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Introduction

The Singapore Students’ Association (Japan) is an association for all students studying in Japan. The members mainly consist of full-time students doing their tertiary education in Japan but also includes people who have studied in Singapore before or people who are simply curious about Singapore.

Based on our own experience we know that studying in Japan can be a very rewarding experience but one that has its difficulties too. We therefore aim to maintain a Singapore Spirit among our members as well as ensure that we provide our members with as much useful information that will aid them in their stay in Japan as possible.

This guide is mainly aimed at Singaporeans who have applied to Japan and are already in the midst of preparing to come. We hope that the information within will aid you in your transition.

If you’ve found this guide useful we also suggest joining us! We organise events once every month or so and we pass information on part time jobs etc. through our weekly digest. The sign-up link can be found at our official website - www.ssaj.net.

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Note:
Please note that many of the necessary registration, paperwork etc. requires Japanese. We highly recommend finding a point of contact who will be able to assist you with the procedures if you are not fluent in Japanese. Some schools will have student tutors to assist you on this but in the case that you do not please approach SSAJ and we can see if we can find someone to help you.

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1. Pre-Departure
   a. Applying for Visa

   The certificate of eligibility (COE) is a document issued by the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), and is required for all foreigners wishing to stay in Japan for a period of more than 3 months. It is a necessary document in your application for a student visa. In most cases, it can be applied for through your school, who would be your proxy, and will require documents similar to these:

   1. Application for a Certificate of Eligibility (COE)
   2. Statement of Financial Resources
   3. Certificate of the Deposit Balance of a Bank Account**
   4. Agreement for Defraying Expenses
   5. Personal History
   6. Copy of Your Passport

   (*) Most forms should be provided by your school so please check with your school for the exact forms that you would be required to fill.

   (**) A Certificate of the Deposit Balance of a Bank Account would take between 3-5 working days to process at the bank.

   The processing time for the COE varies from between 1 to 3 months.

   For more information regarding the COE, click here.

   After obtaining your COE, you can apply for your visa at the Embassy of Japan in Singapore. There will be an application fee of S$39 (As of Sep 2014). In addition, you will also require the original copy and a photocopy of the COE. The processing time for the visa is normally 3 working days, but in some cases if referral to Japanese government office is needed it will take 1-2 months. For the application forms and more details, click here.

   As the entire process from applying for the visa and COE to obtaining them takes a certain amount of time, it is advisable to start applying for these documents early.

   b. Airline Choices

   For direct flights from Singapore to Japan, there are 3 main carriers available for you to choose from. Singapore Airlines (SIA) is probably the most expensive, with a baggage allowance of 30kg. Japan Airlines (JAL) is probably the second in terms of price, but comes with a baggage allowance of 2 pieces of 23kg luggage. All Nippon Airways is possibly the cheapest amongst the three, with a

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baggage allowance of 2 pieces of 23kg luggage.

For students coming to Tokyo or the Kanto region, you might want to fly to Haneda airport rather than Narita airport. Narita is located in Chiba Prefecture, approximately 1.5 hours away from central Tokyo, while Haneda is located within Tokyo itself. As such, moving from Haneda airport to your residence in Tokyo might be less of a hassle.

c. Getting Money from Singapore to Japan

The cheapest way to get money from Singapore to Japan is by carrying it over yourself. Japan is rather safe, but safety on the airplane is a different issue. However, if you do carry more than ¥1 million, declaration at customs is not too much of a hassle. It only requires you to fill up a form which takes about 2 minutes.

Another option for money transfer is to do a telegraphic transfer from DBS/POSB to Bank of Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG). It would cost a total of less than SGD100 for a single transfer.

Otherwise, opening a Citibank account in Japan and linking it to your Citibank account in Singapore would allow you to transfer money without an administrative fee, but the exchange rate might not be favorable.

