How to use this handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to assist foreign mothers and children who had been staying in Japan only for a short while, in the matters of raising a child and various situations that one might confront in such situations. It is composed of Japanese on the left side and foreign languages on the right side. Foreigners who are not fluent in Japanese and Japanese people trying to support them are welcome to use it as a reference.

It is important for you to cooperate with others and get current information from your region, because this content is based on information as of February 2013, and sometimes official regulations may differ from place to place.

If you face difficulties in communicating with people around you or local officials, please contact the City Consultation Counters with foreign language support provided by governments or support organizations.

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**Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents (OFIX)**

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<tr>
<th>Tel</th>
<th>06-6941-2297</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hours</td>
<td>Mon-Fri 9:00 – 17:30 (closed on Dec. 29th – Jan. 3rd and on National Holidays)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages</td>
<td>English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Filipino, Thai, Japanese</td>
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**International Hose, Osaka Information Counter for Foreign Residents**

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<tr>
<th>Tel</th>
<th>06-6773-6533</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hours</td>
<td>Everyday 9:00 – 17:30 (Includes Saturday, Sunday and National Holidays with exception to Year-end / New Year’s Holidays)</td>
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(*PTA is organized by teachers and students’ parents to contribute to children’s education and interaction between members.)
1. After Arriving in Japan

All foreign nationals must register at the local city hall with your residence card issued from immigration ports. If you don’t have a resident card, you need to be in possession of your passport to register as a resident.
For more information, you can visit the website of Ministry of Justice provided below.

http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact_1/

For further details, please contact the Immigration Breau of Japan (Phone number is provided at the end of this guide).

2. Getting pregnant in Japan

If you think you are pregnant, make an appointment to see an obstetrician or a gynecologist to confirm your pregnancy. If you are pregnant, you should go to a City Health and Welfare Center or Health Cnter, hereafter ‘health center’, to get the Mother Child Health Booklet (=Boshi-Kenko-Techo) for recording the progress of pregnancy, and receive information about checkups for the mother and her baby. Some local hospitals and health centers offer classes to expecting parents. These classes are designed to increase your knowledge and confidence as you prepare for the birth of your baby and to take another step in life. Please feel free to participate.
Also, in Japan, the number of clinics that provide delivery services is quite limited, so you must choose the clinic where you would like to give birth, and make an appointment with them as early as possible.

3. Giving Birth in Japan

Generally, the cost of delivering a baby is about 400,000yen ~ 600,000yen. However, if you are enrolled in the National Health Insurance program or the union program of health insurance, you will be qualified to apply for a “Lump Sum Birth Allowance.” It can be used for your childbirth expenses, so please consult your obstetrician.
After the baby is born, you must complete the legal procedures such as the birth registration for the child within 14 days in the nearest city hall.

In some cases, for example, when the child’s parents are of different nationalities or if the parents of a child are not married to each other, you may need to submit extra documents. Therefore, you should check the required documents and prepare them beforehand.
4. Medical Subsidy for Infants and Children (until 15 years old)

In certain cases, the government provides a health care subsidy for the child’s medical check up and medicine fee to support families of young children from age 0 to age 15. The subsidy system may differ by the local self-governing body, so please check with the government officials.

5. Raising a child in Japan (until 18 years old)

While you raising a child, you may be burdened by various problems. Things such as your child’s development, way of upbringing, child abuse, stress of raising a child, or even child neglect. In such cases, please ask for help or assistance from a community nurse at a public office, or from the child consultation centre and child support centre. If you are not fluent in Japanese, international organizations such as the International Communication Association assist you. There will be some differences between your country’s way and Japanese way in terms of raising a child, so please don’t hesitate to contact below for a consultation.

• Osaka Prefecture Child Support Centres:
  * An interpreter will be arranged with an appointment.
  • Osaka Prefecture Chuo Child Support Centre: 072-828-0161
  • Osaka Prefecture Ikeda Child Support Centre: 072-751-2858
  • Osaka Prefecture Suita Child Support Centre: 06-6389-3526
  • Osaka Prefecture Higashiosaka Child Support Centre: 06-6721-1966
  • Osaka Prefecture Tondabayashi Child Support Centre: 0721-25-1131
  • Osaka Prefecture Kishiwada Child Support Centre: 072-445-3977

• Osaka City Child Counselling Centre: 06-4301-3100

• Sakai City Child Counselling Office: 072-245-9197
6. Medical check up for children (from age 0 to age 3)

In general, medical checkups are regularly provided for children in Japan. An expert examines the baby to check if your baby is growing well. Please feel free to ask any questions to the expert.

