Conflict

 1.50

The risk of armed conflict in Japan is minimal. Tokyo is involved in a territorial dispute with China and Taiwan over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. While there have been no major incidents of armed conflict among the claimants, maritime and aerial activity in the area has at times led to heightened tensions. There have also been periodic reports of increased military presence and capability development in the wider region as countries in the Asia-Pacific, including Japan and China, continue to modernize their maritime forces.

Japan's security environment is also influenced by broader regional dynamics, including tensions in the East and South China Seas. Japan has supported capacity-building efforts in some Southeast Asian countries through security cooperation and assistance, which China views as part of the wider strategic competition in the region.

Despite these factors, the likelihood of a large-scale armed conflict involving Japan remains low, supported by extensive diplomatic, economic, and security interdependence in the region.

Security Services

 1.00

The capabilities and responsiveness of security services in Japan are generally high, and the overall risk is low. Japan maintains multiple security institutions, with prefectural police forces and local police boxes (*koban*) being the primary points of contact for both residents and foreign nationals.

Japanese-English interpretation services are available in major cities and at key police stations, though availability may be more limited in rural or less-populated areas.

Infrastructure

 1.50 - Low

There are no safety concerns over air travel.

There are no safety concerns over road travel.

Yokohama port in Japan has been ranked as the most efficient port in the world.

Electricity, mobile and internet connections are stable and reliable.

Cyber crime poses a credible concern, despite existing measures that aim to protect online users.

Ground Transport

 1.50

The road network in Japan is extensive. Despite being an archipelago, the road network covers approximately 1.21 million km, 80 per cent of which is comprised of paved roads. In general, road conditions are good, although secondary roads are narrow. Parts of the road network can also be inaccessible due to floods and landslides, which are common during the rainy season, whilst roads can be very slippery and hazardous due to snowfall during the winter period. Local drivers are generally well mannered and considerate, although many are known to beat the red traffic light, especially in urban centers.

The average number of traffic accidents in Japan is considered low. However, non-fatal collisions are still relatively common and the national police typically take a strict approach to even the most minor incidents. Foreign visitors must immediately report any incidents (including those involving no third parties) to the emergency services and are often request to complete a full written report.

Japan's rail network is one of the safest in the world, and is widely used for both business and pleasure. Very frequent services run on the main routes.

Local Buses

● Unrated

Buses are available within and between most major cities. Buses in Japan have a good safety record. Petty theft and other criminal activities pose a low threat to travelers. Terrorists have not attacked buses in Japan in the last decade.

Mass Transit

● Unrated

Metro systems are available in most major cities in Japan. The country's metro systems are generally efficient and safe. Securing personal items onboard metro trains is important, as theft is a standard threat.

Taxis

● Unrated

Taxis operate in all major cities in Japan. Drivers use meters and follow regulated fare structures.

Ride-hailing services and app-based vehicle booking operate in Japan, often through licensed taxi fleets. Availability decreases outside major urban areas and during late-night hours.

Train Travel

● Unrated

Japan has a comprehensive, nationwide rail network with frequent service. Trains operate on strict schedules across both urban and intercity routes, including Shinkansen high-speed rail services operated by the JR Group, which connect major cities such as Tokyo, Osaka, and Fukuoka. Major rail operators include JR East for eastern regions and JR West for western regions, along with urban metro systems such as Tokyo Metro and Osaka Metro.

Delays occur infrequently and are usually brief. Accidents and derailments remain rare by international standards. Personal safety and property security aboard trains and within stations remain consistent across most locations, including major transit hubs in Tokyo, Osaka, and other large cities.

Vehicles and Roads

● Unrated

Road safety conditions in Japan are generally good. Traffic in Japan drives on the left. Heavy traffic congestion is common in major cities. Car rentals are available in most major cities. Foreigners planning to drive in Japan must have an International Driving Permit (IDP) or valid driver's license issued in Japan.

International Road Travel

Japan does not have any international road connections.

Cyber

● 3.00

Geostrategic Concerns

The cybersecurity environment in Japan presents an overall medium level of threat - this is shaped by the balance between threat activity, institutional capacity, and digital resilience. Japan faces moderate exposure to state-linked cyber espionage, with frequent targeting of critical infrastructure such as energy, government institutions, and financial sectors. Broader risks include state-sponsored actors and digital disruption, with exposure varying according to alliance structures and infrastructure resilience.

The legal and regulatory environment in Japan is well-developed, with key measures including Basic Act on Cybersecurity, the Act on the Protection of Personal Information (APPI), and the Active Cyber Defense (ACD) Laws. These laws impose requirements on data protection, breach reporting, and incident response, with their effectiveness assessed as high, reflecting robust enforcement. Institutional capacity is provided by the National Cybersecurity Office, which ensures strong coordination between government, private sector, and critical infrastructure providers. Overall, domestic digital infrastructure is (moderately secure, with protections strongest in IT services and weakest in financial and health sectors.

Cybercrime

Cybercrime in Japan is assessed as a high threat. Common threats include phishing, ransomware, credential theft, and fraud, with multinational firms, or critical sectors most vulnerable to compromise. Japan also experiences intellectual property theft, supply chain compromise, and state-criminal overlap.

Law enforcement capacity is strong, with authorities proactive in addressing cybercrime, and regulatory enforcement is consistent. Cooperation with international partners is robust, particularly along the ASEAN Japan Cybersecurity Community Alliance (AJCCA). Systemic resilience depends heavily on factors such as public-private coordination, institutional resources, and global partnerships.

Maritime

1.50

Japan's maritime sector is supported by modern port infrastructure, efficient logistics networks, and well-developed maritime services. Major commercial ports maintain high security standards and generally operate with minimal disruption under normal conditions.

Maritime security risks remain low. While regional tensions involving North Korea's ballistic missile programme and territorial disputes with China and Russia contribute to an elevated security environment, these have not significantly affected commercial shipping or access to Japanese ports. Shipping in the East China Sea may experience increased coast guard and naval activity near disputed maritime areas, but international shipping routes generally remain open and secure.