Also, please do not bring traveler’s cheque or money orders as it is extremely troublesome to process due to its unpopularity in Japan.

d. Things to bring

You are advised to bring original copies of academic transcripts, certificates of achievements, and testimonials.

It is advisable to avoid bringing electrical appliances (e.g., rice cooker, electric kettle, iron, hair dryer, etc.) due to the difference in voltage, ampere and frequency (for people staying in the Kansai region). This means that your appliance might not work as it should. The plugs are also shaped differently so you will require an electric socket adaptor in order to use the electrical appliances brought over from Singapore. Laptops, etc., are fine as long as you have the relevant power adaptors though.

As there are four seasons in Japan, it is advisable to bring some warm clothing. However, it is not advisable to bring too much clothing, as the fashion in Japan is different from that in Singapore. You may end up not wearing the clothes you have brought over, and it helps that there are many places where you can buy cheap and fashionable clothing. Rooms in Japan are also generally

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smaller than in Singapore so it is not desirable to bring too many things over.

e. Housing

It is strongly advised that you find a form of accommodation through your school before coming over to Japan for starters. It is the most convenient way to be settled down in Japan, especially if you do not have a strong command of Japanese.

Trying to find an apartment in Japan by yourself is a lengthy and troublesome process and we strongly advise against doing so when you first arrive here.

f. Financing

![Bar Chart]

**Fig. 1 Types of Scholarships which Members Receive**

1. **Scholarships whose applications must be made before starting a university course**

   *Monbukagakusho (MEXT) Scholarship (文部科学省奨学金)*

   This is a bond-free scholarship provided by the Japanese government. Please refer to the embassy website for details.

   **Scholarships from PSC/government-linked agencies**

   PSC and other statutory boards such as EDB and STB offer bonded scholarships to students wishing to further their studies in Japan. Please do contact the respective agencies for the most updated information.

2. **Financial aid from universities/organisations in Japan**

   Many universities provide a certain amount of financial aid for needy students, such as a waiver or reduction of school fees. In addition, many organisations also offer one-time or monthly scholarships to foreign students.

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3. Part-time work

Fig 2 “How much do you earn a month from part-time work?” (in yen)

Most university students in Japan do part-time work, or arubaito, to cover their living and study expenses. However, as foreign students living in Japan on a student visa, you must first apply for a "Permit to Engage in Activity other than that Permitted by the Status of Residence Previously Granted". There is an upper limit to the amount of hours foreign students may work per week (currently 28 hours).

Please refer to Study in Japan and the Immigration Bureau for more information. Also see part 2a (residence card) and part 3d (part-time jobs and internships in Japan) for more information on applications and details.

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2. Upon Arrival

a. Residence Card

1. Obtaining a residence card

At the immigration counter at the airport, you hand over your COE and passport containing the visa to the immigration officer and your residence card will be issued on the spot.

2. Obtaining the part-time work permit

If possible, apply for the part-time work permit (資格外活動許可 shikakugai-katsudo-kyoka) when you apply for the residence card at the immigration counter. A part-time work permit form should be available for the airport for you to fill in. If you apply for the permit after, you will have to make at least two trips to your nearest the immigration bureau. In Tokyo this is likely to be at Shinagawa. The first visit will take at least 2 hours including the waiting time. After which a letter will be mailed to your around 2 weeks later for you to make a second visit to receive the permit.

b. Transportation from Airport

1. From Narita to Tokyo

Please see this link for possible transport modes to Tokyo from Narita. The cheapest route is the bus which links to Tokyo station. However if you have more than two pieces of luggage or want to avoid traffic volatility rail may be better.

2. From Kansai International Airport to the main Kansai cities.

Please see the following link for a discounted and affordable ticket from Kansai International Airport to the major cities of Kansai.

c. Registration at the Local Municipal/Ward Office

Within 14 days from the date of arrival in Japan, you are required register an address in Japan at the local ward office. This is done by submitting a prescribed form which is available at the local ward office.

