

# Tokyo

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# Quick Facts

- Tokyo is the capital city of Japan.
- It is the most populated metropolitan area, with 40.8 million people
- It is one of the most expensive cities to live in.
- Tokyo isn't just Tokyo city, it is the whole Tokyo Metropolitan Area, which extends across several prefectures.
- Despite a large train/subway system, it is incredibly congested.



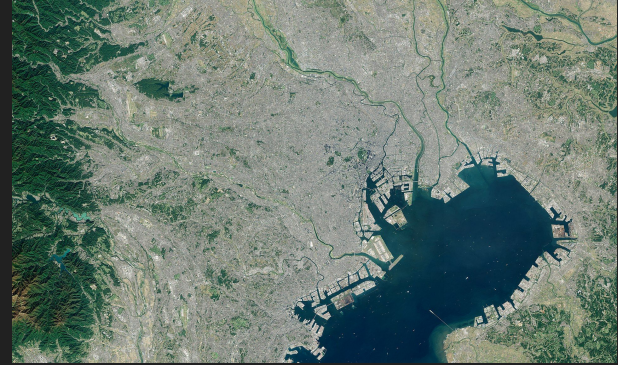
# Transformation

Tokyo has transformed dramatically, and will continue to do so.

Tokyo was not a major city until the Meiji restoration, when its power was ascendant (no longer Kyoto). The Great Kantō earthquake, and then WW2 did huge damage, but Tokyo has built back to a huge degree.

The environmental damage of Tokyo is well-managed by government authorities, but the worst by far is Tokyo's **MASSIVE** heat-island. There is little the Tokyo authorities can do about it, and it leads to notably higher electricity expenditure on cooling than Japan's average.

Tokyo (literally Eastern Capital) grew economically largely due to its port, and its central location. Access to food, access to the rest of Japan, access to the rest of the world.



↑ Tokyo Today - ↓ Tokyo, 1945(cc



# Problems

Many of the primary environmental threats to the city(garbage, sewer, contagious diseases) are difficult but well-managed by the Tokyo authorities. The garbage and sewer operations run at a massive scale, but benefit from the high-wealth of the city(can afford significant taxes to pay for it) and the generally clean nature of Japanese culture(emphasis on it). The sewer/water pumping system in Tokyo is frequently described as sci-fi-esque, and I see it.

Contagious diseases, Covid-19 for example, dealt a comparatively small blow to Tokyo for both of these reasons. Social cohesion is prized to a degree that it is not in much of the West.

On issues of conservation, Japan in general has a conservation policy more in line with ex-situ conservation(zoos, and reserves) rather than the preservation of the actual habitat. Considering how little land Japan has for high-level development, it makes sense.





# More Environmental

Japan has lost lots of agricultural space since it has transitioned into a wealthier economy. It still does a large amount of farming, but it imports large amounts of foodstuffs(~60%). Simply put, it is better to use  $1\text{ft}^2$  for factories/technology than farming.

Tokyo used to have horrific air pollution, but they have cleaned it up to a large degree. The biggest problem now is the “blow-over” air pollution from China, and a significant proportion of Tokyo acid rain is due to this.

Environmental issues are taken seriously politically at a local and national level, partly due to a desire to prove that Japan is still at the cutting edge of clean technologies.



# Tokyo's future development

If Tokyo is to keep developing (and in light of birth rates that isn't certain), Tokyo must go up and not out. The sprawl of Tokyo is ever expanding (running to lower rents where they can be found), but this makes infrastructure demands ever greater and congestion ever worse.

The birth rates are the bigger problem, but Tokyo's urban sprawl is ever continuing. Tokyo, as compared to many other cities, does a fairly good job on environmental matters.