The principal operational risks to maritime services arise from natural hazards rather than security threats. Earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons, volcanic activity, and severe weather can temporarily disrupt port operations, shipping schedules, and coastal infrastructure. Ports and shipping operators maintain comprehensive disaster preparedness and business continuity measures, allowing most disruptions to be managed effectively.

Overall, Japan presents a low maritime risk environment, with operational interruptions more likely to result from natural disasters than geopolitical or security incidents.

Air Travel

1.50

There is no significant risk associated with air travel to or from Japan. According to the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Japan's aviation sector complies with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) safety standards. National carrier Japan Airlines (JAL) and the country's largest airline, All Nippon Airways (ANA), are also considered as two of the safest in the world.

Japan has several airports located across the archipelago. Narita International Airport (NRT) is the main international aviation hub serving Greater Tokyo area, whilst Haneda Airport (HND), which is JAL and ANA's primary hub, is the capital's secondary international airport. Kansai International Airport (KIX), on the other hand, primarily serves Greater Osaka Area, whilst New Chitose Airport serves the Sapporo Metropolitan area. These airports have amenities, including lounges, restaurants and cafes, currency exchange stalls and automated teller machines (ATMs), and security at these facilities is considered adequate.

It should be noted that air travel disruptions are common during severe weather, affecting both domestic and international flights. Return to normal flight schedules following major disruptions may also take time due to backlogs.

Utilities

1.25

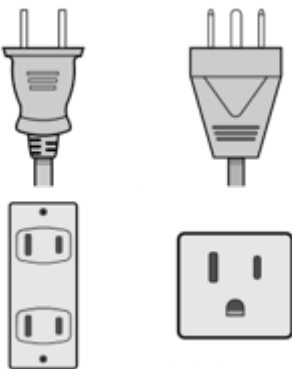
One hundred per cent of the population has access to electricity, which is mainly derived from liquefied natural gas (LNG), coal and nuclear power, as well as renewable energy, including hydrothermal and geothermal energy. Similarly, mobile communications coverage is extensive, and internet connections in Japan are stable and fast.

Electricity

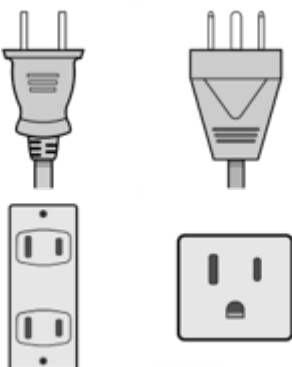
Unrated

Electricity in Japan is supplied at 100 V, 50/60 Hz. Japan uses Type A and B plugs.

Plug Types



Types de prises



Internet and Telecommunications

Unrated

Internet service in Japan is readily available in most accommodations and internet cafes. Internet activity is considered private and secure in most areas.

Environment

3.00 - Moderate

Japan is known for its comprehensive and effective disaster preparedness programs. However, the risk of human casualties and devastation resulting from natural hazards like earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and storm systems is significant given the historical precedent for high-impact events, which can overwhelm existing safety measures. The typhoon season lasts year-round, but most storm activity occurs July-September. During this time, major flooding can lead to significant disruption and loss of life. While modern construction techniques, early warning systems, and evacuation programs have reduced the impact of earthquakes in Japan, seismic events still pose a significant threat to personnel and business operations.

Man-Made Hazards

2.00

Japan continues to face challenges in managing hazardous nuclear waste from the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster in Okuma, Fukushima Prefecture. In March 2011, a massive earthquake and tsunami led to meltdowns in three reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, resulting in hydrogen-air explosions and the release of radioactive materials into the atmosphere. The incident was classified as a rare Level 7 event on the International Nuclear Event Scale.

It is estimated that more than 30 million people have been exposed to the radioactive fallout from the site or have suffered from other physical and mental conditions as a direct result of the accident and the subsequent displacement of local communities. Nonetheless, an investigation by the World Health Organization in 2013 concluded that the evacuated residents were exposed to so little radiation that radiation-induced health effects were likely to be below detectable levels. Equally, visitors to the area are very unlikely to experience any adverse health effects from radiation exposure. The World Nuclear Association reports that radiation exposure for those living in proximity to Fukushima is expected to be below 10 mSv over a lifetime, far lower than the background radiation level.

Debate over the management of treated contaminated water from the reactors has continued to generate political concern and public opposition. Proposals by authorities to discharge treated water into the sea prompted protests by residents and opposition groups.

As of March 2026, Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings (TEPCO) has discharged approximately 133,000 cubic meters of treated radioactive water from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station into the Pacific Ocean. This process began in August 2023 and is part of the decommissioning efforts. Despite meeting international safety standards, the discharge has faced opposition from residents, fishermen, and neighboring countries.

In December 2025, Japan approved the restart of reactors 6 and 7 at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa Nuclear Power Plant, the world's largest nuclear power plant. Reactor 6 was restarted Jan. 21 2026, and after initial issues, it resumed operations Feb. 9 2026.

Seismic

3.50

Japan is situated in the northern portion of the Pacific Ring of Fire, one of the world's most seismically active zones due to the subduction of the Pacific tectonic plate and the localized collision of lithospheric plates. According to the government's Earthquake Research Committee, there are more than 2,000 active fault lines within Japanese territory, including 97 capable of generating powerful tremors. Most of these high-risk areas are located in the Chubu, Kansai, and Kanto regions, although the rest of the country also faces a moderate risk of tremors. Although most earthquakes are low-to-moderate in intensity, powerful earthquakes occur relatively frequently and cause large-scale

devastation. A magnitude 7.6 earthquake struck off the coast of Aomori Prefecture Dec. 8 2025, resulting in injuries to 47 people and damaging nearly 4,000 buildings in Aomori and Hokkaido. The earthquake also triggered tsunamis that reached heights of up to 70 cm (28 inches) along the coast of northern Japan.