1. Certificate of Resident Registration (住民票 juminhyo)

The local ward office will issue you a certificate to confirm your residence record upon request. It generally costs around 300yen. It is advised to keep 2 copies of the Juminhyo as you are likely to be asked to present a copy of it to the school.

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2. National Health Insurance Registration

Everyone who lives in Japan is obliged by law to enroll in public health insurance (国民健康保険 kokumin-kenkohoken) so that everyone can receive medical treatment at affordable rates when ill or injured. It is advisable for you to register for the National Health Insurance (NHI) at the same time as your Resident Registration at the city/ward office.

a. When the NHI card is shown, the policyholder will bear 30% of the medical fee, while the remaining 70% will be borne by the National Health Insurance.

b. The costs of the insurance premium is different in every ward. It will be calculated and mailed to you. You can opt to pay the premium in one lump sum for the entire year or in monthly instalments. The deadline is at the end of the month for each payment period, and there are two methods of payment – by paying cash using the invoice* or by debiting the amount from your bank account. The annual premium (for 12 months) will be divided into 10 portions, each to be paid from June to March of the following year. (The system is the same for both methods of payment.)

c. You can pay at banks, post offices and other financial institutions, the City Office, Branch Offices or convenience stores designated by the City Office.

d. Bank Account Matters

Unlike Singapore where some banks open until 7pm, Japanese banks usually close at 3pm. Hence, it is strongly advised that you open your bank account (銀行口座 ginkokoza) within the first few days of your arrival into Japan (before school starts) so that you do not have to skip lessons.

1. What is required to open a bank account

a. Residence Card
b. Minimum Sum of 1yen
c. Inkan¹ (A signature can be used in its place at some banks)
d. A guardian (For those below the age of 20)
e. Someone who is fluent in Japanese²

¹ In Japan, personal seals are used as a symbol of agreement or approval, much like a signature, to verify official documents such as contracts. You can order a personal seal for your name at a stamp engraving outlet. It is not necessary that you register the imprint at the City Office. Banks do not require you to register your inkan at the City Office. Please note that personal seals are not unique and can be easily duplicated.

² It is highly recommended to have someone who is fluent in Japanese to accompany you in opening

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2. Suggested banks
   
a. Japan Post Bank (ゆうちょ銀行 yuchoginko)
   Typically where scholarship money is deposited into. It also appears to have the most coverage across Japan, especially in more rural areas as you can withdraw money from the Post Office.

b. Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ (三菱東京UFJ銀行)
   The most popular option among Singaporeans.

c. Citibank Japan
   Recommended if you have an account in Singapore as it is the most direct (although expensive) way of transferring money.

The choice of banks is dependent on the individual’s preferences. Different banks offer different premium services. One should also take into consideration the availability of ATMs for cash withdrawal.

3. ATM Usage
   
a. Please note that unlike Singapore, ATM cash withdrawal in Japan is free only for a certain period of the day during weekdays. Handling charges will be incurred if you withdraw cash outside the specified hours. Some banks, however, provide free cash withdrawal services 24/7. These are usually small banks with a limited number of ATMs.

b. The ATMs in convenient stores charge an extra fee for withdrawal.

4. Credit Cards
   
It is quite tedious for foreigners to apply for one especially if you are not fluent in Japanese and do not have any verification of a steady source of income.

5. Debit Cards
   
Debit cards can be applied for directly when opening a bank account. However its usage is limited mainly to online shopping and cannot be used in most physical stores (the concept of NETS does not exist in Japan).

e. How to get a Cellphone and Home Internet Access

Cellphone:

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You may have to buy a Japanese cellphone (携帯電話 keitai-denwa), as your Singapore cellphones will not work with the local service network. Currently, Japanese cellphones are locked in with local telecommunications companies, which sell both subscription plans and cellphones. (However, the government is taking steps to liberalize the market, and Singaporean cellphones may work with local networks from late 2015. We cannot offer precise information at this point in time).

