

Basic Guide to Apartment-Search in Japan



2020

Office of Student Services

Temple University Japan Campus

Q&A (before you find an apartment)

1. How do I find an apartment? What steps should I follow?

STEP 1: Research on the web (see Appendix 1) and talk with your parents

STEP 2: Prioritize some of the following factors and look for apartments that best fit your expectation.

rent	location	room size
distance from train station	neighborhood	furnished (yes/no)
guarantor (yes/no)	key money (yes/no)	gift money (yes/no)
Internet connection	age of building	pet (yes/no)

STEP 3: Contact real-estate agents and make an appointment to check apartments of your interest.

STEP 4: Thoroughly check the apartments on-site and consider pros and cons.

STEP 5: Make a decision and finalize your contract and wire-transfer initial payment.

2. How much do I need to pay up front?

Initial payment charged by conventional Japanese realtors is, on average, six times as large as your monthly payment (see below). Many of the realtors on the list (Appendix 1) do not charge deposit or appreciation fee.

- (1) 家賃(*yachin*): rent for the first month (ex) 80,000yen
- (2) 敷金 (*shikikin*): deposit/key money (**refundable**) (ex)80,000 yen x 2 = 160,000 yen
- (3) 礼金 (*reikin*): appreciation fee (**non-refundable**) (ex)80,000 yen x 2 = 160,000 yen
- (4) 仲介手数料: (*chuukai tesuuryou*) brokerage fee (ex)80,000 yen

Total = (1)+(2)+(3)+(4) = 480,000 yen

3. What is 保証人 (“hoshou nin”, guarantor)? If a guarantor is required, what can I do?

Guarantors take responsibility for any damage on the property and are required to pay your rent if it is overdue. Guarantors must meet the following three requirements:

Requirement 1) a Japanese citizen or a permanent resident in Japan

Requirement 2) 20 years or older

Requirement 3) a full-time employee

If your family lives overseas, they do not meet Requirement 1) and thus cannot be a guarantor for your contract. TUJ cannot be your guarantor, either. When Japanese people sign lease contract, they usually ask their parents or employers to act as a guarantor. Since this is a serious request which may involve huge amount of money, you cannot ask a casual acquaintance.

Another choice is a “guarantor company.” These firms help Japanese tenants who fall between the cracks in the guarantor system and are open to foreigners as well. They generally charge 50% of your monthly rent for their guarantor service. The guarantor fee is one-time payment, but if you renew your 2-year apartment contract and renew the guarantor contract as well, you have to pay guarantor fee again. Most real estate agents refer you to a specific guarantor company to which they are closely related. You may be turned down by a risk-averse guarantor company. In that case, you can expect your real estate agent to introduce you to another.

4. What is emergency contact person”? Who can be my “emergency contact person”

Choice 1: a Japanese friend of yours (20 years or older)

Choice 2: TUJ as an institution (not individual faculty member or staff member)

5. I am 17 years old. Is a minor allowed to sign a lease contract?

Under Japanese civil law, underage people are allowed to enter legal transaction if only they are given written consent by their parent (or legal guardian). Real estate agents ask you to send a lease contract to your family, which will be sent back to Japan with your parent’s signature.

6. If a room is the size of 6 *tatami* mats, how big is this?

Counting unit of 畳(*tatami*, straw mat) is 畳(*jou*). One Tatami mat is equal to 1.65 m². Thus, a six-tatami-mat room, a standard size of a bed room in Japan, is about 10 m².

ex)



(*) 和室 (*washitsu*): Japanese-style tatami-floored room

7. Is it possible to share a big apartment with my friend(s)?

Yes it is, only if room-sharing is approved by the landlord (or real estate agent) in advance. In the lease contract “who lives in this apartment” and “how many people live in the apartment” are specified and thus no one else is allowed to share the apartment. Discuss with your roommates and select one person who signs the contract and is legally considered a tenant.

Q&A (after you find an apartment)

1. How can I move my belongings? Is it possible to reserve a moving van?

You can choose one of the following means or combination of some.

- by train
- by shipping service (ex) Yu Pack by Japan Post)
- by taxi
- by moving van

If you have many suitcases and boxes to carry and want to arrange a moving van, ask OSS.