Japan also faces a risk of volcanic eruption due to more than 100 active volcanoes. The human impact depends on the intensity of the eruption and the location of urban populations relative to the volcano. In the past, eruptions have caused significant human casualties and displacements, structural damage, and travel disruptions.

Due to the high amounts of seismic activity and high population density along the coast, the risk of tsunamis is high, especially along the Pacific coast. The probability of a tsunami along the Japan Sea coast is significantly lower than along the Pacific coast due to lower seismic activity and longer recurrence intervals in the Sea of Japan. To reduce the risk of flooding in low-lying areas, authorities have built a large and complex network of defensive infrastructure along the coast, with the Pacific coast being more developed.

Given the country's vulnerability to seismic events, the Japanese government enforces strict structural and zoning safety codes that apply to all businesses and developers. Japanese residents also regularly participate in earthquake and volcanic eruption drills as a precautionary measure. Although these activities help to reduce the human impact of seismic events, powerful earthquakes and major eruptions can easily overwhelm these disaster preparedness programs.

Storm Systems

● 3.50

Typhoons can occur year-round, but most typhoons occur May-October, with activity peaking August-September. Typhoons can bring heavy rain, flooding, strong winds, high waves, and storm surges. They also increase the risk of river flooding and landslides, threatening people's lives and livelihoods. Although storm systems usually affect southern Japan, other parts of the country are also vulnerable to these hazards.

Tropical Storm Risk (TSR) is predicting above-average activity of around 25 percent in 2026 due to moderate to strong El Nino conditions. In 2026, El Nino conditions are forecast. Storm formation is likely to shift; countries and islands further east and north, including Micronesia, Guam, Japan, Korea, eastern mainland China, and Taiwan, are likely to see a greater number and higher intensity storms.

Forecast Parameter	Average (based on historical activity 1991-2020) Tropical Storm Risk	
Number of Named Storms	25.5	27
Number of Typhoons	16	18
Number of Intense Typhoons	9.3	11

Blizzards and other severe weather are also common during the winter season, typically December-February, particularly in the northern regions of Hokkaido. Heavy snowfall can cause human casualties, structural damage, service delivery disruptions, and travel interruptions.

Natural Hazards

● 3.00

Most regions of Japan (including Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu) feature a temperate, humid subtropical climate characterized by four distinct seasons; winter, spring, summer, and autumn. However, much variation exists between the Japanese archipelago's outer northern and southern areas. While northern Hokkaido features a cool humid continental climate, the southern Yaeyama Islands experience a warm tropical rainforest climatic zone.

The East Asia rainy season typically begins in May in eastern mainland China, Taiwan, and Okinawa Prefecture in Japan. Its effects gradually spread to the north and east, encompassing the rest of China, most of the rest of Japan, North Korea, South Korea, and Russia's Primorsky Krai by mid-June. In Japan, it is known as Baiu; all areas except the country's northernmost island, Hokkaido, experience this rainy season.

The following table shows the approximate start and end times for the Baiu:

Region	Onset	Withdrawal
Okinawa	May 10	June 21
Amami	May 12	June 29
Kyushu (South)	May 30	July 15
Kyushu (North)	June 4	July 19
Shikoku	June 5	July 17
Chugoku, Kinki, Tokai	June 6	July 19
Kanto/Koshin	June 7	July 19
Hokuriku	June 11	July 23
Tohoku (South)	June 12	July 24
Tohoku (North)	June 15	July 28

Forecast models indicate that above-normal precipitation is likely across most of Japan April-June, except for the Amami and Okinawa regions, where below-normal precipitation is likely. Above-normal precipitation is also likely in central, western, and southern Japan June-August, with normal precipitation over the rest of Japan. Above-normal temperatures are forecast across Japan April-August.

Generalized flooding due to high levels of precipitation is relatively common in Japan, particularly during June and July. Many Japanese cities are located in river deltas and on flood plains, which are particularly vulnerable to this risk. Although Japan's world-class infrastructure and emergency service provisions keep fatality rates relatively low, such events can heavily impact business continuity.

Bear sightings have been reported across northern and central Japan, particularly in Akita, Iwate, Aomori, Yamagata, Fukushima, Hokkaido, and parts of Niigata and Nagano. Several fatal encounters and rising reports near rural communities have prompted repeated local warnings and travel advisories from multiple foreign governments.

Air Quality

 Unrated

Air pollution routinely exceeds recommended thresholds in urban areas. Individuals with asthma or chronic cardiorespiratory conditions should consult with a healthcare provider and carry necessary medications. On days when air quality is particularly poor, affected individuals should take personal precautions to reduce respiratory stress.

Health and Medical

2.00 - Low

There are no major health-related concerns in Japan. The country has high-quality healthcare services, more so in urban centers. Essential health services are available and accessible throughout the country. Tap water is safe for consumption.

Disease and Health Threats

 1.75

Diseases of High Risk

- None identified

Diseases of Moderate Risk

- **Japanese Encephalitis:** Transmitted through mosquito bites. Fewer than 1 percent of individuals infected develop symptoms. When symptoms do occur, they usually develop four to 14 days after being infected. Most individuals develop mild, influenza-like symptoms. However, some infections may progress to encephalitis (brain inflammation), which can be life-threatening. Risk is greatest for extended time in rural endemic areas and for those involved in agriculture. Sporadic activity has been reported countrywide, except in Hokkaido. Risk is highest from June to October.
- **Leptospirosis:** Transmitted through exposure or ingestion of water contaminated with the urine of infected animals. Flooding poses an additional risk of contracting leptospirosis. Initial symptoms of leptospirosis typically develop two days to four weeks after exposure. Such symptoms include headache, fever, muscle aches, chills, diarrhea, vomiting, and abdominal pain. Those who may be at high risk can take an antibiotic prophylaxis.
- **Leishmaniasis:** Transmitted through the bites of sandflies. Risk is greatest from dusk to dawn. Cutaneous leishmaniasis is the most common form of *Leishmania* infection, causing skin sores that are usually painless. Visceral leishmaniasis is the second most common; typical symptoms include high fever, substantial weight loss, swelling of the spleen and liver, and anemia. If left untreated, this form of leishmaniasis is nearly 100 percent fatal within two years.
- **Dengue Fever:** Transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito, mostly during the day. Bite prevention is essential. Symptoms of dengue fever include a sudden onset of fever and at least one of the following: severe headache, severe pain behind the eyes, muscle and/or joint pain, rash, easy bruising, and/or nose or gum bleeding. Fever and other symptoms generally appear abruptly four to seven days after being bitten. Some people have reported experiencing no symptoms. Dengue fever outbreaks are sporadic in Japan.