There are three major telecommunications companies in Japan, NTT Docomo, KDDI (AU) and Softbank. Though they each offer a similar range of plans and prices, KDDI and Softbank are a tad cheaper, and they allow their users to message and call other users using the same Telcom for free. You will have to head to one of their shops to apply for a cellphone and a subscription plan.

When applying, you will need the following items:

1. Residence Card (在留カード zairyukaado) updated with your address
2. Bank Book/Credit Card
3. Inkan 印鑑 (not compulsory)

Also, you will need someone above 20 years of age to be your guarantor. If possible, try to find someone fluent in Japanese to accompany you, so that you will be clear about the subscription plan options. Beware of certain options that are free for the first month but incur additional charges each subsequent month - you may have to visit the shop a second time to cancel these unwanted options.

(As you will need to get in order the above items before you can apply for a cellphone, take note that you will not have a mobile connection for the first few days of your stay in Japan)

A cellphone can be paid for in monthly installments, though depending on the policy of the store, international students may be asked to pay the entire cost of the cellphone upfront. This can cost anything from 30,000 yen to 70,000 yen.

A subscription contract lasts for two years, and will be renewed automatically at the end of each term. If you intend to change telecommunications companies in the middle of a contract term, take note that you will have to pay a penalty of more than 10,000 yen. The monthly cost of a cellphone installment plus subscription plan is about 6000 yen for unlimited 3G access and from 1000++ yen for pay-per-use 3G access.

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Home internet access:

If you are living in a dormitory, there will probably be internet access. However, if you are living in an apartment, chances are that you will have to arrange for and pay for internet access on your own.

There are two ways through which you can do so: wired internet access (インターネット回線 internet kaisen) and wireless mobile router (データ通信端末 data tsushintanmatsu). In the first case, you will have to use the service provider that owns the line connecting your home to the internet; talk to your landlord for more details. In the second, you will have to buy a wireless mobile router and a corresponding subscription plan from one of the three telecommunications companies.

The cost of internet access can be anything from 2500 yen to 5000 yen. In most cases, you will be eligible for discounts if you use the same telecommunications company for both your cellphone and your internet access.

f. School Registration

Registration is conducted at the school administrative office (事務室 jimushitsu). You will receive a document from the school pertaining to important information such as school semesters, rules etc. In addition, you will receive a student card (学生証 gakuseisho) with your photograph affixed. The student card will enable you to purchase a commuter pass (定期券 teikiken). The commuter pass provides unlimited rides between the train station/bus stop nearest to your place of residence and your school at a discounted monthly rate. Please note that this pass can only be purchased at designated train stations authorised by the various train companies.

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3. Living in Japan

a. Exit and Re-entry into Japan

You will be required to show your Residence Card at the immigration counter upon exiting and re-entering Japan. Should your planned period of absence from Japan be shorter than a year, you will fall under the minashi re-entry permit (みなし再入国許可 minashi-sainyuukoku-kyoka) category, under which you will not have to apply for anything. Should your planned period of absence from Japan be longer than a year, you will be required to apply for a special re-entry permit (再入国許可 sainyuukoku-kyoka) at the airport. Subsequent extensions of the permit will not be allowed while you are still abroad.

If your period of stay as stated on your visa expires within a year of your departure, please ensure that you re-enter Japan to renew your visa before the expiration date of your visa.

b. Renewing Your Visa

As your visa expiration date approaches, your school will probably contact you about renewing your visa. After going through the necessary procedures at your school office, you will have to visit a regional immigration office in charge of your area of residence. For more information, check out the website of the Immigration Bureau of Japan.

c. Earthquakes (adapted from japan-guide.com)

The Japanese archipelago is located in an area where several continental and oceanic plates meet. This is the cause of frequent earthquakes (地震 jishin) and the presence of many volcanoes and hot springs across Japan. If earthquakes occur below or close to the ocean, they may trigger tidal waves (津波 tsunami).