2. Do I need to call utility companies before I move in? How do I pay utility bills?

Yes, you do. A few days before you move in to your new place, call each of the utility suppliers - gas, electricity and water. Their telephone numbers are provided by your real estate agent - either on a side note of your lease contract or inside a plastic bag attached to the door or mailbox.

<**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. On the day the gas valve is opened, you have to be physically at your apartment to meet a representative. You will have to contact the utility provider to set up the account in your name.

<**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** (自動引き落とし, “*jidou hikiotoshi*”) – 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.

3. How do I pay my monthly rent?

A majority of real estate agents (and landlords) prefer bank wire transfer (口座振替 *"kouza furikae"*). Cash payment is exceptional.

4. How can I set up Internet connection in my new apartment?

Some newly-built apartments come with fiber-optical Internet connection. If Internet connection is not built in your apartment, you need to set up your own connection. Call an ISP (ex) nifty, biglobe, OCN) and NTT East (landline owner). On the day the connection is installed, you have to be physically at your apartment to meet a technician.

5. What should I do with my residence card and health insurance card?

- 1) Visit ward (or city) office of your current residence and submit "Moving-out Notice" (転出届 *"tentshutsu todoke"*). You should notify of your move-out at the health insurance desk as well.
- 2) After you move to a new location, within 14 days, you are required to visit the ward (or city) office of your new residence. Submit "Moving-in Notice" (転入届 *"tennyu todoke"*) and update your residence card (new address is written on the back side) After that, visit the health insurance desk to get a new insurance card. Health insurance cost varies per city/ward and they will adjust any over- or under-paid premiums afterwards. You should submit "A Proof of Earnings Form" (国民健康保険簡易申告書 *"kokumin kenko hoken kanni shinkokusyō"*) to maintain a lower fee.

6. Do I need to notify TUJ of my new address? How about cell phone company and bank?

Yes, you do. Renew your address through TU Self Service Banner. If you have a cell phone and a bank account, do not forget to notify them of your new address. The post office also has a mail forwarding service, "Change of Address Notice" (転居届 *"tenkyo todoke"*).

Appendix 1: list of foreigners-friendly and English-speaking realtors

- Note: 1) TUJ does not endorse or recommend any of the following housing options, landlords or rental organizations.
 2) TUJ is not able to function as a relocation service or real estate agency.
 3) TUJ cannot serve as a guarantor for housing.