Diseases of Low Risk

- **Hepatitis B:** Transmitted through infected blood and bodily fluids and effectively prevented with vaccination. An unexpected medical or dental emergency may place the unvaccinated traveler at risk. Practice safe sex and ensure medical procedures, tattoos, or piercings are conducted using sterile equipment. Symptoms include fever, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, fatigue, dark urine, loss of appetite, joint pain, and jaundice.
- **Hepatitis A:** Transmitted by contaminated food and water. Hepatitis A does not always cause symptoms. If they occur, symptoms appear two to six weeks after exposure and include fever, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, fatigue, dark urine, loss of appetite, joint pain, and jaundice.
- **Tuberculosis:** Transmitted through respiratory droplets released by coughing or sneezing. Individuals planning an extended stay should consider obtaining a PPD skin test to reference against future suspected infections. Symptoms commonly include chest pain, a bad cough lasting three weeks or longer, and coughing up blood and/or sputum. Some people also experience chills, weight loss, fever, weakness, night sweats, and loss of appetite.
- **Hepatitis E:** Transmitted by contaminated food and water. Symptoms appear two to eight weeks after exposure and include fever, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, dark urine, joint pain, and jaundice.
- **Tick-borne Encephalitis (TBE):** Transmitted through the bite of an infected tick. Bite prevention is essential. In rare cases, people can become infected by consuming unpasteurized dairy products. Early symptoms include fever, fatigue, headache, myalgia, and nausea. These symptoms generally appear two to 10 days after exposure. In some cases, infection can progress to encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), which can be life-threatening. Most cases occur from April to November in forests and fields below 1500 meters' altitude (approximately 4,920 feet). Risk of infection exists in Hokkaido Prefecture.
- **Traveler's Diarrhea:** Transmitted by contaminated food and water. This is the most common illness in travelers. People who become ill by an infectious agent that causes traveler's diarrhea most often experience nausea, vomiting, fever, bloody stools, and/or the urge to pass stools despite an empty gastrointestinal tract constantly.

- **HIV/AIDS:** Transmitted through infected blood and bodily fluids. Practice safe sex and ensure medical procedures, tattoos, or piercings are conducted using sterile equipment. Within two to four weeks of HIV infection, many people, but not all, experience influenza-like illness, including fever, swollen glands, sore throat, rash, fatigue, muscle and joint pains, and headache. These symptoms, also called acute retroviral syndrome (ARS), can last from days to weeks. Without treatment, the infection can lead to AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome).
- **Rabies:** Transmitted through the saliva of infected wild or domesticated mammals, usually by a bite or scratch. Do not approach unknown animals. No known risk.

Health Requirements

● Unrated

Yellow Fever: Vaccination Not Required

There are no recommendations or requirements for yellow fever vaccination in Japan. There is no risk of yellow fever.

Health Recommendations

● Unrated

Recommended Immunizations for Travel to Japan

Travelers should ensure that they have routine vaccination courses and boosters. You should visit a healthcare professional at least four to six weeks before the trip. Routine vaccines include measles-mumps-rubella (MMR), diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis, varicella (chickenpox), polio, and the annual flu vaccine. Travelers should consider obtaining COVID-19 vaccination where available, even if the destination country does not require it.

- **Hepatitis A:** Recommended for most individuals unless contraindicated. Two doses, administered at least six months apart, are required for long-lasting protection. It is recommended that all susceptible people traveling for any purpose, frequency, or duration to countries with high or intermediate hepatitis A endemicity be vaccinated or receive immune globulin before departure. A booster is recommended for partially vaccinated travelers.
- **Hepatitis B:** Recommended for most individuals unless contraindicated. Widely used formulations require three doses administered over the course of six to 18 months, depending on the recipient's age and vaccination history. Booster doses after a complete series are usually not required to maintain immunity. If exposed before finalizing the full series, individuals may receive a special booster within 24 hours for short-term protection.
- **Japanese Encephalitis:** Unless contraindicated, it is recommended for individuals who are moving to or planning stays of one month or longer in endemic areas, especially in rural areas with rice fields or marshland during the transmission season. Transmission season predominately occurs between June - September. It is also recommended for travelers engaging in activities that increase the risk of infection, such as visiting rural areas, hiking or camping, or staying in places without air conditioning, screens, or bed nets. Widely used formulations require two doses administered 28 days apart. An accelerated series may be available, with the first dose required at least two weeks before travel.
- **Rabies:** Unless contraindicated, the WHO and CDC recommend vaccination for individuals who will be performing occupational or recreational activities that increase the risk for exposure to potentially rabid animals, such as animal handlers, field biologists, cavers, missionaries, veterinarians, and some laboratory workers. It is also recommended for travelers who might have difficulty getting prompt access to safe post-exposure prophylaxis. Japan has not reported any rabies in domestic animals, thus most travelers are at low risk. Bats are likely to carry bat rabies.

- **Tick-borne Encephalitis:** Recommended for individuals trekking, working, or engaging in outdoor activities in high-risk, endemic areas, particularly heavily forested areas where the disease occurs and ticks are likely to be found. Currently, a tick-borne encephalitis vaccine is available in many countries. The initial vaccine consists of three doses and requires six months or more for completion. Tick bite prevention is also essential.

