

Forum:[Hack Forums](#)

Thread: [Preparing to study in japan, tips and tricks?](#)

severos - July 17, 2018, 1:08 am

I'm planning to take my Masters degree in Japan, already got my self accepted at university, and got a 1 year stay at the dormitory (reservation only, still need to fill application).

Has anyone studied there before? or abroad in general?

It'll be my first time travelling abroad (and alone), so I'm pretty nervous about it. Does anyone have some tips/tricks to help around??

Phackfo - July 17, 2018, 4:47 am

My best tip for you is... HAVE FUN!

And try to connect with other people going to the same plan as you so you can make friends before you get there.

SotirBay - July 17, 2018, 4:53 am

I'm studying abroad. It's really interesting to meet with a new culture.

Don't get worried and start learning japanese :)

severos - July 17, 2018, 5:35 am

(Jul 17, 2018 04:47 AM)Phackfo Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) My best tip for you is... HAVE FUN!

And try to connect with other people going to the same plan as you so you can make friends before you get there. Is it possible to have fun, degree, and sleep? far as I know those 3 make a triangle where you have to pick 2 XD

(Jul 17, 2018 04:53 AM)SotirBay Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I'm studying abroad. It's really interesting to meet with a new culture.

Don't get worried and start learning japanese :) I already know some basics (97.5 days of anime), just worried about my reading/writing abilities.

Phackfo - July 17, 2018, 5:53 am

Who said anything about sleeping? :)

Good luck man

severos - July 20, 2018, 9:00 am

Come on guys, no one got any tips around???

Prox - July 20, 2018, 5:28 pm

I studied abroad in Japan for 3 years while I was in high school, it's an amazing experience to have!

I'm not sure about university abroad studies, but for me there were different groups at my school and locally that were formed with English speaking people from different nations such as America, Britain, Australia, etc. It could definitely help to check if there are anything like that for when you go!

As for experiencing Japan.. You HAVE to check out their arcades, they are insanely cool. There is usually a floor dedicated to them in every mall. (Also, the malls there are the best I've ever seen). Don't be afraid to explore on your own, try different foods, ride the trains to different parts of Japan, and even talk to the locals.. Most locals were always friendly even if I butchered Japanese talking with them haha.

Also... The 7-11 "gas station" you may see there have crazy good sushi and rice cakes oddly

enough!

severos - July 21, 2018, 2:45 am

(Jul 20, 2018 05:28 PM)Prox Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I studied abroad in Japan for 3 years while I was in high school, it's an amazing experience to have! I'm not sure about university abroad studies, but for me there were different groups at my school and locally that were formed with English speaking people from different nations such as America, Britain, Australia, etc. It could definitely help to check if there are anything like that for when you go!

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Also... The 7-11 "gas station" you may see there have crazy good sushi and rice cakes oddly enough!

I'm staying in the university dorms for post grad students (local and international) so I think it might look like a group in a way or another.

How much those arcades cost? since I'm going on a scholarship the budget isn't that good for me. I'll certainly try to hit it off with the locals, might join some community events if they held any (and if there's enough time).

Do you have any recommendation for sushi type??

Prox - July 21, 2018, 1:56 pm

(Jul 21, 2018 02:45 AM)severos Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I'm staying in the university dorms for post grad students (local and international) so I think it might look like a group in a way or another.

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Do you have any recommendation for sushi type??

Oh nice! Yeah I'm sure you'll have a bunch of people to get along with.

The arcades can get a little pricey, most games are about 100 yen (~\$1) per play but it'll last longer than arcades in the US.. But it's cool to at least watch the huge selection of games and pick one you think you'll like the most. There are a lot of cool community things the locals put on.. I've attended things like Japanese sword fighting classes (My first couple times for free!) that were really cool.. You don't even need to speak Japanese to follow along and have fun.

Hmm sushi recommendations... A safe go-to for most people is the "California Roll".. But there are so many with lots of different tastes you'll have to try them out!

Muscleboy - July 21, 2018, 5:15 pm

Get you a Japanese shorty OP. Good investment

No Sports - July 21, 2018, 7:29 pm

I stayed two years in Japan (one year in Kobe, one year in Tokyo).