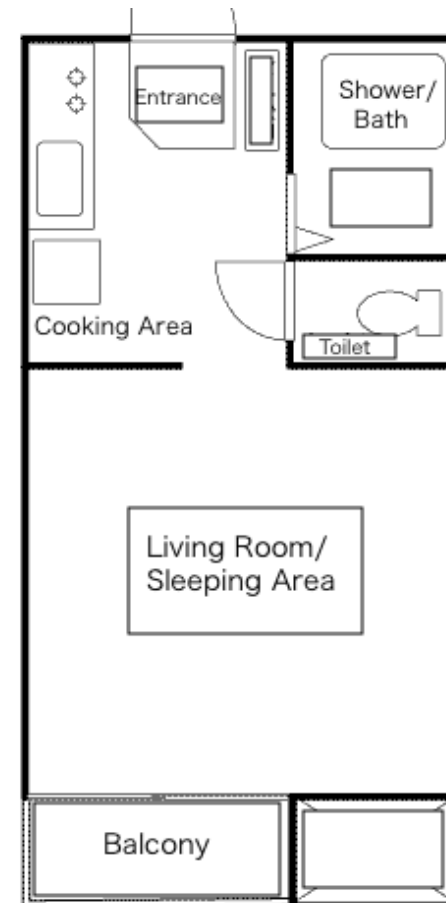
<p>OSS - Office of Student Services</p>	<h3>J&F Plaza</h3> <p>Dagenzaka 225 Building, 8F 2-23-14, Dagenzaka, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-0043</p> <p>03-6455-0360</p> <p>info@jafplaza.com</p> <p>Apartment, Share House</p> <p>Guarantor service included Emergency contact person needed</p> <p>They speak: </p>	<h3>N-ASSET</h3> <p>1-1-3 Hisamoto, Takatsu-ku, Kawasaki-shi, Kanagawa 213-0011</p> <p>044-873-8037</p> <p>eigy@n-asset.com</p> <p>Apartment, Share Houses</p> <p>Guarantor service NOT included Emergency contact person needed</p> <p>They speak: </p>	<h3>RE/MAX J Investment Property</h3> <p>Kaneda Building 6F, 3-16 Koicho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0094</p> <p>03-6261-5136</p> <p>info@jip.tokyo</p> <p>Apartment, Share House</p> <p>Guarantor service included Emergency contact person needed</p> <p>They speak: </p>
<h3>Uninest Student Residences Japan (GSA)</h3> <p>Aiagi Green Hills Mori Tower, 18th Floor, 2-5-1 Aiagi, Minato-ku, Tokyo, 105-6218</p> <p>03-3830-7011</p> <p>info@gsa-gp.com</p> <p>Share House, Dorm</p> <p>Guarantor service included Emergency contact person NOT needed</p> <p>They speak: </p>	<h3>Itochu Urban Community</h3> <p>2-7-1 Nihonbashi Honcho, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 100-0023</p> <p>03-3662-5805</p> <p>gakusei@itc-uc.co.jp</p> <p>Dorm</p> <p>Guarantor service NOT included Emergency contact person NOT needed</p> <p>They speak: </p>	<h3>Dprife Tokyo Apartment</h3> <p>DN Plaza Bldg. 1-16-3 Kitazakae, Urayasu, Chiba 279-0002</p> <p>047-381-0022</p> <p>contact@tokyoapartment-d.com</p> <p>Apartment</p> <p>Guarantor service included Emergency contact person needed</p> <p>They speak: </p>	<h3>SAKURA HOUSE Co., Ltd.</h3> <p>Nishi-Shinjuku K-1 Bldg. 2F, 7-2-6 Nishi-Shinjuku, Shinjuku-Ku, Tokyo 160-0023</p> <p>03-5330-5250</p> <p>info@sakura-house.com</p> <p>Apartment, Share House, Dorm</p> <p>Guarantor service NOT included Emergency contact person needed</p> <p>They speak: </p>
<h3>Fujimi House</h3> <p>M2 Shibuya Fujimi Building, 1-26-26 Higashi, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-0011</p> <p>03-6418-4666</p> <p>info@fujimihouse.jp</p> <p>Apartment, Share House</p> <p>Guarantor service included Emergency contact person needed</p> <p>They speak: </p>	<h3>Hippo House</h3> <p>Human Net Inc. Tokyo Gejutsu Center #1609, 1-4-1 Benju, Adachi-ku, Tokyo 120-0034</p> <p>03-6237-9480</p> <p>hippo@hmn-net.co.jp</p> <p>Share House</p> <p>Guarantor service NOT included Emergency contact person needed</p> <p>They speak: </p>	<h3>Mainichi ComNet</h3> <p>Yaesu dragon name building, 4th Floor, 1-3-22, Yaesu, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 100-0028</p> <p>03-6777-1001</p> <p>sitemaster@maicom.co.jp</p> <p>Apartment, Dorm</p> <p>Guarantor service included Emergency contact person needed</p> <p>They speak: </p>	<h3>Kimi Information Center</h3> <p>Osar Bldg. 8F, 2-42-3 Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku, Tokyo 171-0014</p> <p>03-3986-1604</p> <p>kimiinfo@kimiwillbe.com</p> <p>Apartment, Share House, Dorm</p> <p>Guarantor service included Emergency contact person needed</p> <p>They speak: </p>
<h3>Global Trust Networks</h3> <p>2nd Floor Akiyama Bldg., 1-15-10 Okubo, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 169-0072</p> <p>03-5155-4671</p> <p>agent@gtm.co.jp</p> <p>Apartment, Share House</p> <p>Guarantor service included Emergency contact person needed</p> <p>They speak: </p>	<h3>Finding Apartments in Tokyo and Surrounding Areas</h3> <p>SCAN ME</p>	<h3>Housing FAQ</h3> <p>SCAN ME</p>	<h3>Other questions?</h3> <p>Visit us at OSS Office of Student Services (1F, Room 104)</p> <p>oss@tuj.temple.edu</p>