Vaccinations are also available for children (please refer to page 13). However vaccination time and policy differs depending on your local health center or clinic, as the diseases to be immunized against may be different from place to place. Therefore, please check the schedule of your child's vaccination with a staff from your clinic or local health center. If your child is already vaccinated in other countries, please prepare a vaccine certificate and seek counsel.

In some regions, Japanese women with young children gather and spend time together to exchange their worries and experiences of raising a child. The meeting is usually conducted only in Japanese, but many are interested in foreign culture and way of raising a child, so please don’t hesitate to join them.
## Immunization Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Vaccine (Please inoculate a required vaccine.)</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
<th>Zero Month Old</th>
<th>One Month Old</th>
<th>Two Months Old</th>
<th>Three Months Old</th>
<th>Four Months Old</th>
<th>Five Months Old</th>
<th>Six Months Old</th>
<th>Seven Months Old</th>
<th>Eight Months Old</th>
<th>Nine Months Old</th>
<th>Ten Months Old</th>
<th>Eleven Months Old</th>
<th>One Year Old</th>
<th>Two Years Old</th>
<th>Junior High School</th>
<th>High School</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus (DPT)</td>
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<td>Polio (Inactivated Vaccine)</td>
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<td>Measles, Rubella (MR)</td>
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<td>Hemophilus Influenzae type B</td>
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<td>Influenza Vaccine</td>
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Please form a plan with staff of hospital, clinic or health center.

Medical Institution:

Telephone number:
8. Kindergartens and Nursery schools (public and private)

There are two types of institutions for children: Kindergartens and Nursery schools.

• Nursery schools, “Hoikusho / Hoikuen”

A nursery school is a school for children whose parents are mostly working. They accept children between the ages of 0 and 5 years. The time depends on schools, but they usually take care of the children from 8 AM to 5 PM. Some schools may look after them until 7 PM. Please confirm the time schedule beforehand.

Most of the schools provide lunch meal for children, but some schools may require you to prepare lunch boxes for your child.

Nowadays, the number of people who would like to use a nursery school is increasing, so you may need to wait for your turn. The admission procedure begins around October, a year before the child’s planned entrance. So please take counsel from officials of local government or schools before you apply for admission. The school fee is determined based on your family income.

• Kindergartens, “Youchien”

When you apply for kindergarten, you need to complete the required procedures a year before the date of planned entrance. The purpose of kindergartens is child education, aimed for children from age 3 to 5. In most cases, kindergartens only run until noon or early afternoon. Lunch for children may be provided or they may require you to prepare lunch boxes, depending on institutions.

Additionally, there are day nurseries where people leave their children temporarily.

9. Lunch boxes (=BENTO)

When children go out or go on a field trip, they usually take lunch boxes with them. They are called “Bento” in Japanese. When children start attending kindergarten or when they go out for field trips at schools, you need to prepare a “Bento” for them. If you don’t know what to put in a “Bento”, you should ask families, teachers or neighbours. With a “Bento,” water bottles, usually called “Suito” is also prepared.
10. Preparing for entry into primary school 
(around the age of 5 or 6)

In Japan, children enter primary schools at the age of six, in April. You will receive information about entering primary school by mail if you had reported your residential information to your local government. If you are not notified, please visit your local city hall. You can also refer to homepage below.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
A guidebook of entering school for foreign students
http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/clarinet/003/1320860.htm

Osaka prefecture international students school life support information
http://www.pref.osaka.jp/jidoseitoshien/toniti/index.html

The school fee and textbooks used in class are basically free in Japan, but additional equipments like school uniform, bag and shoes are to be prepared by the individual families. Parents should also write their child’s name on them. For more details, please ask your neighbours or staff of international communication association.

To Japanese residents
It is usual for Japanese to give their clothes and toys to other people, but some foreigners think it is impolite. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to take their cultures and customs into consideration before you do something for them.

To foreign residents
It is usual behaviour for Japanese to give their children’s hand-me-down clothes, toys and books to other children who can make use of them. You may feel unpleasant or impolite, but it comes from Japanese kindness and consideration. Please try to communicate with them first before making any assumptions.
11. Entering primary school

• Information, “Oshirase”
  Your child will frequently bring home papers written “notice (=Oshirase)” from his/her school. If you cannot understand what it says, please ask his/her teacher. A staff or a volunteer from international communication association can also help you to understand the information.

• School lunch
  In Japan, primary schools provide lunch to their students. It is called “Kyushoku.” If your child has any allergies or religious restrictions, please inform your child’s teacher which foods your child can’t eat. You can also ask for help from local international association or SINAPIS (please refer to page 23).

• Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and Children's association named ‘Kodomo-kai’
  If you participate in a PTA or a Children’s association, you can understand the Japanese social structure and local rules. In addition, you can get Japanese friends through the activities. (*PTA is organized by teachers and students’ parents to contribute to children's education and interaction between members.)

• Punctuality
  Being punctual is very important in Japan. When you are late for an appointment, it is assumed that you will contact them by phone. You may feel uncomfortable at first, as you are not yet accustomed to the Japanese way, but your neighbours and teachers support you.

• When your child enters school, there is a possibility that he/she may be placed into a lower grade based on of language abilities and the time of arrival in Japan.

To Japanese residents
  There are some foreigners who might seem like they are not punctual at all, but it doesn’t mean that they have bad intentions. They just don’t share the same cultures or customs practiced in Japan at their home countries, so please teach Japanese politeness and way of living to them.
12. Entering Junior High school, High school and University

If there is something you don’t understand about school rules, please consult the school teacher.

In Japan, in order to go to high school or universities, many students go to cram school for studying after classes. Those schools don’t provide special assistance for international students, but you can always ask teachers or a staff of international association for further information or an alternative solution.

One of the most important things after entering High School is to decide the path to take after graduation. Studying in a university on a scholarship and studying at a night school or distance education are the ways to reduce the financial burden. Your teachers know support system for entering a university, so please consult them beforehand.

13. When women become 40 years old

• Cancer screening

The local government will send you a screening coupon of cervical cancer, breast cancer, and colorectal cancer in year of age 40, which you can use to receive medical screening. However, please confirm the system before you take a medical check up. You should always keep mails sent by the local government and regional offices even if you can’t understand the information. A government official or staff of international association will help you to understand the information of the mail.

• Specific medical examination

Specific medical examination is only for people who are over 40 years old. It is the test to determine if you have metabolic syndrome or not. If you are qualified to have the examination, please receive the check up to avoid metabolic syndrome. The examination fee changes depending on the type of your insurance, so please visit the local government or ask your company’s staff.
14. Suffering domestic violence (DV) from your spouse or lover

Violence from your spouse or lover is a serious crime. If you are suffering from domestic violence, you must consult friends or institutes listed as below for your safety. They will support you with an emergency shelter, moving away, divorce, and visa status. If you feel uncomfortable seeking help from male police officers or if you can’t communicate in Japanese fluently, a private organization can give a hand to you. First, you can consult people of international association, local government, school, and clinic, then they will help contacting a specialized agency.

• Police
  110 : Nearest police box or station (Only for emergency cases)
  06–6941–0110 : ‘Woman line.’ The telephone line especially for victims of sex-related crime (provided by the Osaka Police Department)
  It is available from Mon to Fri, 9:30 to 17:00, and an answering machine will pick up your message outside office hours. (Only Japanese language is available.)

• Women’s Support Centre, Osaka prefecture (Support Centre for Domestic Violence):
  06–6949–6022 / 06–6946–7890
  It is available from Mon to Sun, 9:00 to 20:00, excluding national holidays and yearend and New Year holidays.
  The telephoneline especially for foreigners 06–6949–6181
  Hours: 9:00 to 17:30, Mon to Fri, Closed on Dec. 29th to Jan. 3rd and on National Holidays.
  Languages: English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Filipino, Thai, Japanese

• Support Centre for Domestic Violence, Osaka city: 06–4305–0100
  Only Japanese language is available.
  It is available from Mon to Fri, 9:30 to 17:00, excluding national holidays and yearend and new year holidays.

• SINAPIS Archdiocese of OSAKA: 06–6941–4999
  Languages: English, Spanish, Filipino, French, Korean
  All day and night.
15. Emergency contacts

When you get involved in a crime or an accident ⇒ police : 110
When you’ve lost your valuables such as wallets ⇒ go to the nearest police station
Fire ⇒ fire station : 119
Sudden illness or serious injuries ⇒ fire station : 119
*Ambulances are placed in fire stations in Japan, so the telephone number is the same.
Disaster in seas or maritime accident ⇒ Japan Coast Guard : 118

16. Garbage disposal

In Japan, there is a strict and detailed regulation about garbage disposal. You must distinguish the garbage, because based on its’ type, the day and the place you bring them out becomes different. The exact rules and types of garbage are also different depending on cities, so please ask someone at the local international association or even your families and neighbours for help.

Please refer to
Osaka Foundation of International Exchange (OFIX)
‘Essentials for living in Osaka: Guidebook for Foreign Residents’
http://www.ofix.or.jp/life/index.html

17. List of contact information

• Rights of Immigrants Network in Kansai (RINK) : 06-6910-7103

• AMDA International Medical Information Centre, Kansai (AMDA) : 06-4395-0555

For further information, please refer to page 149.