Medical Facilities and Services

2.00

The quality of healthcare in Japan is high, with modern hospitals, well-equipped clinics, specialist services, and trained medical professionals available throughout most of the country. Emergency and tertiary care are widely available in major cities, and ambulance services are generally reliable. Access may be more limited in rural areas and remote islands, particularly for specialist or emergency services. English-speaking physicians and facilities may also be limited outside major urban centers. Treatment can be expensive, and hospitals or doctors may require upfront payment or proof of adequate insurance before admitting a patient.

Medications and Pharmacy

Unrated

Pharmacies are widely available across Japan, particularly in major cities, and generally provide reliable access to prescription and over-the-counter medicines. Availability may vary by location and product. Many common medications available over the counter in other countries may require a prescription in Japan. Some medicines, including certain stimulants, narcotics, psychotropics, and cold or allergy medicines containing restricted ingredients, may be prohibited or tightly controlled.

Before traveling, confirm the status of your "over the counter" medicines with the accredited foreign government offices of Japan in your country. Some medicines require travelers to obtain an import certificate in advance. Always carry your prescription medication in its original packaging, along with your doctor's prescription and any other relevant documentation.

Mental Health

2.75

Mental health services are unevenly distributed, with significant disparities between urban and rural areas, and conditions are moderately managed.

Food and Water Safety

1.00

Drinking water is generally safe in Japan. However, officials still recommend drinking bottled or otherwise purified water whenever possible to reduce the risk of traveler's diarrhea or other gastrointestinal illnesses. Ensure that food is properly handled and prepared. Wash raw produce before eating. Consume only pasteurized milk and dairy products, or use powdered or canned milk and cured cheeses. Consider avoiding street vendors and unregulated food establishments.

Political

1.75 - Low

Japan has experienced shifts in its political landscape in recent years, although the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) remains the country's dominant political force. The LDP leads the government in coalition with the Japan Innovation Party (JIP/Ishin) following political realignments in 2025. The coalition holds a majority in the House of Representatives, while Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi of the LDP heads the government. Government institutions continue to operate within well-established constitutional and legal frameworks. Corruption levels remain low by international standards, and the rule of law is consistently upheld across public institutions, although political funding and ethics issues continue to receive public and media scrutiny.

Corruption

1.75

Levels of corruption in Japan remain low by international standards. Japan maintains an established legal and institutional framework to address corruption risks and support the enforcement of anti-corruption measures. Sporadic cases involving senior political or government figures occur, but these remain isolated and do not indicate systemic corruption.

Government Stability

1.25

Japan is a representative democracy and a constitutional monarchy. The emperor serves as the hereditary ceremonial head of state, while the prime minister serves as head of government. The National Diet holds legislative authority and consists of the House of Representatives and the House of Councilors. The judiciary operates independently and is headed by the Supreme Court.

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) remains the largest political party and continues to lead the government through coalition arrangements, reflecting sustained electoral support over time.

Rule of Law

2.25

The rule of law is firmly established in Japan. The judiciary is generally regarded as independent and impartial, while law enforcement institutions operate effectively within a well-developed legal framework. Corruption levels remain low by international standards, although political funding and governance issues periodically attract public scrutiny.

Legal mechanisms govern the conduct of politicians and public officials. The practice of retired senior bureaucrats taking positions in private companies, industry associations, or public corporations (*amakudari*) remains a recognized feature of Japan's administrative system, although reforms have reduced its prevalence. The practice continues to attract scrutiny because of concerns over potential conflicts of interest.

Japan's criminal justice system also remains subject to criticism from legal experts and human rights organizations over its high conviction rates, lengthy pre-trial detention, and reliance on interrogations prior to indictment. Critics argue that these practices can place considerable pressure on suspects and provide prosecutors with significant procedural advantages.

Sanctions

1.50

Japan is not subject to international sanctions and continues to operate within established global trade and regulatory frameworks. It participates in multilateral export control regimes and maintains broad access to international markets.

China has applied targeted trade restrictions on Japan during periods of political tension, particularly in areas related to advanced technology and dual-use goods. In early 2026, Beijing restricted exports of dual-use goods to several dozen Japanese industrial entities, heavily regulating the outflow of materials, electronics, sensors, and rare-earth-related inputs.

Japan and South Korea continue to manage periodic trade sensitivities related to historical and regulatory issues, but day-to-day trade has remained stable in recent years. Both countries restored more predictable export procedures in 2023 following earlier restrictions in the semiconductor supply chain. Trade in major sectors such as automotive and advanced manufacturing remains closely interconnected, reflecting continued structural exposure between the two economies.

Legal

Unrated

Visitors to Japan are subject to local laws, which may differ in scope and application from those in their home country. Authorities may impose fines, detention, prosecution, or deportation depending on the nature and severity of an offense, including for unintentional violations. In cases of arrest or detention of foreign nationals, authorities generally notify the relevant consular mission in accordance with applicable international agreements.

Consular officers may assist detained nationals, including welfare checks and guidance on local procedures. However, they cannot intervene in judicial proceedings, provide legal representation, or pay legal fees or fines. Japanese authorities determine the status of dual nationals under domestic law, which may affect the level of consular access available in certain cases.

