



JAPAN STYLE SHEET

THIRD EDITION

The SWET Guide
for Writers, Editors,
and Translators

SWET

SOCIETY OF WRITERS, EDITORS, AND TRANSLATORS, TOKYO



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STYLE
SHEET



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SWET SOCIETY OF WRITERS, EDITORS, AND TRANSLATORS

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Preface to the Third Edition

This guide has been compiled to assist writers, editors, and translators working on English-language publications related to Japan. It discusses Japanese names and dates, Japanese words transcribed into the Latin alphabet, and style and editing issues particular to Japan-related material. It offers advice and information useful to translators and researchers in Japanese studies, but is mainly aimed at the needs of editors and writers of material for popular audiences and diverse general purposes.

The first edition of the *Japan Style Sheet* was compiled by SWET members in 1983. It built on the established styles of respected English-language journals and publishing houses then active in Japan. The second edition, published in 1998 and kept in print by Stone Bridge Press for 20 years, responded to the disappearance from the publishing scene of several of the authorities quoted in the first edition. During that time, JSS became widely recognized as a reliable reference work supported by the experience of Japan-based wordsmiths.

The third edition confirms the enduring recommendations of the second edition while updating content affected by the tremendous changes in technology that have taken place over the intervening decades. As we embrace diverse new platforms for the written word, the *Japan Style Sheet* helps to anchor publishing endeavors in the best practices of publishing professionals.

Today, not only trained editors but writers, rewriters, and translators of all kinds can improve the quality of their work by referring to tested editorial practice. The information in this guide is tailored to help in making thoughtful style decisions, whatever the medium or audience.

ABOUT THE SIDEBARS

Throughout this book are sidebars that contain additional commentary about subjects that are discussed in the main text or that are not strictly related to stylistic concerns.

**FOR GENERAL STYLE
QUESTIONS**

Many of the problems writers and editors of Japan-related material need to solve are no different from those occasioned by non-Japan-related texts. The *Chicago Manual of Style* is an excellent guide to nearly every aspect of word publishing and should be consulted for general questions not addressed in this book. The *Chicago Manual* includes some reliable material on handling Japanese, but may be more useful for its discussions of Chinese and other languages frequently encountered by editors of publications related to Japan or Asia.

The text is in two parts. The first covers the mechanics of rendering character-based Japanese into an English environment. The second looks at the various stylistic and technical decisions that need to be made to ensure clarity and consistency. Throughout we provide highlighted recommendations for those seeking a safe, quick, simply stated rule. Bear in mind, however, that stylistic rules generally need a certain amount of fine-tuning depending on the specific character of each project.

The new and improved sections in this edition include notes on how to input diacritical characters, advice on dealing with excessive use of all caps, practical considerations regarding kanji in English text, and cautions about the use of quotation marks in translated material.

The appendices pull together useful guides to areas that are often problematic in editing Japan-related text, including periodization and era-name dating, geography, and conversion of Japanese measurements and large numbers into their Western equivalents. Those in need of specialized information should consult other reliable sources (see **Further Resources** at japanstylesheet.com).

As an organization of professionals working with the English language in Japan, SWET hopes this guide will help our colleagues working in many countries and genres to make informed choices and to set high editorial standards for their publications.

Society of Writers, Editors, and Translators

Tokyo, Japan

Getting Oriented

This guide should be used in conjunction with a major style manual such as the *Chicago Manual of Style*. A reliable dictionary such as the latest edition of *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* will settle most questions of spelling, hyphenation, and other points. The *Monumenta Nipponica Style Sheet*, available online, offers detailed advice useful for scholarly works.

When working with Japan-related texts, you will probably encounter issues in four general areas:

Handling of Japanese words rendered in the Latin alphabet.

The basic Japanese romanization rules are straightforward and relatively simple, as shown in the appendices, but questions about italicization, capitalization, positioning of parentheses, quotation marks, punctuation, and other such treatment of romanized words/text may not be sufficiently covered in general style guides. For details, see **Transliterating Japanese**. A few issues to be aware of include the following:

Macrons. Will macrons (ā, ī, ū, ē, ō), indicating an extended vowel sound, be used or not? Popular texts (such as guidebooks) often omit them, but their use is recommended for scholarly or other specialized texts since they provide a useful aid to authentic pronunciation of Japanese. If diacritical marks are used for other languages (such as Sanskrit or Chinese) that appear romanized in a text, then macrons should be used for Japanese as well. See **Long Vowels**.

Hyphenation. Hyphenation in romanized words and titles is a helpful aid, but too many hyphens can be unwieldy. See **Hyphens**.

