

# Housing Information in Tokyo and Surrounding Areas for Foreign Students

## - Foreigner-Friendly & English-Speaking Realtors -

**Note:**

- TUJ does not endorse or recommend any of the following housing options, landlords, or rental organizations.
- TUJ is not able to function as a relocation service or real estate agency.
- TUJ cannot serve as a guarantor for housing.
- Our goal in compiling this list is to introduce you to some affordable housing locations during your study at TUJ.
- If you have any questions or need further assistance, please contact the Office of Student Services ([oss@tuj.temple.edu](mailto:oss@tuj.temple.edu)).

Company	Location	Website
Cheap Housing Tokyo	Various in Tokyo	<a href="http://www.cheaphousingtokyo.com/">http://www.cheaphousingtokyo.com/</a>
Gaijin House	Various in Tokyo	<a href="http://www.gaijinhouse.com">http://www.gaijinhouse.com</a>
Global Trust Networks	Various in Tokyo	<a href="http://www.gtn.co.jp/english">http://www.gtn.co.jp/english</a>
Hiragana Times	Various in Toyo	<a href="http://www.hiraganatimes.com/hp/acomo/index.html">http://www.hiraganatimes.com/hp/acomo/index.html</a>
J&F Network	Various in Tokyo	<a href="http://www.jafnet.co.jp/index_en.html">http://www.jafnet.co.jp/index_en.html</a>
Leo Palace 21	Various in Tokyo, Kanagawa, Chiba and Saitama	<a href="http://www.leopalace21.com/">http://www.leopalace21.com/</a>
Minimini	Various in Tokyo and more	Contact <a href="mailto:azabu@minimini.jp">azabu@minimini.jp</a> or visit Azabu branch directly (map available at OSS)
Oak Guest House	Various in Tokyo	<a href="http://www.oakhouse.jp/eng">http://www.oakhouse.jp/eng</a>
PAL	Tokyo, Kawasaki and Yokohama	<a href="http://www.fudosan.yoursnet.com/index.htm">http://www.fudosan.yoursnet.com/index.htm</a>
RAISE House	Various in Tokyo	<a href="http://homepage2.nifty.com/raise-guesthouse/english/index.html">http://homepage2.nifty.com/raise-guesthouse/english/index.html</a>
Sakura House	Various in Tokyo	<a href="http://www.sakura-house.com/index.htm">http://www.sakura-house.com/index.htm</a>
Shrek Watta House	Nerima Ward (Tokyo)	<a href="http://www.shrek-watta-house.com/index.html">http://www.shrek-watta-house.com/index.html</a>
The Tokyo Cozy House	Kita Ward (Tokyo) and Ichikawa (Chiba)	<a href="http://www.cozyhouse.net">http://www.cozyhouse.net</a>
The-you	Various areas	<a href="http://the-you-english.blogspot.com">http://the-you-english.blogspot.com</a>
TOKYO APARTMENT	Various in Tokyo	<a href="http://www.tokyoapt.com">http://www.tokyoapt.com</a>
Tokyo Rent	Various in Tokyo	<a href="http://www.tokyorent.com">http://www.tokyorent.com</a>
Tokyo Room Finder	Database of available rooms	<a href="http://www.tokyoroomfinder.com">http://www.tokyoroomfinder.com</a>
Tokyo Room Guide	Various in Tokyo	<a href="http://www.roomguide.jp/e/index.html">http://www.roomguide.jp/e/index.html</a>
Transborders	Various areas	<a href="http://www.transborders.co.jp">http://www.transborders.co.jp</a>
Weekly Mansion Tokyo	Various in Tokyo	<a href="http://www.wmt.co.jp">http://www.wmt.co.jp</a>

# How do I find an apartment?

**STEP 1:** Research on the web, collect information from friends, and discuss with your family to set price limits and expectations.

**STEP 2:** Consider these essential aspects and look for apartments that fit your needs and limitations

✓ Price of rent	✓ Location	✓ Room size
✓ Distance from train station	✓ Neighborhood	✓ Is it furnished or not?
✓ Is key money required?	✓ Is gift money required?	✓ Do I need a guarantor?
✓ Is there internet access?	✓ Age of building	✓ Are pets allowed?

