

# What to Bring to Japan – Packing Essentials

## CLOTHING

- Business casual attire (ask your predecessor about your school's dress code)
- A black suit for formal events (graduation, opening/closing ceremonies, etc.)
  - For some events, such as funerals, only black suits are acceptable.
- Shoes that you can put on and take off QUICKLY
  - If you wear size 10 M or 8 W or larger, you may have difficulty finding your size in Japan.
  - You will need 1 indoor pair for school and POSSIBLY 1 white soled athletic pair for gym – these must not be worn outside EVER)
- Swimwear (especially if placed at an elementary school as swim lessons are compulsory during the summer)

## PERSONAL ITEMS

- Toothpaste (most Japanese toothpaste lacks Fluoride)
- Prescriptions / Vitamins – bring prescription notes
- Deodorant – Anti-perspirant
- Bike / snowboard / skis / etc.
  - New athletic equipment in Japan tends to be more expensive than in the U.S., but items like snowboards can be rented easily. New and used bikes can be bought for decent prices. It may be better to rent or buy in Japan than bring these items from home.

## ELECTRONICS

- The voltage used throughout Japan is 100 volts. There are no 3-pin plugs used in Japan; 2-flat-pin plugs are used instead.
- Computers – If you have a laptop, bring it! If not, it's best to buy one before you leave. Only consider buying in Japan if you intend to stay for a long time – warranty coverage from inside the country can be a plus. You can get American keyboards and English OS from some manufacturers, but they will cost you extra.
- Take your current music player and camera – you can upgrade them later.
- Japanese phrase book/dictionary or electronic dictionary (denshi jisho)
  - Electronic dictionaries are cheaper in Japan than in the U.S., so if you don't already own one buy it later.

## MONEY

- \$1000-\$2000 depending on your situation. You will need more if:
  - You want to go out a lot in Tokyo
  - You will be living in a city
  - You will need key money for your apartment (or other apartment expenses)
- Cash vs. Traveler's Checks vs. Credit Cards
  - Most US debit cards can be used to withdraw money from Japanese post office ATMs
- Ongoing obligations at home: student loans, credit card bills etc.
  - You may want to add your parents on your bank account to handle issues and help pay using your bank account while your away.

## GIFTS/OMIYAGE

- You'll need gifts for your principal, vice-principal, supervisor, JTEs, school staff, and extras for people you'll meet and wish you had something to give.
  - Anything that shows where you're from – Made in Oregon / Chocolates / Pens / Postcards
- Students (for prizes)
  - Stickers / Pens / Pencils / Key chains / Erasers / 1¢ Stamps or Pennies

## TEACHING MATERIAL

- Pictures – start snapping photos of your daily life now! Your house, your family, your friends, and your town / neighborhood...also consider bringing photos from your school days to share during your self-introduction.
  - Holiday photos can make great teaching materials, too!
- Take a good USA map and state map.

## FOOD/OTHER

- Many foreign foods can be found in large cities or at import food stores, such as Jupiter and Costco.
- Hard to find foods can be sent to you later, or mail yourself a care package just before you leave.

## TIPS

- Leave space in your suitcase for the stacks of papers / handbooks / freebies at Tokyo Orientation.
- You can send belongings ahead (good idea for winter clothes), but you won't see them for a couple of months if you send them the cheap "boat" way.
- Japan has ALMOST everything you'll need - 120 million people live there just fine!
- You're only allowed to bring one suitcase to Tokyo Orientation; your other suitcase will be forwarded to your town. Keep this in mind when packing because you'll need your suit and best business attire in Tokyo!