# The Complete Pre-Departure Master Checklist for Indian Students Bound for Japan

Embarking on an academic journey in Japan is a profoundly rewarding venture, offering world-class education alongside unparalleled cultural immersion. The path from receiving your acceptance letter to settling into your new life, however, involves a series of critical, time-sensitive steps. A successful transition is not a matter of chance but of meticulous preparation. This comprehensive guide serves as an authoritative roadmap, breaking down the entire pre-departure and initial settlement process into a clear, chronological checklist. By following these steps, Indian students can navigate the logistical, financial, and administrative requirements with confidence, ensuring a smooth and stress-free start to their studies in Japan.

## Part 1: The Foundation - Post-Acceptance Paperwork (4-6 Months Before Departure)

The period immediately following university acceptance is the most crucial phase of your pre-departure journey. The actions taken here establish the timeline for every subsequent step. Diligence, accuracy, and promptness in handling documentation are paramount, as this phase lays the groundwork for your entire transition.

### Section 1.1: Securing Your Certificate of Eligibility (COE): The First Hurdle

The Certificate of Eligibility (COE) is the cornerstone of the Japanese student visa process. It is not the visa itself, but a foundational document issued by a Regional Immigration Bureau in Japan that certifies your eligibility to enter the country for long-term study.1 The application for the COE is not submitted by the student directly but by the accepting university in Japan, which acts as your official sponsor or proxy.3

The entire pre-departure schedule hinges on the issuance of this one document. The processing time for a COE typically ranges from **one to three months**, a significantly longer period than the final visa stamping, which takes only 5 to 10 working days.1 Therefore, any delay in providing the required documents to your university will create a cascading effect, pushing back your visa application, flight booking, and accommodation arrangements. Your primary focus after accepting your admission offer must be the immediate and accurate compilation of all documents required by your university's international student office.

**The Process Explained:**

1. **Accept the Offer:** Formally accept your admission offer and pay the initial enrollment or admission fee as instructed by the university.3
2. **Document Submission:** Your university will request a comprehensive set of documents from you. It is your responsibility to provide these promptly and ensure they are complete and accurate.3
3. **University Application:** The university's international student office will use your documents to complete the COE application and submit it on your behalf to the local Immigration Bureau in Japan.1
4. **Processing and Issuance:** The Immigration Bureau will process the application. Once approved, the original COE is sent to your university, which will then forward it to you in India.3

**Documents You Must Prepare for Your University:**

* **Completed COE Application Form:** Your university will provide this form. It must be filled out truthfully, in capital letters, ensuring all information is consistent with your passport and other official documents.3
* **Passport-Sized Photographs:** You will need several recent photographs. Adhere strictly to the specified dimensions, which are typically **4cm x 3cm** or **4.5cm x 3.5cm**, taken within the last six months against a plain white background.3
* **Copy of Passport:** A clear, legible copy of the main photo/biometric page of your valid passport.1
* **Academic Records:** Official copies of your academic transcripts and graduation certificates, such as your 10th and 12th-grade marksheets and your bachelor's degree certificate if applicable.5
* **Proof of Financial Capability:** Detailed documentation proving you or your sponsor can cover your educational and living expenses. This is a critical component and is detailed in the next section.3
* **Letter of Admission:** A copy of the official acceptance letter from your Japanese university.5
* **Statement of Purpose/Letter of Reason:** A written statement explaining your academic goals and your reasons for choosing to study your specific course in Japan.1

### Section 1.2: Assembling Your Financial Fortress: Proof of Funds for Indian Applicants

A crucial part of the COE application is demonstrating sufficient financial support to cover at least one full year of tuition and living expenses.3 This proof is submitted to your university, which then includes it in the COE application to the Japanese Immigration Bureau. The objective is to assure the authorities of your financial stability and your ability to reside in Japan without facing monetary hardship.

The requirement is not merely about showing a specific amount of money at a single point in time. Immigration officials scrutinize financial records to assess the long-term stability and legitimacy of the funds. The need for six months of bank statements and multiple years of income tax returns is designed to build a narrative of consistent financial health.5 A large, recent, and unexplained deposit into the sponsor's account can be perceived as a red flag, suggesting that the funds may have been borrowed temporarily solely for the visa application.9 Therefore, it is essential for your financial sponsor to maintain a stable and sufficient balance over the entire six-month period leading up to the application.