1. Earthquake measurement:

The Japanese 震度 shindo scale for measuring earthquakes is more commonly used in Japan than the Richter scale to describe earthquakes. Shindo refers to the intensity of an earthquake at a given location, i.e. what people actually feel at a given location, while the Richter scale measures the magnitude of an earthquake, i.e. the energy an earthquake releases at the epicenter.

The shindo scale ranges from shindo one, a slight earthquake felt only by people who are not moving, to shindo seven, a severe earthquake. Shindo two to four are still minor earthquakes that do not cause damage, while objects start to fall at shindo five, and

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heavier damage occurs at shindo six and seven.

2. Preparedness:

Every household should keep a survival kit with a flashlight, a radio, a first aid kit and enough food and water to last for a few days. Avoid placing heavy objects in places where they could easily fall during an earthquake and cause injury or block exits. Have a fire extinguisher. Familiarize yourself with the designated evacuation area (避難区域 hinan-ku’iku) in your neighborhood.

3. During and after an earthquake:

Falling objects, toppling furniture and panic present the greatest dangers during an earthquake. Try to protect yourself under a table or doorway. Do not run outside, and try to remain as calm as possible. If you are in the streets, try to find protection from glass and other objects that may fall from surrounding buildings.

After a strong earthquake, turn off ovens, stoves and the main gas valve. Then listen to the radio or television for news. In coastal areas beware of possible tidal waves (津波 tsunami) while in mountainous areas beware of possible landslides.

d. Part-time Work and Internships

Most university students in Japan do part-time work (アルバイト arubaito). While a good way to get some pocket money, it is also seen as an opportunity for personal growth and a form of contributing to people around you as an active member of society. As an international student, you will need to hold a part-time work permit (資格外活動許可 shikakugai-katsudou-kyoka) to do paid work in Japan. This you can sometimes apply for upon receipt of your Residence Card upon arrival in Japan. If you did not do so at the airport, you can also make the application at your regional immigration office (not the municipal office). Take note that an application at the regional immigration office usually takes a few weeks to process. Also, even with the permit, you may only work a maximum of 28 hours a week. Please refer to Study In Japan and the Immigration Bureau of Japan for more information.

The average hourly pay (自給 jikyuu) for your run-of-the-mill part-time-job in a convenience store or restaurant is 900 yen to 1000 yen in Tokyo, less in other prefectures. These shops will often indicate that they are hiring part-time-staff with a paper sign outside their door, so keep your eyes peeled. If you teach English as a personal tutor the hourly pay is around 1500 yen to 3000 yen; there are online portals through which you can advertise your services. Finally, there are specialized once-off jobs for international students.

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which you can find on the Tomonokai and SSAJ mailists.

Long-term internships with companies are not difficult to find if you know where to look. Startups are often keen to hire international students as interns. Spend time out of school and network your way into one of them, and you will get to learn a lot about the business culture in Japan.

Take note that Japanese universities do not offer much information on internships, so you will have to find out on your own. On the other hand, long-term internships are not a prerequisite condition to finding a job; unlike in Singapore, the majority of undergraduate students in Japan do not do long-term internships. Having a couple under your belt is definitely a plus though.

Also view this article, which may help you look for a part-time job.

e. Household Shopping

When settling into your new environment in Japan, there are some basic necessities that you will have to procure. Upon moving into your dormitory/apartment, you might need the following items:

1. Furniture and Electronics

   For affordable furniture, Nitori is a large japanese furniture chain-store that offers online shopping as well. Therefore, if one is moving into an unfurnished apartment, it is quite a good idea to check out the site. Alternatively, you can try sourcing for furniture from Ikea Japan.

   As for electronics, some reputable electronics stores include Bic Camera, Yodobashi and Yamada Denki. You can arrange for home delivery at these stores as well so if you intend to purchase large electronic items, it might be a good idea to ask the store to deliver it.