Appendix 2: room layout

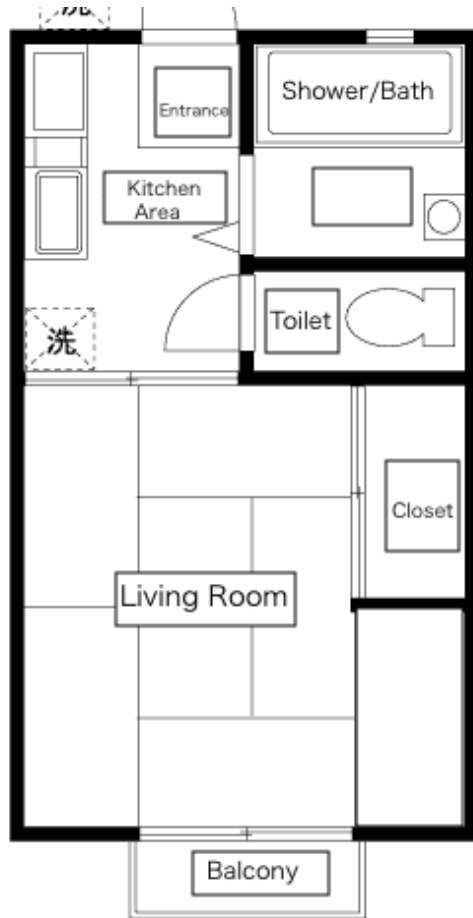
1 Room



1 K (1 Room + Kitchen)



1 DK (1 Room + Dining + Kitchen)



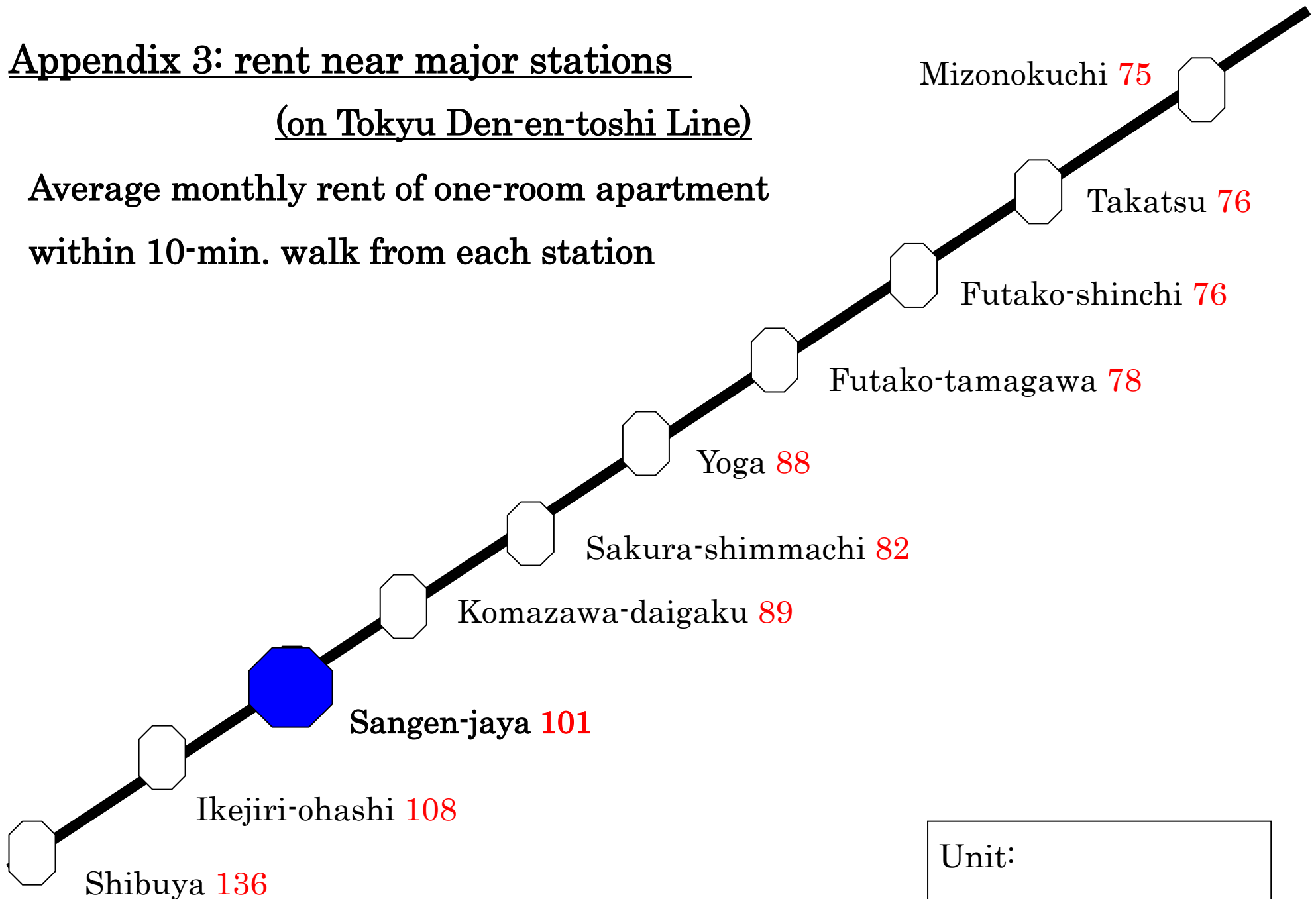
1 LDK (1 Room + Living + Dining + Kitchen)



