

How do I get cash in Japan?

Japan is a predominantly a cash-based economy. Credit cards are normally only accepted in larger stores, restaurants and tourist-destinations.

The official currency of Japan is the yen (JPY or ¥). As of 12/13/2019, the exchange rate was *1 USD to 109JPY*.

When you arrive in Japan, be sure to have adequate funds to cover your first month's rent, pay for transportation expenses, purchase anything you need for your room, and any other expenses that may arise.

You will probably want to have approximately **\$1,000-\$1,500 available to you for the first several weeks**. You may wish to bring a small amount in cash and the rest in traveler's checks, which you may cash upon arrival. Or, you may want to use your bank's debit card to withdraw from the ATM at the airport upon arrival. While you will likely not spend all your arrival funds, keeping your money in traveler's checks will safeguard against emergencies, and cash flow will be especially important in the first weeks as you get accustomed to the higher costs of living.

Traveler's Checks

Traveler's checks in U.S. dollars and other denominations can be exchanged for yen at most post offices, banks with exchange services, travel offices, and at major hotels and department stores throughout Japan (a passport is required). Citibank and American Express traveler's checks are the most widely accepted.

What to Do Before Leaving

1. It is your responsibility to take care of loans, your Athena account, any scholarships, etc.
- 2.
3. Inform your bank (for credit cards and debit cards) that you will be traveling internationally so international charges or withdrawals will not be flagged as possible fraud.
- 4.
5. Sign the Risk & Release form in your retreat folder and submit it to the program coordinator prior to departure.
6. Provide MISTI with your emergency contact information in the U.S. and contact information in Japan. If you get a cell phone or other contact information after arriving please let us know.

ATM / Bank Debit Card

If you have a bank debit card, you can also withdraw money for AMS at the airport. Japanese Post offices (Yucho ATMs), Seven Banks at “7-11” convenience stores, and AEON Bank also accept foreign ATM credit cards. Call your bank and let them know that you will be traveling to Japan so you will be able to use your debit card in Japan. Find out from your bank what your limit is for cash withdrawal and whether there are any foreign transaction or withdrawal fees.