First of all, even without Japanese its possible to survive and to have a nice time. But of course, when you are able to speak Japanese, its so much more fun. The Japanese are very friendly, they

will help you a lot with your language, if you ask for it!

And thats the most important part: Japanese are very, very, very respectful to each other. So you always have to do the first step. Always ask for help, always ask if you can join or if the other person wants to grab lunch/dinner. Normally they are too respectful to ask you (they don't want to force you to anything). Don't be shy but also don't be rude (most important rule!).

Also, don't be an asshole. I saw a lot of foreigners who didn't behave. Just "study" your surrounding and learn what you are allowed to do and what you shouldn't do. For example in trains, you shouldn't be too loud, don't eat stuff there, and so on.

For the university life. It depends on your preferences. Its easy to make a lot of foreign friends (the dorms are often devided between japanese and foreigners.

But if you like to make japanese friends, like me, go out there. Join the university "circles". These are the after class clubs/activities.

Studying in Japan is actually not so difficult, compared to other countries like China or countries in Europe. Most teachers go easy on the students, because in Japan school and work life is considered tough, so students should relax a little while being at the university.

Last but not least, about the the expanses. So it highly depends on your lifestyle. You can leave super cheap, of you want to (eat Ramen most of the times, go to the supermarket one hours before it closes, go to bars which offer special discounts....) . If you follow these tips, the life is cheap (ok, still expensive but cheaper than most people always tell you). Also just ask the other students. Japanese as well as foreign students, normally are very clever how to avoid costs.

If you have any questions, just ask me. I am happy to help!

Actually I will be back to Japan next year, to finish a project! Lovely country!

severos - July 21, 2018, 10:24 pm

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(Jul 21, 2018 05:15 PM)Muscleboy Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Get you a Japanese shorty OP. Good investment I'll probably have to get 2 to match my height, otherwise she might look like my kid, or I'll look like a pedo...

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Actually I will be back to Japan next year, to finish a project! Lovely country!Wow... thanks a lot for the tons of info there.

I'll be studying in Tokyo for 5 years (2 Masters, 3 Ph.D), so maybe we'll meet next year XD
Would it be possible to budget my monthly food/drink expenses to around 50k yen ?

No Sports - July 21, 2018, 10:51 pm

(Jul 21, 2018 10:24 PM)severos Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I'll be studying in Tokyo for 5 years (2 Masters, 3 Ph.D), so maybe we'll meet next year XD

Hehe, yeah definitely! I will let you know, when I am back to Tokyo!

(Jul 21, 2018 10:24 PM)severos Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Would it be possible to budget my monthly food/drink expenses to around 50k yen ?

It is hard to say. Really depends on your style. If its only for food and drinks (especially drinks like "highball" from a 7-11; and foods from cheap restaurants like ramen or supermarkets), then you should be good to go.

If you want to eat expensive stuff or party every night in a bar, it will definitely cost you a lot more!

LoveOverFear - July 21, 2018, 10:58 pm

Wow, lucky you'll be in anime heaven, haha

severos - July 22, 2018, 10:12 am

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If you want to eat expensive stuff or party every night in a bar, it will definitely cost you a lot more! Since I'm on a scholarship for studying, I doubt I'll be partying every night, and not enough time to enjoy expensive meals at restaurants. I might get a part time job to practice my Japanese, that could add some budget, but still think it could be spent elsewhere.

(Jul 21, 2018 10:58 PM)6ix_ Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Wow, lucky you'll be in anime heaven, haha!KR!!!
I'm planning to visit akihabara on x-mas and take some pictures around :D
Any other recommendations??

Carta Production - October 7, 2018, 9:20 am

Whether you're traveling to Japan for fun or to study the language, it's important to prepare for your time away from home. It's natural to experience some culture shock any time you travel to a new place, but proper preparation can make the difference between an uncomfortable trip and a life-changing experience.

Immerse Yourself at Home

True language immersion is impossible if you don't live in a Japanese-speaking city, but it's important to expose yourself to the language (as much as possible) before you go.