Place names. Standard usage in Japanese includes an administrative suffix for prefectural, city, town, and village names, such as Nagano-ken, Sapporo-shi, Karuizawa-machi, and Ono-mura. These are usually dropped in the English text. Readings of place names can also be tricky. See **Place Names**.

Differences in conventions between Japanese and English.

Here are some of the issues that are likely to come to your attention:

All caps for corporate names. See **Capitalization**. Japanese texts frequently include words in all-capped roman letters, which may be directly transferred in translation; you may want to suggest modifying them to initial cap only.

Large numbers. In converting large numbers from Japanese to English, it is all too easy to skip or add a digit. Double-check all conversions against the original. See **Numbers** (in the Appendices) for assistance.

Lists. Lists should follow a sequence that is logical to readers of English. This may sometimes entail altering the sequence used in the Japanese text to alphabetical order in English.

Name order. Customary name order for Japanese, Chinese, and Korean names is surname first. In Western contexts, Japanese people often switch their names to the Western order; but if the text also includes historical names, things may get complex. See **Personal Names**.

Quotation marks. Usage of *kagi-kakkō* marks (「・」or 『・』) in Japanese does not always correspond to usage of quotation marks in English, and automatically converting one to the other may cause unintended consequences. See **Quotation Marks**.

Content and organization. If the text has been translated from Japanese into English, issues of logic, clarity, and expression may remain. Every translation benefits from the work of a knowledgeable checker and a skilled editor. Accuracy and readability can be facilitated by collaboration between a native Japanese and a native English speaker working together with the support of the author or an expert on the subject. The following items frequently require particular attention:

Accuracy. Ideally, the translation should have been reviewed by a knowledgeable checker; if not, the editor or some other qualified person may need to make sure, at minimum, that readings of personal and other names are correct by referring to standard or “official” sources.

Adjusting content. If the original text was geared to a Japanese audience while the translation is for an international readership, some adjustments may be needed, such as dropping details of little or no significance to non-Japanese readers and adding supplementary information not included because it is common knowledge among Japanese.

Headings and titles. Titles in Japanese are sometimes dense summaries of the text that follows, and may need to be transformed into something short and catchy to better match English conventions. If a text has too many headings or if the headings are overly wordy, inconsistent, or illogical, consider possible ways to better organize or consolidate the content of the text.

Rhetorical issues. The logical flow of information and styles of presentation and argumentation differ between the two languages, often requiring a restructuring of sequences. The meaning of the original should be conveyed in a way that readers of English can easily follow, using language appropriate to the context.

Layout and appearance. Your awareness of what makes an English text attractive from the viewpoint of text layout, design, and typography may be a valuable asset to clients who have limited experience with English-language publishing. In addition to checking layout issues such as paragraphing style, word division, and page breaks, watch out for the following:

Choice of typeface and point size. Good design in English texts tends to call for a simple palette of one or two typefaces (one for display type and one for the text) and standard point sizes. Be sure to mention any typographical or other design-related concerns to the client and suggest solutions.

Alignment and word space. Some suggestions may give the finished product a more professional look: a flush-left line under a title or subtitle, careful hyphenation or calibration of a ragged-right margin, fine-tuning of the word-space settings in the design software, fewer paragraphs.

Transliterating Japanese

Editing English-language texts that include Japanese words requires a certain amount of technical knowledge about romanization. There are two major systems of romanization in use today—Hepburn and Kunrei—with scattered exceptions and words that are still spelled in archaic romanized forms. This section explains these systems, how they are used, and how to “fine-tune” them for specialized or general material.

Skillful editing of Japanese words in English texts involves both flexible use of available rules and knowledge of the practices appropriate for a particular subject matter or genre of writing. One set of rules may be preferred for texts in art history, another for writing in the social sciences, and yet another for international news or sports writing. Editors, authors, designers, and typographers must also consult with each other to coordinate their preferences and requirements.

Careful and consistent romanization is particularly desirable in specialized or scholarly writings about Japan. Accurate transcription of bibliographical data for Japanese references, for example, makes it possible for readers to more readily locate works for further research. For this reason, editors may decide to use macrons to mark long or extended vowels, to insert apostrophes to aid correct syllabification, and to exercise extra care with hyphens and word division.

The phonetic units from which Japanese words are composed are limited in number, so romanization is relatively straightforward. However, texts with numerous names, technical terms, and bibliographical data can present unexpected problems.

USING KANJI IN ENGLISH TEXT

Except in specialized publications it is generally unnecessary to use actual Japanese characters (kanji) instead of their romanized equivalents. Kanji may be used in text discussions pertaining to language, of course, or in bibliographies intended for researchers. In running text, kanji characters should appear immediately after the words or titles they correspond to. (For details see **Kanji in English Text.**)

ROMANIZATION SYSTEMS

- Use the Hepburn romanization system to transliterate Japanese words.
- Respect established variants.