**Required Financial Threshold:**

* The Japanese Immigration Bureau generally requires evidence of funds amounting to approximately **¥2,000,000 to ¥3,000,000**. This is roughly equivalent to ₹11 Lakhs to ₹16 Lakhs, though this figure will vary with currency exchange rates.5 This amount is intended to cover average annual tuition fees (around ¥820,000 for national universities) and estimated living costs.9

**Acceptable Documents from an Indian Context:**

* **Sponsor's Bank Statements:** Official bank statements for the past **six months** are mandatory.5 These must be from the account of your designated financial sponsor (typically a parent). Ensure the statements are original, printed on bank letterhead, and officially stamped and signed by a bank official.9
* **Income Tax Returns (ITR):** Your sponsor's ITRs for the past two to three years serve as strong evidence of consistent income and financial reliability.3
* **Proof of Relationship:** Official documents, such as a birth certificate or passport, that clearly establish the relationship between you and your financial sponsor.9
* **Letter of Sponsorship:** A formal, signed letter from your sponsor explicitly stating their relationship to you and confirming that they will cover all your tuition and living expenses during your stay in Japan.5
* **Sponsor's Employment Certificate:** A document from the sponsor's employer confirming their position and income.11
* **Other Supporting Documents:** Certificates for Fixed Deposits (FDs) can be included as they are considered liquid assets.9 If you have received a scholarship, the official award letter should be submitted, as this can reduce the total amount you need to show in personal funds.3

### Section 1.3: Paying Initial University Fees from India

Most Japanese universities require the payment of an enrollment fee or an initial tuition deposit before they will begin the COE application process on your behalf.3 It is vital to complete this payment efficiently and securely, keeping meticulous records of the transaction.

**Methods of Payment:**

* **University's Preferred Method:** Always begin by checking the university's official admissions guide or website for their specified payment method. Many institutions have dedicated online portals or have partnered with international payment services like Flywire to streamline the process for international students.12
* **International Wire Transfer (SWIFT):** This is a traditional and highly secure method available through major Indian banks like SBI, HDFC, and ICICI. While reliable for large sums, it can take 3-5 business days to process and may involve higher costs due to transfer fees and less competitive currency exchange rates offered by banks.13
* **Online Money Transfer Services:** Modern fintech platforms such as Wise or Supreme Forex are often a more cost-effective and faster alternative.13 These services typically offer the mid-market exchange rate (the one seen on Google) with low, transparent fees, and can complete transfers much more quickly, sometimes within hours.13
* **Forex Cards:** While excellent for personal spending upon arrival in Japan, Forex cards are generally not recommended for paying large, one-time tuition fees due to potential issuance fees, loading charges, and less favorable exchange rates compared to specialized transfer services.13

**Key Considerations:**

* **Compare Total Costs:** Before choosing a service, compare the total cost of the transaction. This includes not only the stated transfer fee but also the margin on the currency exchange rate. A service with a zero-fee promotion might offer a poor exchange rate, making it more expensive overall.14
* **Meet Deadlines:** Initiate the payment transfer well in advance of the university's deadline to account for any potential processing delays or public holidays in either India or Japan.14
* **Keep Records:** Retain all digital and physical receipts, transaction confirmations, and bank statements related to the fee payment. These documents are your proof of payment and may be required by the university.14

## Part 2: The Green Light - Visa and Travel Logistics (2-3 Months Before Departure)

Once you receive the original Certificate of Eligibility (COE) from your university, the most significant hurdle is cleared. This phase is about converting that eligibility into a visa, securing your travel, and arranging your new home. While these steps can be pursued in parallel, it is critical to understand their dependencies to avoid costly mistakes.