   If you have someone accompanying you without a long-term visa, (i.e parents who came with you), you can claim for tax rebates of 8% at the store as well. Furthermore, it is recommended that you sign up for a membership card so that you can earn points for future purchases in Japan.

2. Groceries

   When you arrive in Japan, you might be tempted to shop at the numerous convenience stores. However, please note that there

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are more affordable options in supermarkets such as Seiyu and Daiei. If you’re living in a dormitory, ask around those who have lived longer than you have for their recommended shopping spots.

3. Miscellaneous

For other household goods like hangers, sponges and detergent, 100 yen stores such as Cando, Daiso and Seria are good places to visit. Please be aware that an 8% tax will be charged for each item as well. Alternatively, you can often purchase miscellaneous household goods from the supermarkets mentioned above.

f. Religion

While the majority of Japanese do not visit places of worship regularly, believers of a faith can still find churches and mosques in Japan. Fellow Singaporean students have recommended the following ways to engage in religious activities:

1. Through friends and family

You can ask to tag along with someone who goes to a place of worship in Japan. This way, you can have some familiar company for your first introduction.

2. Using Google

You can also search for places of worship on Google. There are places of worship with English services so do a bit of searching online to find an appropriate one for you.

For those who need restaurants and foods to be halal-certified, please be aware that most Japanese restaurants are not halal-certified, including Fast Food establishments such as McDonalds and Mos Burger.

For special dietary requirements, either self-imposed or for religious purposes, please note that many sauces in Japan are fish-based and not appropriate for consumption by vegetarians.

g. Transport within Japan

If you are staying in Japan for an extended period time, it is recommended for you to purchase a transport pass from the company that operates the transportation system in your area. (Suica and Pasmo if you are in the Tokyo area, Icoca if you are in the Kansai area)

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Getting a transport pass is likely to be more convenient, especially if you are commuting to school on a regular basis. You can also choose to personalise your card so that in case you lose it, you will be able to retrieve the remaining amount in your card.

In addition, after getting your student ID, you can apply for a concession price with your transport pass, available for 1, 3 or 6 months. For more information on applying for the concession pass, please refer to Section 2f.

h. Post Office

The postal offices in Japan are commonly found and provide a range of services, including re-delivery services for parcels. There is an English site of Japan Post available where you can obtain more information about basic services.

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4. A Word from the Seniors

In 2014, SSAJ did a survey of its members. One of the questions asked what advice would they give to any new people arriving in Japan. Below we have a selection of their comments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you're coming to Japan for studies (especially if the course is going to be in English), definitely join clubs in your school + activities outside school + get a host family. Immersing yourself in Japanese culture and forcing yourself to speak in Japanese outside a school context will definitely make the experience far more fulfilling and interesting!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japan is honestly a good experience that WILL be different from your peers studying in English-speaking countries. I came here with no Japanese by the way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't let the language barrier or anything stop you from coming to Japan/studying abroad anywhere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go join student committees and circles! It'll be hard to fit in at first, but after a couple of years of dedication your efforts will definitely bear fruit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan your finances well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be careful when doing baito. I got cheated by my boss (who's even a Singaporean @#$%^ so much for the trust for Singaporeans!) and didn't receive my pay for 2 months (Worked 3 months in total). Understand that the school's 相談 [counseling] staff and even the 労働基準監督署 [bureau in charge of enforcement of the labour code] will not be able to help if the company doesn't want to pay up. (I've gone through all the processes that I could, but didn't get my money back in the end anyway...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That coming to Japan - and taking the less-beaten path - is one that will be difficult but very rewarding as long as you put in the effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study some japanese before coming! the greater your chances of breaking out from the gaijin bubble (which i am very comfortably stuck in now).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come with an open mind. Japan has a very unique culture and I've seen too many students disappointed because they had preconceived notions about how their life would be here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on what you can learn rather than what you cannot learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose the right university.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do your proper search well especially you are not fluent in Japanese. The Chinese sites provide more information than English sites. If you have friend based in Japan, best to seek assistance where possible as you could face a lot of frustration dealing with the bureaucracy at first.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A good command of Chinese helps in learning Japanese and surviving in Japan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do research on housing, banks and other basic necessities before coming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan works very differently from Singapore so we have to accept that. Stop saying things like &quot;the banks here damn stupid. Must wait 6 months to open account. Sg immediately open!&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Remember that you may get things done in Singapore quickly because you are a citizen there and because you know how the system works.