**STEP 3:** Contact real-estate agencies and make appointments to go visit open rooms of your interest.

**STEP 4:** Thoroughly check the apartment onsite when you visit and compare it with others.

**STEP 5:** Learn about the contract procedure from real-estate agents as well as the amount of your initial payment, move-in date, rules and regulations, etc.

**STEP 6:** Move out and move in. Plan how to move ahead of time (by taxi, train, mover's van, etc.).

**STEP 7:** Activate utilities (gas, water, electricity).

**STEP 8:** **Submit Change of Address Forms at TUJ through AAC, the post office, and other places** (cell phone company, bank, etc.).

# Different Types of Apartments: Terminology

Note that there can be various combinations of the below room styles. For example, 3SDK is a three bedroom apartment complete with dining room, kitchen area, and storage. Rent is usually higher based on the location of the apartment and its features.

## 1 Room

The average size of this room is generally 16m<sup>2</sup> - 20m<sup>2</sup>.

The kitchen and bedroom are joined and there is a unit bathroom (toilet and shower are in one room).

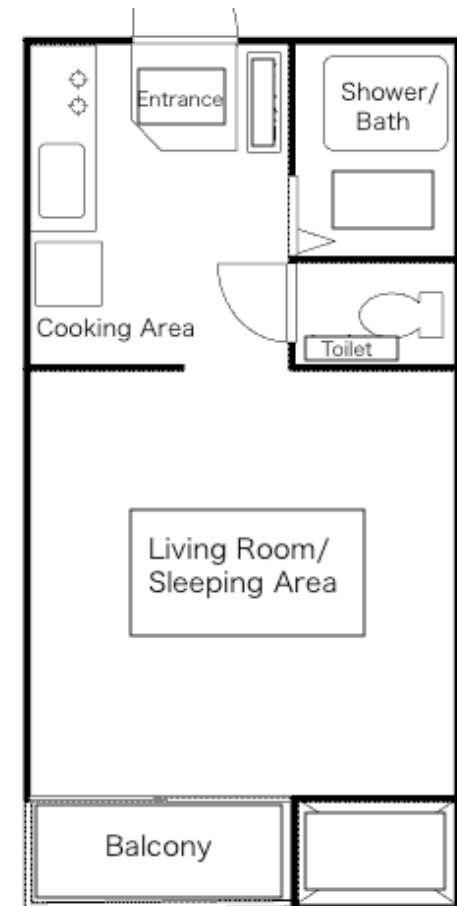


## 1 K

The size of this room is usually the same as a 1ROOM.

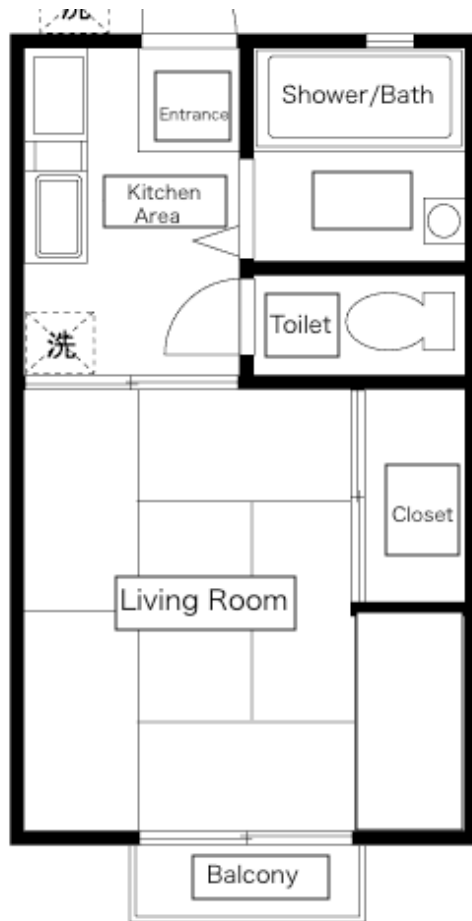
The only difference is that the toilet and shower are separated from each other and the kitchen is sectioned off away from the bedroom.

1K = 1ROOM + Kitchen.