Hepburn System

Also called the Hyōjun system, the Hepburn system (Hebonshiki) is the most widely used method of romanization. It was named after James C. Hepburn, the nineteenth-century American missionary, and propagated through his *Japanese and English Dictionary* (1867). Based on English consonants and Italian and German vowels, the Hepburn system is used by all the major English-language publishers, academic presses, journals, and newspapers that work closely with Japan or Japanese topics. It is used by all the Japanese-English dictionaries with romanized entries. We support its use as providing the closest approximation to accurate pronunciation of Japanese for the general English reader.

TABLE OF THE HEPBURN SYSTEM

A table showing the complete Hepburn system of romanization appears on pages 64–65 in the **Appendices**.

Kunrei System

Adopted as the official romanization system of Japan in 1937, the Kunrei system is taught in Japanese schools and is used by the National Diet Library. Advocates believe it best reflects the phonemic structure of Japanese, but it is rarely seen in publications.

Nippon System

The Nippon romanization system, predating Kunrei, was used mainly in the prewar period. Its main differences from the Kunrei system are the use of *kwa* for *ka*, *gwa* for *ga*, and *wo* for *o*.

Common Variants

Editors may see variant romanizations used in certain words and proper names that reflect historical convention or a particular individual's personal preference. In these cases, the variant may be used regardless of the romanization system used elsewhere in the publication.

HEPBURN ROMANIZATION	VARIANT
Chichibu (mountains)	Titibu
en	yen
Inoue	Inouye
Kansai Gakuin University	Kwansai Gakuin University
Mt. Fuji	Mt. Huzi
Itō	Itoh
Reiko	Leiko
Suzuki Daisetsu	Suzuki Daisetz
kaidan	<i>Kwaidan</i> (title of English publication by Lafcadio Hearn)

ROMANIZATION SYSTEM NOTE

In academic publications, editors often choose to advise readers as to the romanization system used throughout and any special variants or exceptions. This note generally belongs in the author's or translator's preface, but it can appear at the first instance of a Japanese word in the text or even on the copyright page.

LONG VOWELS

- Use macrons to represent long vowels and other diacritics in publications for specialists, or when the words are important in a linguistic sense.
- Omit macrons and other diacritics in general material or when using them causes production problems.

DOES THE WORD HAVE A MACRON OR NOT?

Whether a word includes a long vowel or not can be ascertained by using any reliable Japanese or Japanese-English dictionary. See **Further References**. Texts in which macrons are used should be checked very carefully through the final proof-reading stage, as consistency of usage is essential (and mistakes are easy to make). Proof-readers and editors should keep detailed style sheets to guard against the omission of macrons or their improper use in apparent homophones.

Japanese phonetics are relatively simple, with five vowels (*a*, *i*, *u*, *e*, and *o*) that can be pronounced short or long. How to handle long vowels is an editorial decision, the crux of which is: Should you indicate long vowels or ignore them?

Macrons: Long Marks

Macrons are bars over vowels that indicate a long vowel (that is, one that is voiced longer; the actual vowel sound of a long vowel is the same as its corresponding short form). In transliterated texts, macrons make it easier to determine, for example, whether a word means “bird” (*tori*) or “street” (*tōri*). Because the Hepburn system favors their use for encouraging correct pronunciation, macrons are widely found in publications where this is a concern of authors and readers, mainly in books in the social sciences and humanities, journals and newsletters oriented to Japan specialists, and writings on culture and the arts for people with specialized interests. In lists of references in a scholarly work it is especially helpful to have macrons included.

Shujin no shōmei (*The Husband's Testimony*)

Shūjin no shōmei (*The Prisoner's Testimony*)

Edo no kozō (*Boys of Edo*)

Edo no kōzō (*The Structure of Edo*)

Nihon shoseki sōmokuroku (*Comprehensive Catalog of Japanese Books*)

Nihon shōseki sōmokuroku (*Comprehensive Catalog of Japanese Evidence*)

O and u are the most commonly found long vowels in Japanese. In loanwords, however, any vowel can be elongated.

bīru	<i>beer</i> (<i>but</i> biru [<i>building</i>])
konpyūtā	<i>computer</i>
bēsubōru	<i>baseball</i>
Māfi no hōsoku	<i>Murphy's law</i>

Arguments in Favor of Macrons

A macron, though it may be unfamiliar to English speakers, distinguishes different sounds in Japanese and encourages more accurate pronunciation of Japanese words.