Appendix 3: rent near major stations

(on Tokyu Den-en-toshi Line)

Average monthly rent of one-room apartment
within 10-min. walk from each station

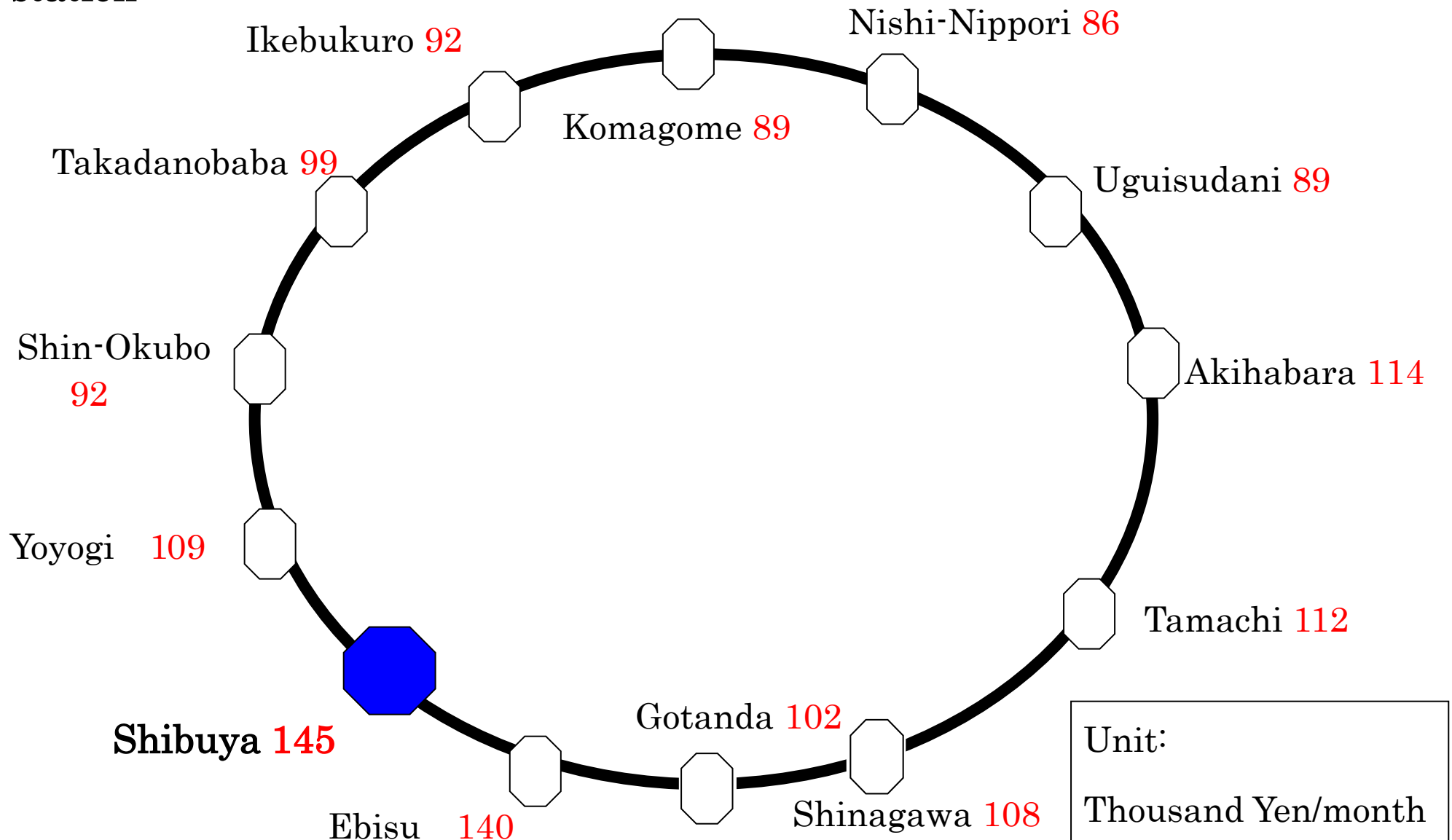


Unit:

Thousand Yen/month

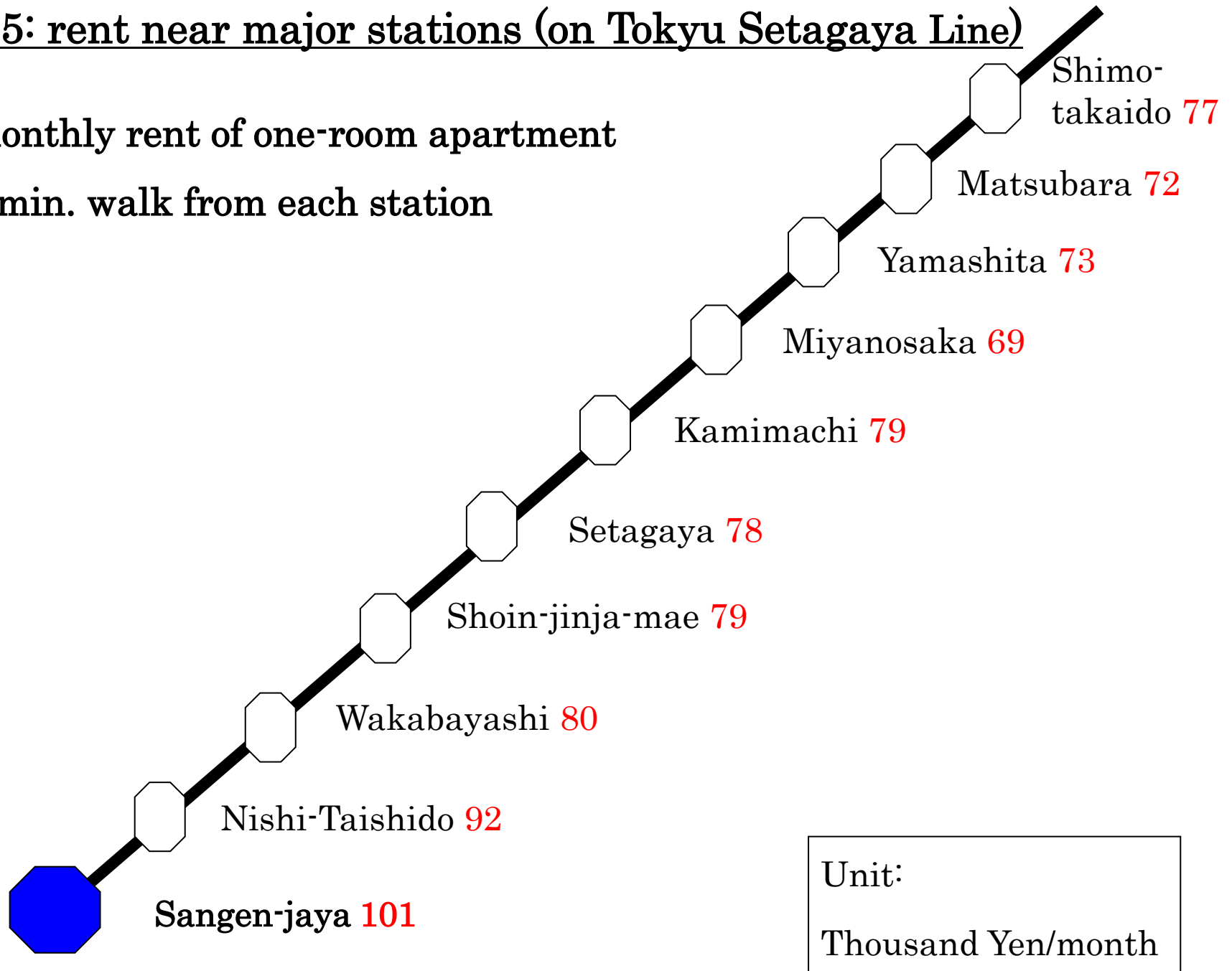
Appendix 4: rent near major stations (on JR Yamanote Line)