### Section 2.1: From COE to Student Visa: The Final Stamp via VFS India

With the original COE in hand, you can apply for the "Student" visa to be affixed to your passport. In India, the Japanese Embassies and Consulates have outsourced the collection of visa applications to VFS Global.15

The issuance of the COE signifies that the Japanese Immigration Bureau has already vetted and approved your application for long-term study.1 The final visa application process at the embassy via VFS is primarily a verification step to confirm your identity as the rightful COE holder and to place the official visa sticker in your passport. Consequently, the probability of a visa rejection at this stage is extremely low, provided all your documents are authentic and correctly submitted. Despite this high likelihood of success, it is imperative that you

**do not book non-refundable flights** until the visa is physically stamped in your passport, as unexpected administrative delays can and do occur.15

**The Application Process:**

1. **Locate Your VFS Centre:** Identify the VFS Japan Visa Application Centre that serves your jurisdiction in India. For most visa categories, including students with a COE, no prior appointment is necessary for submitting your application.15
2. **Complete the Visa Application Form:** Download the latest visa application form from the website of the Embassy of Japan in India or the VFS Global website. Fill it out accurately in capital letters, ensuring every detail—especially your name and passport number—matches your COE and passport exactly.5
3. **Submit Your Application:** Visit the VFS centre with your complete set of documents. You will pay the visa and service fees at the time of submission.

**Required Documents for VFS Submission:**

* **Original Certificate of Eligibility (COE):** You must submit the original COE sent to you by your university, along with one clear photocopy.5
* **Valid Passport:** Your current passport must have a minimum of two blank pages. It is also required to submit any old passports you may have.5
* **Completed Visa Application Form:** The fully completed and signed application form.5
* **Recent Photograph:** One photograph meeting the required specifications (typically 2x2 inches or 4.5cm x 3.5cm, with a white background, taken within the last 6 months) glued to the designated spot on the application form.5
* **Letter of Admission:** A copy of your admission letter from the Japanese institution.5
* **Academic Documents:** Photocopies of your most recent academic certificates and mark sheets.6

**Fees and Processing Time:**

* **Visa Fee:** For Indian nationals, the student visa fee is nominal, currently around **₹450** (as of April 2025).15
* **VFS Service Fee:** VFS Global will charge an additional service fee for processing your application.15
* **Processing Time:** The standard processing time is **5 to 10 working days** from the date of submission at VFS.5 This can extend during peak travel seasons, so it is advisable to apply as soon as you receive your COE.

### Section 2.2: Booking Your Flight: Strategy, Savings, and Student Baggage

Booking your flight to Japan is a significant expense and a major logistical step. A strategic approach can lead to substantial savings and a more manageable travel experience.

**When to Book:**

* **The Optimal Window:** Flight pricing data suggests that the best time to book international flights is typically **40 to 75 days (approximately 6 to 11 weeks) before departure**.17 Booking within this window often provides the best balance of price and seat availability.
* **Cheapest Travel Months:** Historically, June and September tend to be the cheapest months for flights from India to Japan.17 While this may not align with your university's start date, being aware of seasonal price trends is useful.
* **Booking Strategy:** As soon as your COE application is submitted to your university, begin tracking flight prices using aggregators like Skyscanner, Google Flights, or KAYAK.18 Set up price alerts for your intended travel dates. Once your passport is returned with the visa stamp, you can book your ticket with confidence.

Maximizing Baggage Allowance:

As a student moving abroad for an extended period, your luggage requirements will be greater than those of a tourist. Standard excess baggage fees can be prohibitively expensive. The most effective way to manage this is by seeking out special student fares.

* **Standard Allowance:** Most major airlines, such as Japan Airlines (JAL) and All Nippon Airways (ANA), offer a generous standard allowance of **two checked bags of 23 kg each** for economy class on routes between India and Japan.21
* **Student Fares:** Many airlines, including Lufthansa and others, offer dedicated "student fares".23 These fares are a significant benefit as they often include an enhanced baggage allowance (sometimes an additional piece or weight) and more flexible conditions for rebooking or cancellation. You must proactively search for these fares on airline websites or inquire with travel agents, as they are not always advertised on flight aggregator sites. Proof of student status (your admission letter or student visa) will be required at the time of booking or check-in.

#### Table 1: Airline Student Baggage Allowance Comparison (Illustrative)

| Airline | Standard Economy Allowance | Typical Student Fare Allowance | Key Conditions |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Japan Airlines (JAL)** | 2 bags x 23 kg 21 | Check for specific student deals | Must present valid student visa/ID at check-in |
| **All Nippon Airways (ANA)** | 2 bags x 23 kg 22 | Check for special student promotions | Must present valid student visa/ID at check-in |
| **Air India** | Varies by route (Piece Concept) 25 | May offer extra weight/piece allowance | Book directly or via authorized agents |
| **Lufthansa (Example)** | 1 bag x 23 kg 23 | 2 bags x 23 kg 23 | Offered on specific routes from India |

### Section 2.3: Arranging Your Home in Japan: A Guide to Accommodation

Securing accommodation before you land in Japan is highly advisable as it provides stability and peace of mind during your initial weeks. For a first-year international student, the complexity and high cost associated with renting a private apartment make other options far more practical.