There are many homonyms in Japanese, and there appear to be even more when the distinction between long and short vowels is not indicated. With careful use of macrons, the meaning of the romanized original is often clearer than without. For example, a best-selling book in 1993 was *Ōkami bugyō*. With the macron it is fairly clear that the meaning of *ōkami* is “wolf”; without a macron, it might at first be confused with the word *okami*, which can mean either “officialdom” or “the wife/mistress/matron.” This title was rendered as “The Wolf Town Commissioner.” A book entitled *Rōjin* is definitely about “Old People,” but one called *Rojin* could be about the Chinese writer Lu Xun.

Without a macron or other contrivance, some Japanese words look like English words, as is the case of Japan’s classical theater, which can be transcribed No, Nō, Noh, *nō*, or *noh*, but preferably not simply “no.”

A BRIEF GUIDE TO PRONOUNCING JAPANESE

Editors or writers without prior knowledge of Japanese may find they have to talk to or ask others about problematic Japanese words and names. Fortunately, the Hepburn system makes the relationship between sound and symbol relatively transparent, at least for English speakers. The following tips will help make sure your pronunciations are understood by others.

CONSONANT SOUNDS

Japanese consonant sounds are pronounced as they are spelled in the Hepburn system.

Single and double consonants are distinguished: *hato*, *hatto*; *Rikuchū*, *Bitchū*.

Y after a consonant indicates a “palatalized” sound.

F is pronounced with slight lip rounding, not with the teeth and lower lip.

R is pronounced with a flap.

N represents two sounds: *n* at the beginning of a syllable, as in *Nagasaki*, and *n* as a syllable in its own right, with a sound more like a nasal vowel (*Shinbashi*).

VOWEL SOUNDS

Japanese has five short vowels and five long vowels. Short vowels are clipped; long vowels are not drawled. As represented in Hepburn, the vowels have “European” values:

a as in “a capella”

i as in “pique”

u as in “schnook”

e as in “Estonia”

o as in “au pair”

Between voiceless consonants in an unaccented syllable, vowels *i* and *u* are devoiced or whispered (so Tsukuba Daigaku つくば大学 would be tsu KU BA DA i ga ku).

ACCENT AND EMPHASIS

In English, one syllable gets a “hammer-like” stress. In Japanese, syllables have either high or low pitch, but the difference between them is more subtle. If the first syllable is high-pitched, all others are low. If the first syllable is low-pitched, the second is high, and after that the pitch remains high or falls, depending on the word. When in doubt the “tsuNAMI” pattern is a safe guess. In “real” Japanese, the place names Roppongi, Shinjuku, Nakano are roPPONGI, shiNJUKU, naKANO, not ropPONGgi, shinJUku, naKAno.

Arguments against Macrons

Some publishers of newspapers and many magazines, even those that deal specifically with Japan, do not use macrons, believing that they confuse or alienate readers. Another consideration is that macrons must be used consistently—always or never—and it may be difficult to check or query every unfamiliar term. Also figuring in the decision are extra costs, typographic difficulties, and proofreading problems. If readers’ interest in pronouncing Japanese words is minimal, the effort it takes to make sure all the macrons are present, and in the right places, may seem wasted. This is usually the case for texts in which most romanized Japanese is avoided in the first place because of the difficulties it creates.

Inputting Macrons in Manuscript Files

Today diacritic characters not only for European languages but also for romanized Chinese, Korean, Sanskrit, and other Asian languages are relatively easy to insert at the manuscript and design/layout stage. Vowels with macrons as well as the subscript and superscript dots for Sanskrit and the breve for romanized Korean can be input from the keyboard or selected from available character sets. Diacritics are sometimes used for romanized Chinese to provide information on the tones (e.g., is Dizàng Púsà, Chinese for Jizō Bosatsu), but mainly in specialized China-related academic publications.

Inputting macrons and other diacritics from the keyboard is now quite easy on either Mac or Windows equipment:

For Mac computers running on operating system of Lion (10.7) or above, when set for the appropriate keyboard (see below) simply hold down a vowel and a pop-up menu of diacritical characters will appear. The U.S. Extended (or ABC Extended) keyboard should be selected. Note that the computer’s input source should be in the correct setting (U.S. Extended “language”

checked under System Preferences > Language and Text > Input Source).

Windows systems come pre-installed with a program called Character Map (*charmap.exe*), which allows users to copy/paste all manner of macrons and kanji into their documents. To open the *charmap* utility, enter the term *charmap* in the Start/Run dialog box. Users of Microsoft Notepad and Wordpad rather than Microsoft Word can copy/paste macrons and kanji from *charmap*, but when saving the file (select “Save As”) the proper encoding format—“Unicode”—must be chosen to retain the macrons and/or kanji. To minimize the time spent searching *charmap* for the correct diacritic, open a new document in Microsoft Word, Notepad, or Wordpad, copy/paste all the needed *charmap* macrons into that document, and then save the file in “Unicode” format. Next time you need the diacritics, simply open your Unicode file and copy/paste the diacritics into any other document. For example, those working with Japan-related texts would create a simple template file with only four diacritics — ō ū Ū Ū.