Emergency Contacts

● Unrated

Emergency Contacts

Ambulance 119

Fire 119

Police 110

Embassies and Consulates

● Unrated

Australian Embassy

Address 2-1-14 Mita, 108-8361 Minato-Ku, Tokyo

Telephone number (81) 3-5232-4111

Fax (81) 2-6261-3111

Web Site <https://japan.embassy.gov.au/tkyo/home.html>

British Embassy

Address 02-8381 Tokyo No 1 Ichiban-cho, Chiyoda-ku

Telephone number (81) 3-5211-1100

Fax (81) 3-5275-3164

Web Site <https://www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-embassy-tokyo>

British Consulate-General in Osaka

Address 541-0059 Osaka3-5-1 Bakuro-machi, Chuo-ku

Telephone number (81) 6-6120-5600

Fax (81) 6-6281-1731

Web Site <https://www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-consulate-general-osaka>

Canadian Embassy

Address 3-38 Akasaka 7-chome, Minato-ku, Tokyo, 107-8503

Telephone number (81) 3-5412-6200

Fax (81) 3-5412-6289

Email tokyo.admin@international.gc.ca

Web Site <https://www.international.gc.ca/country-pays/japan-japon/tokyo.aspx?lang=eng>

French Embassy

Address 4/11/44 Chome Minami Azabu, Minato-Ku, 106-8514 Tokyo

Telephone number (81) 3-5798-6000

Email infoconsul.tokyo-amba@diplomatie.gouv.fr

Web Site <https://jp.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en>

German Embassy

Address 4-5-10, Minami-Azabu, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0047

Telephone number (81) 3-5791-7700

Fax (81) 3-5791-7773

Email info@tokyo.diplo.de

Web Site <http://www.tokyo.diplo.de>

US Embassy

Address 1-10-5 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-8420 Japan

Telephone number (81) 3-3224-5000

Fax (81) 3-3224-5856

Web Site <https://jp.usembassy.gov/>

US Consulate in Fukuoka

Address 2-5-26 Oori, Chuo-ku,
Fukuoka 810-0052

Telephone number (81) 92-751-9331

US Consulate in Nagoya

Address Nagoya International Center Bldg. 6th floor
1-47-1 Nagono, Nakamura-ku, Nagoya 450-0001

Telephone number (81) 3-3224-5000

US Consulate General in Naha

Address 2-1-1 Toyama, Urasoe City, Okinawa, Japan 901-2104

Telephone number (81) 9-8876-4211

Fax (81) 9-8876-4243

US Consulate General Osaka-Kobe

Address 2-11-5, Nishitenma, Kita-ku,
Osaka, 530-8543

Telephone number (81) 6-6315-5900

US Consulate General in Sapporo

Address 3-1, Kita 1-jo Nishi 28-chome, Chuo-ku,
Sapporo, Hokkaido 064-0821

Telephone number (81) 1-1641-1115

Entry/Exit

Unrated

Travelers can obtain specific information about visas and other entry-exit requirements at: <https://entry-exit.crisis24horizon.com/>.

- Foreign nationals entering Japan are generally required to provide fingerprints and a facial photograph at immigration checkpoints. Exemptions apply to diplomatic personnel, certain official government visitors, and other categories specified under immigration regulations.
- Accommodation providers in Japan are required to record the passport details of foreign guests. Guests typically present their passports for verification and registration at check-in. Lodging operators must retain guest information, including name, nationality, passport number, address, and occupation, in accordance with local regulations.

Pre-Departure

Unrated

- Japan frequently experiences episodes of extreme weather and is situated in an active seismic zone. Travelers should familiarize themselves with local evacuation plans issued by local government or the relevant authorities, and monitor weather patterns prior-to and during travel.
- The Japan Tourism Agency has developed an alert app to enable notifications generated by the national earthquake early warning system to be 'pushed' to international travelers and tourists. Details of the app can be accessed [here](#).
- Travelers should have adequate travel insurance in place to enable rapid medical treatment or emergency extraction from country in the event of a major natural disaster.
- Travelers should provide friends and family with a copy of their itinerary, and make a copy of important travel and identification documents to carry on their person.
- During the typhoon season, travelers should prepare a small emergency kit of bottled water, non-perishable food items, a battery-powered radio, medications that are taken regularly, and vital travel documents. This is particularly important in southern and western coastal areas.

On Arrival

Unrated

- There are no significant measures that need to be undertaken on arrival into country. However, due to the risk of seismic episodes, travelers should confirm the location of evacuation areas, evacuation routes, open spaces, and facilities such as community halls and convenience stores in their immediate area.

In Transit

Unrated

- Public transport is generally safe, and up-to-date information on service delays and other potential disruptions is available from the following sources:

- [East Japan Railway Company](#) (operations information) or via twitter @JREast_official
- [Tokyo Metro](#) (operations information)
- [Toei Subway](#) (operations information) or via twitter @toeikotsu
- [Haneda Airport](#) (flight information)
- [Narita Airport](#) (flight information)

- Japan's roads are operated to a high safety standard, and driving is permitted for licensed drivers. Traffic updates and information on road closures can be accessed via the following links:

- [Japan Road Traffic Information Center](#)
- [Real-time Traffic Updates](#)

At Your Hotel

● Unrated

- Due to the threat of earthquakes and related tsunami risk, travelers should take note of emergency instructions which are usually readily available in hotel rooms. Weather reports provided by the local media and government authorities should be monitored via their websites or social media. Warnings and transport information are published by the following organizations:

- [Japan Meteorological Agency](#) via and the twitter handle @JMAkishou
- *Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department, Security Bureau, Disaster Division via the twitter handle @MPDbousai*
- Japanese Red Cross Society via the twitter handle @JRCS_PR
- The Japan Tourism Agency also provides a [multi-language disaster app](#) which provides safety tips and general travel advice
- International travelers can also use the American Forces Network (AFN) 360 app to access the AFN radio stations for guidance during a crisis. [Radio Japan](#) is broadcast in 18 languages
- The National Tourism Organization operates telephone hotlines around the clock in English, Chinese and Korean. The number is 050-3816-2787. Operators can provide information on safe places of refuge during natural disasters and advice on contacting missing persons.

In the Street

● Unrated

- Japan is relatively progressive in terms of LGBT+ rights among Asian countries. The country does not have a history of widespread hostility toward homosexuality, and many venues and events are catering to the community, particularly in major urban centers. Some openly gay and lesbian politicians have run for office and won elections. There is no comprehensive nationwide legal framework that explicitly prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, although some protections exist through local ordinances and court interpretations. Activists have reported unequal treatment in areas such as employment and housing.