The primary obstacle to renting a private apartment is the requirement for a **joint guarantor** (*rentai hoshonin*), a Japanese resident who agrees to be financially liable if you default on rent or cause damages.26 This is a significant commitment that is nearly impossible for a newcomer to secure. While some universities offer a guarantor system for their students, this is not a universal service.27 For this reason, university dormitories and share houses, which do not require a guarantor, are the most recommended options for your first year. This approach provides a "soft landing," allowing you to acclimate to Japan and understand the local rental market before considering a private apartment later in your studies.

**Types of Accommodation:**

* **University Dormitories:** This is often the most affordable and convenient choice. Rent is significantly lower than private options, and major initial costs like security deposits (*shiki-kin*) and non-refundable key money (*rei-kin*) are typically waived.26 Rooms are often furnished, and the location is usually on or near campus. The main drawbacks are limited availability and potentially strict rules, such as curfews.26
* **Share Houses (Guesthouses):** A popular and well-balanced option that offers a private, furnished room within a larger property where common areas (kitchen, bathrooms, lounge) are shared with other residents.28 This model is more affordable than a private apartment, requires no guarantor, and provides an excellent social environment where you can interact with both Japanese and other international residents.29
* **Private Apartments:** This option provides the most independence and privacy but comes with the highest costs and complexity. Initial move-in costs can amount to 4-6 months' worth of rent, covering the first month's rent, a security deposit, key money, real estate agent commission, and insurance.26 Furthermore, apartments are almost always unfurnished, requiring you to purchase all furniture and appliances.26

#### Table 2: Accommodation Options at a Glance

| Feature | University Dormitory | Share House | Private Apartment |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Avg. Monthly Rent (Tokyo)** | ¥28,000 - ¥40,000 26 | ¥70,000 - ¥95,000 (Private Room) 30 | ¥60,000 - ¥100,000+ 26 |
| **Initial Costs** | Low / None 26 | Low (Deposit + Contract Fee) 30 | Very High (4-6 months' rent) 26 |
| **Guarantor Needed?** | No 29 | No 29 | Yes (Major hurdle) 26 |
| **Furnished?** | Often Yes 26 | Yes 28 | No 26 |
| **Social Life** | Good (student community) | Excellent (mixed community) 28 | Isolated |
| **Best For** | First-year students on a tight budget | Students seeking a social, hassle-free start | Independent students after their first year |

## Part 3: The Final Countdown - Packing and Health Prep (1 Month Before Departure)

With your visa, flight, and accommodation secured, the final month is dedicated to the practical preparations for your physical move and ensuring your health and well-being are prioritized.

### Section 3.1: The Ultimate Packing Guide for the Indian Student

Packing for a multi-year stay abroad requires a strategic approach to maximize limited baggage allowance and ensure you have essentials for your initial settlement period. The key is to differentiate between what you must bring from India, what is better purchased in Japan, and what is critical to have in your carry-on luggage.