Diacritics Input Chart for Mac Users

Accent	Sample	Input sequence
Macron	Ō ō Ū ū	Option + a, letter
Breve	Ö ö Ŭ ŭ	Option + b, letter
Circumflex	Ê ê	Option + 6, letter
Subscript dot	ş ş	Option + x, letter
Superscript dot	š š	Option + w, letter
Grave accent*	È è	Option ` + letter
Acute accent	É é Š š	Option + e, letter

*The grave accent may be at the far upper right next to the number 1, at the far lower right next to the shift key, or next to the letter P, depending on the keyboard.

MACRONS IN ANGLICIZED WORDS

Even in texts that use macrons, it is common practice to omit them in Japanese words fully acculturated in English, such as judo and sumo, and in widely known place names like Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, and Honshu. A partial list of anglicized Japanese words appears in the section **Italics** on page 35.

Other Long-Vowel Markers

The Circumflex

Instead of the macron, the circumflex was once used as a quick and easy way to indicate long vowels. A circumflex is defined by Webster's as "a mark . . . used in Greek over long vowels to indicate a rising-falling tone and in other languages to mark length, contraction, or a particular vowel quality," so it cannot be called wrong usage, but many editors and specialists try to avoid it.

Hōryūji temple bēsubōru

The circumflex can be used as a stand-in for the macron and then digitally swapped out during layout.

Doubled Letters

As in the Kunrei system, a long vowel may be indicated by doubling the letter: *aa, ii, uu, ee, oo* (also seen as *ou*). This can be clumsy, however, if the word contains the same vowels in succession.

Takeo Jōō *but* Takeo Joōō *or* Takeo Jouou

Nonetheless, when long vowels are required and it is difficult to get satisfactory typographical results for macrons on *a, e, or i*, the doubled letter may be the best choice.

biiru (*beer*) fantajii (*fantasy*)
erebeetaa (*elevator*) raamen (*noodles*)

Oh, Oh

A solution to the long-vowel problem often adopted for *ō* is the use of *oh*, as in "Noh." (The romanization *uh* for *ū* is never seen, however.) Most frequently seen examples of *oh* are in names.

Ohmae Ken'ichi Ōmae Ken'ichi

Ohoka Echizen no Kami
Andoh Tadao

Ōoka Echizen no Kami
Andō Tadao

Some Japanese prefer this variant romanization, particularly if they are active internationally in business, journalism, or sports, because they feel the *oh* makes their names easier to pronounce.

When citing a work published under a nonstandard romanization you should follow the style of the original publication. When simply referring to a well-known Japanese individual who is widely known by a variant romanization, the choice is less easy, although our preference would be to offer the name in the form readers are likely to find most familiar. Many people of Japanese ancestry who live outside Japan also use variant spellings that of course must be adhered to, regardless of the system of romanization otherwise used throughout the work.

Macron Character Findability in Web Documents

Some search engines (Google, Bing, etc.) “differentiate” between a macron character and the same character without a macron. So, for example, a search for the deity “Jizō” will yield different results than a search for the same deity written as “Jizo.” Also, most Internet readers do not know how to use macrons to conduct searches and would search “Jizo” rather than “Jizō.”

What can be done about this? Writers who want their work to be “found” by Internet searches may use the correct spelling “Jizō” throughout the main body of the text, but also “hide” the incorrect spelling, “Jizo,” inside the document: (1) as image alt-tags for each photo of the deity appearing on the page; (2) as a meta-tag keyword (needed just once); and, whenever possible or feasible, (3) in a visible note in the main body giving the two spellings. Use all three strategies on any single URL page address for best results. This technique can improve the “findability” by the general public and specialists alike if macrons are used.

In the field of art history, use of the *m* was conventional for words like Tempyō (the era in history) and Rimpa (the school of painting) for a long time. Scholars in art and religion—and those who write on cultural topics—may prefer to use the *m*, but the recent tendency is to be consistent by using the *n* in all cases.

Exceptions

Place Names

Note that there are place names and words whose romanizations have, through usage or sense, established themselves regardless of the hard and fast rules of the *n* and *m* schools.