It's not as hard as you think to do this, you just need to be creative. Watch Japanese TV shows with subtitles, listen to Jpop (Japanese pop music), read manga, and watch anime.

Define Your Goal

There are several options for students studying in Japan. You could join an immersion program, find a scholarship program, study abroad, or find a language exchange program.

Determine what you want to get out of your trip and then choose the best plan of action to achieve that goal.

Do Your Homework

If you don't plan to stay in Japan for a long period of time and just want to get a taste of the culture and lifestyle, look into the different travel options and opportunities.

Read travel blogs, brush up on the essential parts of the language, and talk to people who have spent time in Japan.

You want to know as much about the culture, climate, lifestyle, and language before you go.

Learn About Etiquette

Remember, you're going to be a guest in another country, so it's important that you're courteous to the locals; you don't want to accidentally offend anyone.

In Japan, it's common to bow when you greet someone.

Plus, did you know that it's considered polite to be as silent as possible on the train?

Shop Around

If you're planning on studying in Japan, find a language program that is either a full immersion program or requires a language pact. GoAbroad is a great resource for this, there are various opportunities like study abroad programs, volunteer opportunities, internships, and more.

Read reviews and ask around. Try to get unbiased opinions from past participants, they can tell you what you need to know and the pros and cons of each program.

"The world is now a very well-connected place, you will be able to find people who have participated in any program and ask for their thoughts," advises Amanda Rollins from The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles. "Be prepared to hear good and bad things, and use your judgement based on what matters to you."

Do your homework and shop around for the program that suits your needs. Ask questions and make sure you have all the necessary information.

Partner schools are another option for language students, so make sure to look into those as well.

“Many partner language schools offer short-term study (as little as 1 – 2 weeks) and then the student is free to continue on his or her trip,” says Anthony Joh of GaijinPot. “Most people probably don’t think about starting their holiday in Japan at a school, but it’s a lot of fun and the language you learn will really come in handy later.”

Budget

This doesn’t just mean putting aside money for your trip, it means taking an honest look at your finances and determining what you can do.

Check out this travel budget calculator from Independent Traveler.

Also, plan ahead for accommodations, travel expenses, and meals.

Plus, you will probably want to buy some keepsakes to remember the trip and some souvenirs for your friends back home.

Check the Weather

Again, this may seem obvious, but what you bring on your trip will depend on the season. For example, summer is hot and humid, so lightweight, moisture-wicking clothes are best.

If you don’t plan ahead for the weather, you may have to buy new clothes in Japan, and this takes away from the money you have to use on your trip.

Also, bring a comfortable pair of shoes, you will be exploring and walking, a lot!

Learn Japanese

No you don’t need to be fluent in Japanese, but don’t underestimate the importance of being able to communicate.

Learn the essential phrases you need to get by. Learn to ask for directions and to greet people.

If you’re traveling to Japan with a group, you’ll have some guides to help you communicate, but wouldn’t you feel more confident armed with a basic knowledge of the language?

Ask your Japanese teacher to go over the most important aspects of the language that will help you communicate and navigate in Japan.

Once you’re in Japan you will have an opportunity to practice your Japanese skills, make sure you take advantage of this.

“Even if you don’t know much Japanese, the practice you get in Japan is worth twice as much as practice at home,” Tofugu editor Michael Richey says. “Take advantage of the time. Also, Japanese people are very patient listeners in general and usually have good attitudes towards foreigners who are trying out their language.”

Don’t Leave Your Study Materials Behind!

While traveling to Japan will allow you to have real-life experiences which will help you take your

Japanese-language skills far beyond the classroom, don't leave your resources behind.

Bring books and items you're familiar with, so you will have materials to study from that you already know how to navigate. This will make it easier to look things up as necessary.

Bring Gifts

It's an excellent idea to bring a gift (as many as you can) from where you're from. Keep in mind that these gifts don't need to be expensive or extravagant.

There is a gift-giving culture in Japan, and when you meet key people (individuals or groups you will interact with regularly), like a host family, it would be a polite, courteous gesture to give them a gift.

This will also show that you appreciate Japanese culture.

ethelooking - September 22, 2020, 10:47 pm

Just learn and use as much Japanese as possible. It's always work