## 1 DK

The size of a 1DK is a little bigger than a 1Room.  
It has a separate bedroom/living room, and a dining/kitchen area.  
1DK = 1ROOM + Dining/Kitchen area.



## 1 LDK

The sizes for this type of apartment are usually 20m<sup>2</sup> - 40m<sup>2</sup>.  
Its primary feature is that its bedroom and living room are separated, and it also has a dining/kitchen area.  
1LDK = 1Room + Living Room + Dining/Kitchen area.



## 1 SLDK

The only difference between the 1LDK and the 1SLDK is that it also has a walk-in closet or “storage.”  
1SLDK = 1Room + Storage + Living Room + Dining/Kitchen area.



# Types of Apartment Buildings

Japanese Term	Explanation
<i>Apaato</i>	Shortened from “apartment,” a small apartment building that is made of wood or steel and is usually only two stories tall. This type of apartment has thin walls and is not well sound proofed.
<i>Mansion</i>	A mansion is a large, modern building with many apartments made from heavy steel and concrete. Rent prices are usually higher than those of <i>apaato</i> .
<i>Kashiya</i>	Also known as an <i>ikkodate</i> , an entire house you can rent. A <i>terrace house</i> is a type of <i>ikkodate</i> in a row of houses.

## Setting Up & Paying for Utilities

The three basic utilities you will need to set up are **ELECTRICITY**, **GAS**, and **WATER**. Telephone, television, internet, etc. are generally not included, so if you are interested in these, you will need to them up yourself as well.

**ELECTRICITY** can be switched on from the main breaker in your apartment, usually by the front entrance, the first time you enter the apartment. You will have to contact the utility provider to set up the account in your name.

**GAS** will have to be set up by a representative from the utility provider. This may or may not be arranged by your agent or landlord.

**WATER** should already be available when you enter the apartment, but you will need to contact the utility provider to set up the account in your name.

Bills will be sent monthly to you by mail. You can pay in cash at convenience stores, banks or post offices. Bills should be paid in full by the deadline; consecutive unpaid bills will result in services being cut off. You can set up an **automatic withdrawal from your bank account** – please request an application form for this service from the utility provider, in which you provide your bank account information and send back by mail. This takes a couple of months to set up so you will need to continue paying in cash in the meantime.

Tokyo Electricity Power Company (TEPCO)

東京電力

<http://www.tepco.co.jp/en/index-e.html>

TEL: 0120-995-001 (for within Tokyo)

Tokyo Gas

東京ガス

[http://www.tokyo-gas.co.jp/index\\_e.html](http://www.tokyo-gas.co.jp/index_e.html)

TEL: 03-5722-0111 (for within Tokyo)

Tokyo Waterworks Bureau

東京都水道局

<http://www.waterworks.metro.tokyo.jp/eng/index.html>

TEL: 03-5320-6326 (general; check for your ward)

If you live outside of the Tokyo Metropolitan Area, please ask your agent or landlord for utility providers' contact information

# Types of Flooring

Regardless of the floor type, wearing shoes are not permitted while in an apartment. You are expected to take off your shoes in the apartment's *genkan*, or entrance area. Non-compliance can result in floor-damage at your expense and downstairs neighbors complaining of noisy footsteps.

Type	Explanation
Tatami	A traditional type of flooring, traditionally made of rice straw (though nowadays sometimes composed of woodchip boards or Styrofoam), with a covering of woven soft rush straw. If not properly cared for, can damage and mould easily. Well sound-proofed.
Flooring	The English term 'flooring' is used to describe floors with a wooden floor board. While it is easy to clean, wood flooring is not soundproof and can be scratched easily, or dented if a heavy object is dropped on it.
Cushioned Flooring	A cushioned floor is a wooden floorboard covered in a type of plastic. Since it is soft, it does not hold up well in the event of a fire. It is, however, waterproof.
Carpet	In addition to being comfortable, carpeting is generally soundproof. On the down side, due to high humidity in Japan, carpet owners need to be aware of insects that can live and breed within their carpeting. Carpet stains are also very hard to clean.

# Apartment Measurements

There are generally 3 measuring units used to measure apartments in Japan.