Nihonbashi	<i>not</i>	Nihombashi
shuppanbutsu	<i>not</i>	shuppambutsu
kinenbi	<i>not</i>	kinembi
higanbana	<i>not</i>	higambana
senbazuru	<i>not</i>	sembazuru (<i>although this is seen</i>)

Especially in compound names and words like “Nihonbashi” (a Tokyo place name), *shuppanbutsu* (“published works”), and *kinenbi* (“commemoration day”), tinkering with a romanized spelling that has become well established is discouraged. (Note that using a hyphen in a compound like “Nihon-bashi” visually severs the *m*-sounding *n* from the following *b*; in this case, even in a document that prefers the *m*, the *n* can be safely used on the grounds of clarity and sense.)

Company Names

A number of companies and organizations prefer the use of *m* in their English names.

Asahi Shimbun

Toyo Keizai Shimposha

APOSTROPHES

- Use the apostrophe when the publication is for specialists or when precise word distinctions are important.

While the apostrophe is used in English to indicate contraction of words or the possessive, in romanized Japanese it clarifies meaning and serves to make the division of syllables distinct.

Man'yōshū Jōshin'etsu Jun'ichirō

The apostrophe also helps avoid confusion in words that would otherwise look like homonyms. You can use an apostrophe after the syllabic *n* to indicate that the *n* is not the initial consonant in the following syllable.

chin'atsu (<i>oppression</i>)	but Chinatsu (<i>a girl's name</i>)
kin'yū (<i>finance</i>)	but kinyū (<i>write in</i>)
tan'ī (<i>unit</i>)	but tani (<i>valley</i>)
zen'ī (<i>good will</i>)	but zeni (<i>coin, money</i>)

DOUBLED "I" IN ADJECTIVES

The citation form of Japanese adjectives always ends in the letter *i*. When the preceding syllable also ends in *i* (most often the syllable *shi*), the result is a word ending in *ii*. A macron should never be used over a single *i* in this case. Nor should the *ii* be written as *īī*.

oishii kibishii

Note that the question of apostrophe usage arises only when the following syllable begins with a *y* or a vowel. Two major dictionary publishers, *Kenkyusha* and *Sanseidō*, use apostrophes when necessary to indicate “when a vowel or *ya*, *yu*, or *yo* is preceded by an *n*.”

When to Use the Apostrophe

Historians, scholarly publishers, librarians, and writers addressing “specialist” audiences—those whose professions require careful romanization—should use the apostrophe.

When Not to Use the Apostrophe

General writers and journalists may opt *not* to use the apostrophe, since such minute linguistic distinctions may not be understood and can be distracting to the reader. The apostrophe may also be dropped when there is no ready reference source for verifying correct usage.

When There Are Two Adjacent Vowels

Some writers and publications use an apostrophe or hyphen to separate two vowels.

Go'e'mon

go'on

Ni'imura

This should not be necessary, however, since the pronunciation of Japanese vowels is consistent.

HYPHENS

- Use hyphens sparingly.
- Watch out for word division errors, especially in electronically set type.

Hyphens are sometimes used to divide romanized words into meaningful units as an aid to understanding and pronunciation. But because the separation of words (i.e., morphological units) in Japanese is not always obvious, there have been no standard rules for using hyphens, and usage has been inconsistent. In the past, the hyphen was used quite frequently, as in

Hō-gaku-bu (*Faculty of Law*)

keizai-teki (*economic*)

Nanzen-ji (*temple name*)

shihon-shugi-shi (*history of capitalism*)

JUN-ICHI OR JUN'ICHI?

In romanized Japanese, the hyphen generally marks a break between two units of meaning, while the apostrophe indicates a pronunciation break after the syllabic *n*. Thus, “Jun’ichi” is the correct romanized form of the personal name. Some individuals, however, may be sticklers regarding the use of hyphens in their own names. Especially if they have been published with their name in that form previously, you should honor their preferred spellings, even at the expense of consistency.

Today the editorial trend is toward eliminating the hyphen (perhaps reflecting the English move away from hyphens) wherever possible, opting instead for either two separate words or a single, unhyphenated word.

Hōgakubu

keizaiteki

Nanzenji

shihonshugishi or shihonshugi shi

In Common Nouns and Compounds

Writers and editors of materials in the social sciences, bibliographers, and librarians are constantly confronted with a plethora of short suffixes: *-teki*, *-gaku*, *-ron*, *-ka*, *-den*, *-shū*, and *-shi*, for example. To avoid unsightly type, suffixes to common

nouns are best run together with their root words.

tensaiteki	kindaika	sekaishi
jinruigaku	eiūden	ningenzō
shinkaron	mondaishū	sekaikan

When the root word is a proper noun or already a compound word, dividing the word with a space (instead of a hyphen) facilitates identification of the root.