- Japan has very low narcotics consumption rates, supported by strict drug control laws and a zero-tolerance approach to drug-related offenses. Penalties for all drug offenses are severe. Enforcement agencies continue to monitor drug importation risks, including among foreign travelers.
- Travelers should keep passports and other travel documents on their person at all times.
- Travelers should avoid overt displays of money, jewelry, or valuables in busy public settings to avoid attracting the attention of petty criminals. Only small denominations of the local currency (yen) should be used, and the contents of wallets or purses should be reduced.
- Travelers should ensure that they carry a mobile phone programmed with appropriate emergency numbers and with sufficient battery life at all times. They should also endeavor to learn or note down several key Japanese phrases that relate to medical needs and requesting emergency assistance, as most operators and administrative staff do not speak fluent English. Travelers should also carry any emergency medical information (such as details of complex prescriptions or allergies) with them at all times.
- In an emergency, the ambulance and fire services number is 119. Ambulance services are free at the point of use in Japan and are generally managed by the fire department, so travelers should make sure to request an ambulance rather than reporting a fire.
- The emergency number for the police is 110. Travelers should use this number to report crime or request police assistance.
- Travelers should be aware of their location and surroundings and generally avoid walking through dimly lit streets after dark. They should carry a map if necessary, but try to keep it concealed.
- In crowded situations, travelers should be aware of jostling, as this may be a ploy for pickpocketing. They should also be aware of people loitering and that attackers may sometimes approach from behind.
- Although protests and public demonstrations are generally peaceful in Japan, travelers should avoid large gatherings where possible, as these may create opportunities for petty crime or cause local disruption.

Culture

Unrated

Standard Hours of Operation

Business: Monday-Friday, 0900-1700

Government: Monday-Friday, 0900-1700

Banking: Monday-Friday, 0900-1500

Business attire is generally conservative and professional. For men, conservative suits are appropriate. For women, conservative dresses or business suits are appropriate.

Appointments are best scheduled Monday-Friday, 1000-1600. Arriving early for meetings or social engagements is common practice. Initial business meetings are generally formal and relationship-focused. Organizations may require multiple meetings to build internal consensus before finalizing decisions. If a meeting includes dining out, the host often offers to pay. Alcohol consumption during lunch or dinner meetings is generally acceptable.

Japanese is commonly used for business purposes. Visitors who use basic Japanese phrases generally receive a positive response, though hosts do not expect this. People widely use business cards and present them with both hands. Recipients should accept cards respectfully

and review them before putting them away. Always use Mr./Ms. or a local honorific/title until the host indicates that using first names is appropriate. Using a person's official title demonstrates respect. When beginning and ending a business meeting, participants typically bow. In international business settings, participants often combine a handshake with a bow.

Golden Week

Golden Week includes a series of holidays observed on April 29 and May 3-5. April 29 is Showa Day, May 3 is Constitution Memorial Day, May 4 is Greenery Day, and May 5 is Children's Day. Collectively, Golden Week is one of the most widely observed holiday periods in Japan.

Many businesses close or operate with reduced staffing during the period. Golden Week is a peak travel season, and flights, trains, and hotels may reach capacity. Hotel rates and short-haul international airfares are often higher than normal. Traffic volumes also increase significantly on major highways. Travelers should confirm reservations and appointments in advance and book transportation and accommodation well in advance if travel is necessary. Restaurants, shopping centers, parks, theaters, temples, and other public venues often experience large crowds during the period.

Gestures

● Unrated

Business cards are widely used, and people usually present them with both hands.

When a meeting begins and ends, participants typically bow as a sign of respect. In international business settings, handshakes may accompany a bow.

Use indirect communication and phrasing when speaking with people from Japan. Maintaining moderate eye contact is common during business discussions, though prolonged direct eye contact may be considered impolite. When addressing someone at a meeting, use their title and last name.

Avoid using the following gestures or habits, as they are deemed offensive or disrespectful:

- Using your index finger to call someone toward you or point at a person; use an open hand instead.
- Holding chopsticks upright in a bowl outside of a funeral setting.
- Using chopsticks to point at someone or something.

Religions

● Unrated

Shintoism 48.5%; Buddhism 46.3%; Other, including Christianity 5%. NB: Many individuals practice a combination of Shinto and Buddhist traditions.

Ethnicities

● Unrated

Japanese 99%, Other, includes Koreans and Chinese 1%

Significant Dates

● Unrated

2026 Important Dates

Date	Event
Jan. 1	New Year's Day

Jan. 12	Coming of Age Day
Feb. 11	National Foundation Day
Feb. 23	Emperor's Birthday
March 20	Vernal Equinox
April 29	Showa Day (Golden Week begins)
May 3	Constitution Memorial Day
May 4	Greenery Day
May 5	Children's Day
July 20	Marine Day
Aug. 11	Mountain Day
Aug. 13-16	Obon Festival (Buddhist Festival; not a public holiday)
Sept. 21	Respect for the Aged Day
Sept. 22	Extra holiday for Silver Week
Sept. 23	Autumnal Equinox
Oct. 12	Sports Day
Nov. 3	Culture Day
Nov. 23	Labor Thanksgiving Day

Financial

Unrated

Japan has a highly developed financial system. Credit cards, debit cards, and electronic payment platforms are widely accepted in urban areas and at most hotels, restaurants, retailers, and transportation hubs. However, some smaller businesses, traditional establishments, and rural locations may only accept cash. Banks and licensed money changers generally offer official exchange rates. Travelers may import and export both local and foreign currency in accordance with Japanese customs regulations and declaration requirements.

Currency

Unrated

Currency Name/Code

The official currency of Japan is the Japanese yen (JPY). The yen is the sole legal tender in Japan.

Currency Convertibility

Banks, licensed money changers, and many international airports offer foreign exchange services in Japan. Unauthorized money-changing activity is uncommon. Travelers may import or export local or foreign currency, but authorities require a declaration for amounts exceeding JPY 1 million (approximately USD 7,000) or its equivalent.