Be ready to adapt to different circumstances. BE FLEXIBLE

Enjoy your stay

Getting an english degree in japan is slack/has certain perks but know what you're trading in exchange for it

If you want to work in Japan after studying, do as many internships as possible each semester break. Internships meaning those that last a month or more, not those one or two day "Internships".

Have fun! You don't need to study much here...but remember that your future career also depends on what you do in college.

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4. Appendix

a. Points of Contact

Singapore Students’ Association (Japan) (SSAJ)

The Singapore Students’ Association (Japan), or SSAJ in short (在日シンガポール留学生協会), is an organisation for Singaporean students studying in Japan. Members are mostly full-time students doing their tertiary education here in Japan as well as exchange students here for a short period of time. SSAJ's main objective is to bring fellow Singaporeans studying in Japan closer. SSAJ holds seasonal events such as Hanami (spring), Momiji (autumn), as well as welcome parties for new students in April and October. At the same time, SSAJ works closely with the Singapore Embassy in Japan, Singapore Association in Japan (SAiJ) and Japanese University Graduates Association of Singapore (JUGAS) to ensure greater bonding between Singaporeans. SSAJ is also a member of the ASEAN Youth Network of Japan (AYNJ), which jointly organises activities such as the AYNJ Festival.

Please visit our website at [http://www.ssaj.net](http://www.ssaj.net) and join our exciting activities!

Singapore Embassy in Japan

The Embassy organises functions and events to bring Singaporeans from all walks of life together, including the Singapore Student Reception, National Day Reception and the Year-end Reception.

New updates can be obtained from the embassy website: [http://www.mfa.gov.sg/tokyo/](http://www.mfa.gov.sg/tokyo/).

Singapore Association in Japan (SAiJ)

The Singapore Association in Japan (SAiJ) is a non-profit volunteer association that helps to foster a community of overseas Singaporeans and friends of Singapore in Japan. The SAiJ online platform ([http://www.saij.org/](http://www.saij.org/)) enables members to connect with other members, meet new and old friends, organise events, and post jobs opportunities etc. Unlike SSAJ, it includes working professionals, spouses and students.

b. Typical Initial Expenditure

You are likely to spend a lot in your first month in Japan, due to furniture, household appliances, airport transport cost. This includes the cost of needing to do a one-time downpayment for your phone.

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We recommend bringing in at least 230,000 yen in cash to be safe.

c. Typical Monthly Expenditure

The following chart shows the results of a survey of our members on their monthly expenditures.

![Pie chart showing expenditure distribution][1]

**Fig 3. “How much do you spend in a month?” (yen)**

Living expenditures, as you can see above, are highly variable on the person though largely fall between 100,000 yen to 140,000 yen per month. 60,000 yen to 80,000 is likely to be the bare minimum assuming a very cheap dormitory. Obviously, people who shop and socialise more are likely to spend more. But aside from this, there are two major points to take note.

1) Location: Living in Kansai probably lowers your expenditure by 10,000 yen - 20,000 yen per month due to rent differences if you're renting your own accommodation. Bigger differences in other parts of Japan.

2) Accommodation: Staying in your own apartment alone will probably increase your expenditures by 20,000-30,000 yen per month. Actual differences depend on the university and area.

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