Nihonjinron teki	Izumo no kuni	Chūgoku shi
------------------	---------------	-------------

Spaces should also be used when you need to divide up unmanageably long and unpronounceable terms into shorter meaningful units.

kaigai shinshutsu kigyō sōran
<i>not</i> kaigai-shinshutsu-kigyō-sōran

In Personal Names

Hyphens should be used to set off honorific suffixes in personal names.

Watanabe-san (<i>Mr./Ms. Watanabe</i>)
Miyo-chan (<i>diminutive Miyo</i>)
Ikeda-kun (<i>young/junior colleague Ikeda</i>)

For other status- or position-identifying terms, treat the suffix as a separate, capitalized word.

Tanaka Buchō (<i>Section Chief Tanaka</i>)
Koide Sensei (<i>teacher/master Koide</i>)
Minami Senpai (<i>senior colleague/schoolmate Minami</i>)

COMMON PREFIXES FOUND IN JAPANESE ADDRESSES

The following prefixes are often used in Japanese addresses to divide large districts into smaller areas. In such cases, hyphens serve as convenient separators in English-language text.

kita-	<i>north</i>
minami-	<i>south</i>
nishi-	<i>west</i>
higashi-	<i>east</i>
shin-	<i>new</i>
moto-	<i>old</i>
kami-	<i>upper</i>
shimo-	<i>lower</i>
naka-	<i>middle, inner</i>

In Place Names

Hyphens are often used to set off suffixes in place names, particularly when the suffix represents a formal geopolitical division.

Nagano-ken (*Nagano prefecture*)

Suginami-ku (*Suginami ward*)

Takamatsu-shi (*city of Takamatsu*)

Yamada-chō (*town of Yamada*)

LOGICAL HYPHENATION RULES

For a well-tested and codified style sheet for handling the romanization of Japanese using the Hepburn system, see the U.S. Library of Congress guide (<http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsol/romanization/japanese.pdf>).

The LC rules, which are also used in Canada and to some extent in the U.K., have been in existence in their current form since the 1980s (and seem to go back to guidelines drawn up in 1959). They are continually updated for grammatical logic, readability, and consistency based on recommendations from the Council on East Asian Libraries Committee on Technical Processing. These rules are widely followed by editors of scholarly and commercial books about Japan.

There is much disagreement about the proper use of hyphens when writing out addresses. Take the following addresses, each of which can be transcribed three different ways:

Kami Kōya	Nishi Shinjuku	Shimo Ochiai
Kami-Kōya	Nishi-Shinjuku	Shimo-Ochiai
Kami-kōya	Nishi-shinjuku	Shimo-ochiai

In these cases, geographical considerations as well as typographical preferences can help you decide which form to use. If you don't like hyphens, avoid them. If there is a Kami (“upper”) and a Shimo (“lower”) pair of districts, the “Kami” is clearly a prefix and the hyphen can be justified. If “Kamikōya” is clearly one word in local parlance, no doubt the hyphen is artificial. Whether to use a hyphen with the often-seen *chō* or *machi* (a suffix denoting a village or small district) is up to personal preference. There are no hard and fast rules, *but you must be consistent*. For more about place names and addresses, see the section **Place Names**.

Vernacular Style

You can safely dispense with hyphens in place names with suffixes—such as temple names, mountains, and rivers—expressed in vernacular style unless there is reason to call attention to the suffix.

Hasedera Tōdaiji Asamayama Yodogawa

One reason for this is that these words are not considered divisible. “Tōdai temple,” for example, is so rarely heard and sounds so odd that it might be considered a temple different from the famous religious complex in Nara. Hasedera, also, is a proper name in and of itself; we would not say “Hase temple.” Names of mountains and rivers in the local vernacular would be expressed as one word: Fujisan, Asamayama, Yodogawa. A more international approach might be to call them Mt. Fuji, Mt. Asama, the Yodo River.

With Country-Name Compounds

Romanization is tricky when treaties or relationships between two countries are referred to, since Japanese writers often employ single-character combining forms like *Nichi* (from *Nihon*) for Japan, *Bei* (*Beikoku*) for the United States, *Chū* (*Chūgoku*) for China, and so on. Usually the romanized syllables denoting each country can be put side by side separated by a hyphen or en dash, but in some compounds editors dispense with the dash to reflect the pronunciation of the combined form in Japanese.

Nichi-Bei (*Japan-U.S.*) *Nit-Chū/Nitchū* (*Japan-China*)

Nichi-Ō (*Japan-Europe*) *Nis-So/Nisso* (*Japan-Soviet*)

Word Division

Computerized typesetting often produces unacceptable word divisions in romanized Japanese. Extra care must be taken in proofreading. If a place name, personal name, or other Japanese word must be divided at the end of a line, the ideal place to divide is between the elements (kanji characters) used to write the word in the original Japanese. For example, in the case of the city name Matsuyama, written with two characters (“pine” + “mountain”), this would mean dividing the word as *Matsu/yama*.