Average monthly rent of one-room apartment within 10-min. walk from each station

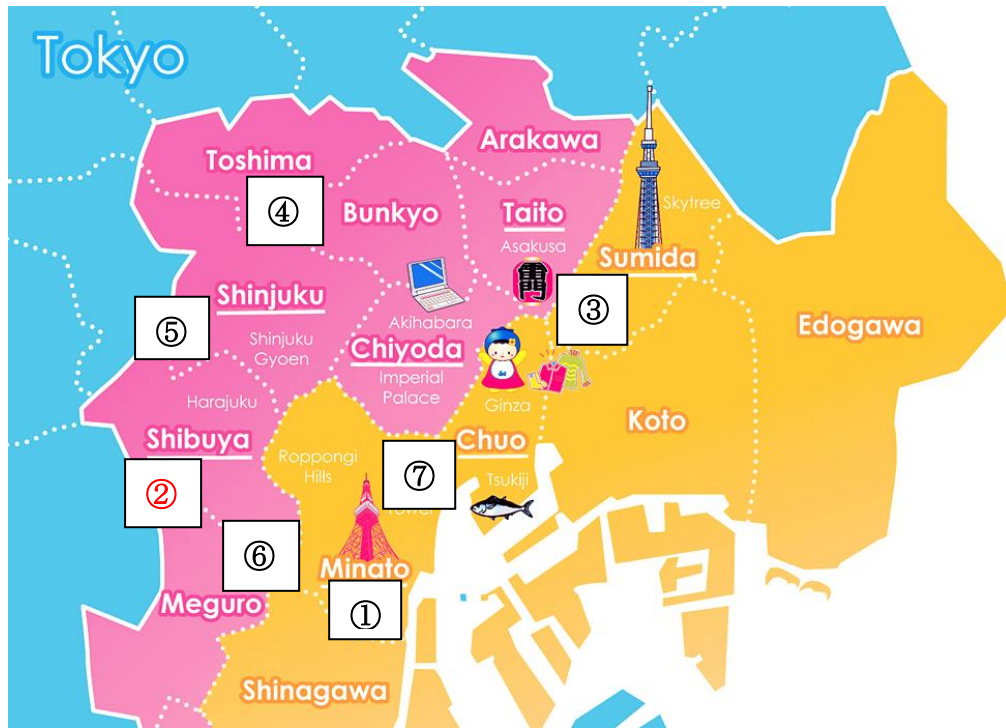


Appendix 5: rent near major stations (on Tokyu Setagaya Line)

Average monthly rent of one-room apartment
within 10-min. walk from each station



Overview of Tokyo Area



Major Locations in Each Area

- ① Azabu 麻布 Mita 三田
- ② Shibuya 渋谷 Ebisu 恵比寿
Sangenjaya 三軒茶屋
- ③ Ueno 上野 Asakusa 浅草
- ④ Ikebukuro 池袋 Nakano 中野
- ⑤ Kouenji 高円寺 Ogikubo 荻窪
Nakano 中野
- ⑥ Gotanda 五反田 Meguro 目黒
- ⑦ Shibaura 芝浦 Shiodome 汐留

2020 Most Popular Towns in Tokyo Metro

Area Source: www.homes.co.jp

#	Location (Station)	Avg. Rent for 1-room Apt. (per month)	Train Line(s)
1	Kichijyoji	¥ 84,500	JR, Keio
2	Ikebukuro	¥ 91,500	JR, Tobu, Seibu, Tokyo Metro
3	Ebisu	¥ 137,600	JR, Tokyo Metro
4	Nakameguro	¥ 125,400	Tokyu, Tokyo Metro
5	Waseda	¥ 81,600	Toden