Type	Explanation
m <sup>2</sup>	square meters
- <i>Jō</i> 畳	1 <i>Jō</i> = about 1.65 m <sup>2</sup> (0.5 <i>Tsubo</i> )
- <i>Tsubo</i> 坪	1 <i>Tsubo</i> = about 3.3 m <sup>2</sup> (2 <i>Jō</i> )

# Useful Terminology & Information

Tokyo is one of the most expensive cities in the world to live. Good planning can therefore save you a lot of time, stress, and money. Apartments in Japan are typically small, particularly in Tokyo and other major cities. Larger apartments are difficult to find and are well beyond the average TUJ student's price range. Below is some housing terminology you should know.

Japanese	English	Explanation
<i>Yachin</i> 家賃	<b>Rent</b>	In the Tokyo area, the cheapest rent generally ranges from about 50,000 yen to 80,000 yen for a one-room apartment. Rent is generally cheaper the farther away you get from popular shopping & fashionable areas (where the average price can go up to 100, 000 to 150, 000 yen for a one-room apartment). Sometimes a longer walk to the train station can save you a significant amount of money on rent.
<i>Hoshoukin</i> 保証金	<b>Deposit</b>	This word means “deposit”. The <i>hoshoukin</i> consists of two parts:
(1) <i>Shiki-kin</i> 敷金	<b>Key Money</b>	A deposit that will likely be returned to you when you leave the apartment (minus mandatory charges for cleaning after you vacate, any damages you incurred, etc.)
(2) <i>Reikin</i> 礼金	<b>Gratuity Fee</b>	A payment given to the landlord or building owner to thank him/her for renting the room to you. This is often non-negotiable and can be anywhere from 1 to 6 months worth of rent.
		A note about deposit money: The <i>hoshoukin</i> can reach the equivalent of 6 to 8 months rent. The standard in most places is 2:2 (2 months <i>shikikin</i> + 2 months <i>reikin</i> ) on top of the first month's rent. If you are trying to find an apartment in a popular area of Tokyo, then you will find yourself paying hundreds of thousands of yen in advance that will not be returned to you. For the average student housing, expect to pay about 4 months rent in advance.
<i>Keiyaku</i> 契約	<b>Contract</b>	Essentially, your lease. Please have the contract looked over by a friend fluent in Japanese before signing anything. Generally, a contract states you will be held liable for any damages incurred during your occupancy. Make sure to keep the apartment clean or you will have a large amount deducted from your deposit for cleaning. It's not unheard for foreigners to be taken advantage of, so we advise you to go through an agency or somebody you trust when searching for apartments.
<i>Hoshonin</i> 保証人	<b>Guarantor</b>	Most landlords require tenants provide a guarantor. The guarantor will be called to check that they are in the country and have a suitable income to support you in case of problems. For a Japanese person, a guarantor is often a relative. For newcomers to Japan, however, finding a guarantor can be difficult. <b>There are agencies available that can act as your guarantor - if applicable, these will be introduced to you by your agent and you have to make a payment which varies depending on your rent.</b> You will have to renew this guarantor contract with the guaranteeing agent after a couple of years. Not all real estate agents accept guarantor agencies.

# Other Cultural Tidbits for living in Japan

<p><b>Customary Behavior and Manners</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Your actions affect those around you. Keep noise levels (tv, music, voice) to a minimum. You can party at a bar.</li><li>- Keep common areas you are responsible for clean. Your mess and noise can damage the reputation of all foreigners.</li><li>- As soon as you enter the apartment you become a member of a small community – be courteous and respect the privacy of your neighbors.</li><li>- Especially in more rural areas, it is common tradition in Japan to give small gifts to your surrounding neighbors when you move into an apartment. This is commonly tea towels, laundry detergent – something useful. In your case, it could be sweets or something small that represents your home country. This isn't practiced in most Tokyo or urban area apartments, however.</li></ul>
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**TUJ organizes housing affairs every semester to help students search for housing.**

**Please contact the Office of Student Services for further information.**

**[oss@tuj.temple.edu](mailto:oss@tuj.temple.edu)**

**NOTE:** If you change your address at any point while you are in Japan, **please update your alien registration card at your ward office. If you change wards/cities, please update your health insurance as well at your new ward office.** If you are an Undergraduate Student or on a Student Visa, please **inform the Office of Student Services** your new address as soon as possible.