Credit Card

Unrated

Major credit cards are widely accepted in shops, restaurants, hotels, and transportation hubs across Japan, especially in urban areas. Many businesses also accept mobile and contactless payment platforms. However, some smaller businesses, traditional establishments, and rural locations only accept cash, so travelers should carry an adequate supply of local currency.

Taxes and Tipping

● Unrated

Japan does not generally require tipping for hotel personnel, restaurant staff, or taxi drivers. Most businesses include service standards in their pricing, and staff do not expect additional gratuities. Some high-end restaurants and traditional inns (ryokan) apply a service charge to the bill.

Bank and ATM

● Unrated

ATM Availability

Automated teller machines operate widely across Japan, including in cities, towns, convenience stores, post offices, and airports. Travelers can access ATMs at major convenience store chains such as 7-Eleven, Lawson, and FamilyMart, which often provide extended operating hours. Travelers should use machines located in secure, well-lit areas.

Bank Availability

Banks generally operate Monday through Friday, 0900-1500. Some branches reduce services during peak holidays. Banks provide cash advances on major credit cards issued by foreign institutions, subject to identification requirements and issuer approval.

LGBTQ Security

2.00 - Low

The overall threat level for the LGBTQ community in Japan is low. Under Japanese law, same-sex sexual acts are legal. However, there are no explicit punishments for discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Physical attacks against LGBTQ individuals are rare, and despite strong cultural and traditional influences in Japan, the overall social support for the LGBTQ community continues to increase. Yet many individuals are hesitant to disclose their sexual orientation due to a lack of constitutional protections against discrimination and harassment. Since 1994, Japan has hosted pride parades and other LGBTQ-related events nationwide, the most notable being the Tokyo Rainbow Pride Parade.

LGBTQ Legal Environment

● 3.00

The legal environment in Japan poses a moderate threat to the LGBTQ community. While same-sex sexual acts are legal in Japan, the country offers limited constitutional protections to LGBTQ individuals. In June 2023, Japan passed its first-ever national law regarding LGBTQ discrimination, although activists criticized the law for mandating more tolerance toward LGBTQ individuals without ensuring protection from discrimination. While the LGBT Understanding Promotion Act states that “all citizens, irrespective of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, are to be respected as individuals with inherent and inviolable fundamental human rights,” it does not explicitly ban or outline punishments for discrimination. Several district and high courts have ruled that a ban on same-sex marriage is a violation of constitutional rights. Often citing Article 13, the right to pursue happiness, Article 14, discrimination based on race, creed, sex, social status or family origin, and Article 24, which addresses matrimonial mutual consent, cooperation, and equality. So far, five high courts have upheld that the same-sex marriage ban is unconstitutional, with Osaka being the latest in March 2025. However, the National Diet still needs to amend Article 24 which defines marriage as between a husband and a wife in order to grant legal recognition for same-sex marriage. As of March 2025, 455 municipalities and 31 prefectures have adopted a “partnership oath system,” granting partnership certificates to same-sex couples. These certificates extend LGBTQ couples some benefits, including hospital visitation rights and housing, though it is not legally binding. On May 28, 2024, city officials in Omura, Nagasaki, agreed to register a same-sex couple as partners under the same household. Observers considered this decision to be rare and “groundbreaking” due to the country's implicit ban on same-sex marriage. IVF is only accessible to married, heterosexual women. As a result, women who receive IVF treatment abroad are at risk of being denied hospital care in Japan. Before the ruling in October 2023, Japanese citizens had to meet the following criteria to change their gender marker legally: be over 18 years of age, unmarried, without underage children, and undergo a sterilization surgery. Then, in October 2023 the Japanese Supreme Court ruled the

requirement of sterilization surgery unconstitutional. Joint adoption by LGBTQ couples is illegal, and conversion therapy is permitted in Japan. LGBTQ individuals, including MSM, are allowed to donate blood; however, they must comply with a 6-month deferral period following their most recent sexual encounter. The legal age of consent is the same for heterosexual and same-sex couples, and LGBTQ individuals may serve in the military under Japanese law.

LGBTQ Enforcement

● 3.00

Enforcement in Japan presents a moderate threat to the LGBTQ community. The anti-discrimination law passed in June 2023 encourages the government to “promote understanding of LGBTQ individuals.” However, it does not lay out penalties for violation and is, therefore, unlikely to be fully enforced. Under Japanese law, members of the LGBTQ community have limited recourse when faced with discrimination and harassment. The constitution does not prevent companies from discriminating against LGBTQ employees, who, in turn, have little to no legal remedy if their employer terminates their contract because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

LGBTQ Social Environment

● 2.00

The social environment in Japan poses a low threat as the population is generally tolerant of the LGBTQ community. Anti-LGBTQ physical attacks are rare. However, social and cultural stigma persists. Individuals are often reluctant to disclose their sexuality for fear of being marginalized and discriminated against in the workplace, school, or housing. Members of the LGBTQ community have also reported that they face a risk of violence and harassment when in police custody. Japan hosts multiple LGBTQ-related events, including the Tokyo Rainbow Pride parade, one of Asia's most prominent LGBTQ events. The 2023 Tokyo Rainbow Pride was titled “Press on Till Japan Changes” and attracted more than 200,000 participants. Japan has many national and local LGBTQ activist groups that advocate for equal legal protections for the LGBTQ community. Yet Japan remains the only Group of Seven (G7) member that has not developed a comprehensive legal framework recognizing same-sex unions. Advocates and business leaders argue that passing such laws would allow Japan to stay competitive in the international market while attracting additional foreign investment and tourism. Some LGBTQ individuals have been elected to local government positions in recent years. Shigeru Ishiba, who became Japan's new prime minister in September 2024, has publicly stated support for the LGBTQ community, calling same-sex marriage an issue of fundamental human rights that “would have a positive and beneficial impact on the overall well-being of Japan.” However, activists are skeptical Ishiba will bring about substantial change because his fellow party members steadfastly adhere to traditional family values.

Active Alerts

No Alerts

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