#### Table 3: The Four-Quadrant Packing Matrix

|  | **Carry-On Luggage (Must-Haves for Flight & First 48 Hours)** | **Checked Luggage (Essentials for First Few Months)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Documents & Money** | - Passport with Visa, Original COE, Admission Letter 33 | - Flight tickets, Accommodation details - Initial Cash (Japanese Yen), Forex Card - Digital & Physical photocopies of all documents | - Extra passport-sized photos - Original academic transcripts and certificates |
| **Clothing & Footwear** | - One change of clothes, comfortable travel outfit - A light jacket or sweater for the plane | - **Clothing:** A mix of casual (jeans, t-shirts), at least one formal outfit (suits in Japan are tailored differently, so bring one from home if needed 34), and one traditional Indian outfit for cultural events.35 Focus on layers. Japanese clothing sizes are generally smaller, so if you wear larger sizes, it is wise to bring more clothing from India.34 | - Footwear: Comfortable walking shoes are essential. Also pack formal shoes and slippers. Again, larger shoe sizes can be difficult to find in Japan.34 |
| **Personal & Home** | - Prescription medications for the duration of the flight plus a few days (with doctor's prescription) 33 | - Basic toiletries (travel size: toothpaste, face wash)  - Electronics: Phone, Laptop, Chargers, Power Bank 33 | - Universal Travel Adapter & Portable Power Strip 35 | - **Home Comforts:** A small pressure cooker (2-3L) is a highly recommended item for easily preparing Indian food.35 Pack small, sealed containers of essential Indian spices like turmeric, garam masala, and cumin.35 A few ready-to-eat meal packets (e.g., MTR, Haldiram's) can be a lifesaver during your first few days.35 | - Linens: At least one set of bedsheets and one towel, as these may not be provided initially in dormitories.35 | - Toiletries: A one-month supply of your preferred shampoo, soap, etc. It is particularly advisable to bring your own deodorant, as Japanese brands are often less potent, and preferred sanitary products, as the variety and type may differ.34 |
| **Health & Misc.** | - Basic first-aid kit (band-aids, pain relief, antiseptic wipes)  - Noise-cancelling headphones, travel pillow 33 | - A more comprehensive first-aid kit, including any specific Indian remedies you use (e.g., for colds or indigestion).  - Small sewing kit, foldable shopping bag (many stores charge for plastic bags).35 |

**What NOT to Pack:**

* **Books:** They are extremely heavy. Utilize your university library or purchase e-books to save space and weight.36
* **Excessive Food Items:** Bring only a starter kit of spices and instant meals. Part of the experience is exploring local Japanese cuisine and supermarkets.36
* **Heavy Winter Coats:** Unless you are arriving in the middle of winter, high-quality and technologically advanced winter wear (like Uniqlo's Heattech line) is widely and affordably available in Japan.

### Section 3.2: Health, Vaccinations, and Insurance Strategy

Proactive health management is a critical component of your pre-departure preparations. This includes consulting with a medical professional, ensuring your vaccinations are current, and establishing a comprehensive insurance plan.

A crucial aspect of this plan is understanding the two-tiered insurance system you will need. Japan's mandatory National Health Insurance (NHI) can only be activated *after* you arrive and register your residency.37 This creates a potential gap in coverage from the moment you leave India until your NHI card is issued. To bridge this gap, a short-term travel insurance policy purchased in India is not merely an option but a necessity. This two-insurance strategy ensures you are protected against travel-related risks like flight cancellations or lost luggage, and also covers any medical emergencies during your initial, uninsured period in Japan.7

**Vaccinations:**

* Schedule a consultation with your doctor at least 4-6 weeks before your departure date.
* **Routine Vaccinations:** Ensure you are up-to-date with standard vaccinations, including Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR), Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis (TDAP), Polio, and Chickenpox.39
* **Recommended for Japan:** The CDC and WHO recommend that travelers to Japan consider vaccinations for Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B. For long-term stays, the Japanese Encephalitis vaccine is also strongly recommended, as the disease is present in Japan, particularly from July to October.39

**Health Insurance:**

* **National Health Insurance (NHI):** Enrollment in Japan's NHI is **mandatory** for all residents, including international students, staying for more than three months.37 You will complete the enrollment process at your local municipal office after arrival. NHI covers 70% of the costs for most medical treatments and prescriptions, with you being responsible for the remaining 30%.42 For new students with no income in Japan during the previous year, the monthly premium is very affordable, typically around  
  **¥2,000**.42
* **Short-Term Travel Insurance:** Before you leave India, purchase a comprehensive private travel insurance policy. This policy should cover you for medical emergencies, trip cancellation, lost baggage, and other travel-related incidents from your departure date for at least the first month of your stay in Japan.7

## Part 4: Touchdown Japan - Your Critical First 14 Days

The first two weeks after your arrival are a period of intense but essential administrative activity. Completing these tasks promptly and in the correct order is the key to establishing your legal residency and accessing fundamental services like banking and healthcare.

### Section 4.1: Navigating Arrival: Immigration and Your Residence (Zairyu) Card

Your first official act upon landing in Japan is to clear immigration. The document you receive here, the Residence Card, is the single most important piece of identification you will possess for your daily life in Japan.

The Residence Card (*Zairyu Kādo*) is your official ID as a mid- to long-term resident. It is legally required to carry it with you at all times.43 This card is the key that unlocks all other administrative procedures: you will need it to register your address, enroll in health insurance, and open a bank account.37 Therefore, securing this card at the airport and safeguarding it immediately is your top priority upon arrival.

**At Immigration:**

* Have the following documents ready to present to the immigration officer: your **Passport** with the student visa, the **original Certificate of Eligibility (COE)**, and your **Letter of Admission**.4
* If you arrive at a major international airport such as Narita (NRT), Haneda (HND), or Kansai (KIX), your **Residence Card** will be printed and issued to you on the spot after your fingerprints and photo are taken.4
* If you arrive at a smaller airport or seaport, a "Landing Permission" stamp will be placed in your passport indicating that your Residence Card will be issued later. The card will be mailed to your address after you have completed your residency registration at the municipal office.4

**"Visit Japan Web":**

* To expedite your arrival process, it is highly recommended to use the "Visit Japan Web" service before your flight. This allows you to pre-register your information for immigration and customs procedures online, potentially saving you time at the airport.4

### Section 4.2: The Essential First-Week Administrative Checklist

Japanese law requires all new mid- to long-term residents to register their address at their local municipal office **within 14 days** of finding a place to live.4 This registration is the trigger for all subsequent administrative tasks. These steps must be completed in a specific sequence, as each one is a prerequisite for the next. Attempting to open a bank account before registering your address, for example, will not be possible.

The correct, non-negotiable workflow is: **1. Airport (Receive Residence Card) → 2. Municipal Office (Register Address) → 3. Municipal Office (Enroll in NHI) → 4. Bank (Open Account).**

* **Step 1: Go to Your Local Municipal/Ward Office (*Shiyakusho* or *Kuyakusho*).**
  + **Task:** Register your address by submitting a "Moving-in Notification" (*tennyu todoke*).
  + **Required Documents:** Your **Residence Card** and **Passport**.45
  + **Outcome:** An official at the office will print your new address on the back of your Residence Card. This officially establishes your residency.
* **Step 2: Enroll in National Health Insurance (NHI).**
  + **Task:** This can and should be done at the same municipal office, immediately after you have registered your address. Visit the NHI (*Kokumin Kenkō Hoken*) counter.
  + **Required Documents:** Your newly address-registered **Residence Card** and **Passport**.47
  + **Outcome:** You will be officially enrolled in the national health insurance system. Your physical insurance card will be mailed to your registered address within a couple of weeks. You will also be given information on how to pay your monthly premiums.41
* **Step 3: Open a Bank Account.**
  + **Best First Bank:** For new international students, **Japan Post Bank (Yucho Ginko)** is consistently the most recommended institution. It has branches in post offices nationwide, is accustomed to handling accounts for foreigners, and generally has a more straightforward application process.44
  + **Required Documents:** Your **Residence Card** (with your address printed on the back), **Passport**, **Student ID card**, and potentially a personal seal (*hanko* or *inkan*). While some banks now accept a signature, having a simple *hanko* made with your name in *katakana* can be useful for other contracts in Japan.44
  + **Outcome:** You will likely receive your bank passbook (*tsūchō*) on the same day. For security reasons, your ATM cash card will be mailed to your registered address separately, typically arriving in one to two weeks.49

### Section 4.3: Settling In: University Orientation and Daily Life Essentials

Once the mandatory administrative tasks are underway, the focus shifts to integrating into your new academic and social environment.

* **Attend University Orientation:** This is a non-negotiable event. Your university's international student support office will provide invaluable information on campus facilities, academic expectations, scholarship opportunities, and Japanese customs.52 Often, they will provide direct assistance or guidance for completing the municipal office and banking procedures.42
* **Get a Phone/SIM Card:** A Japanese phone number is essential for daily life and is often required for various registrations and services.49 Research providers that offer student-friendly plans or pre-paid SIM cards.
* **Master Local Transportation:** Purchase a rechargeable IC card like Suica or Pasmo. These can be used for trains, buses, and even at many convenience stores. Figure out the primary train or bus routes between your accommodation and your university campus.
* **Explore Your Neighborhood:** Take time to walk around your local area. Locate the nearest supermarket, convenience store (*konbini*), post office, and police box (*kōban*). Familiarize yourself with local rules, especially the complex but strict procedures for garbage sorting and disposal, as failure to comply can cause issues with neighbors.26 This initial exploration will help you feel more at home and self-sufficient in your new environment.

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