Most Japanese syllables end with a vowel; the rest end with the syllabic *n* as in the word “Shinkansen.” When Japanese words

HYPHENATION HELP

The algorithms used in most word processing and DTP programs invariably break the syllable *tsu* in the wrong place: *mat-su* instead of *ma-tsu*. Once text is set in type be sure to recheck all line endings for errors. To speed the process, add frequently used words to your custom hyphenation dictionaries. Also note the following:

Ja-pan

but

Japa-nese

Many experienced editors assiduously avoid the potentially offensive “Jap-” at the end of a line, although according to most dictionaries and spelling guides such hyphenation is permissible.

are very long and space is limited, or if you are unfamiliar with the characters, the rule of thumb is to divide after a vowel or after the syllabic *n*, according to the Japanese syllabary.

Ma/tsu/ya/ma

Shin/kan/sen

A division to be avoided, therefore, is *Mat/suyama* (see sidebar). Japanese syllables can be determined using the Hepburn romanization chart on pages 64–65.

Matters of Style

Compared with the relatively straightforward rules for transliterating Japanese, the guidelines for the handling of Japanese words as part of English text are by no means absolute. Each writer or editor must create a style matrix for each publication based on the readership, preferences of the author(s), and content. This section outlines the options that writers and editors can draw on in making style decisions, particularly for macron use, italicization, and name order (Japanese or Western).

Style decisions must of course be made with a realistic appraisal of the situation. If macrons are going to be used, is the author available to check them? If all Japanese terms are italicized every time, will the pages be littered with words in italics? If Western name order is adopted, what happens when the name of a historical figure like Toyotomi Hideyoshi crops up?

Do you want a style that emphasizes the specialized nature of the material or deemphasizes it? For example, a newspaper article about current business trends in Japan might talk about “keiretsu,” “kanban” systems, and “Kayabacho” as if these words were an accepted part of the English language. A scholarly book about the history of management practices might require the use of stricter notation, italicizing the first two nouns and adding a macron to the third word, a place name: Kayabachō.

Many Japanese words are already part of the English language; others are borderline, and the rest are still considered foreign. The following sections can help you decide where to draw the line between romanization and English, how to decide whether certain words are proper nouns, and how to handle plurals and other copyediting minutiae.

EDITING SPECIALIZED CONTENT

When working on a specialized text, you may come across some words that are very well known in the West and others that are hardly known at all. For example, a text on Japanese poetry might mix common and uncommon terms like *haiku*, *tanka*, *renga*, *renku*, *waka*, *haikai*, *kyōka*, and so on. You may italicize all the Japanese words, none of them, or only those that are not in your English dictionary of choice.

ITALICS

- **In general, follow the italicization rules for English.**
- **Italicize all Japanese words except those that have been anglicized. After its first appearance, an italicized Japanese word that appears frequently in the text can be set in roman (non-italic) type.**

General Rules for Italicization

In general, apply the rules of italicization used for English (see the *Chicago Manual of Style*). Titles of books, periodicals, and other published materials should be italicized.

CLASSICS: *Taiheiki*, *Man'yōshū*

CONTEMPORARY BOOKS: *No! to ieru Nihon*

MAGAZINES: *Bungei shunjū*

OTHER PUBLICATIONS: *Keizai hakusho*

Proper nouns (i.e., names of persons, places, families, organizations, institutions, schools of thought or art, or eras) are usually *not* italicized, except when used in a generic sense.

PERSONAL NAMES: Morita Akio, Murasaki Shikibu, Misora Hibari

PLACE NAMES: Tōhoku, Suemura, Enoshima, Chūbu region

FAMILY NAMES: Tachibana, Fujita, Kikuchi, Miyamoto

SCHOOLS OF ART OR THOUGHT: Kokugaku, Rinpa school, Urasenke

HISTORICAL ERAS AND PERIODS: Asuka, Sengoku, Kyōhō, Meiji, Heisei

ORGANIZATIONS: Fujin no Tomo no Kai, Keidanren, Toyota Zaidan,

Koguma-za

Anglicized Words

Japanese words used in an English sentence are usually italicized, except for those that have entered the English language. (These anglicized words may, of course, still be italicized where desired for emphasis or when the content is very specialized.) The test of anglicization is appearance in the standard English-language dictionary of your choice. The selection of these loanwords differs from one dictionary to another, so in the end you must make a subjective judgment about whether the readers of a particular publication need the italic flag. Anglicized words do not use macrons; however, Japanese words set in roman (non-italic) type may use macrons or not. Here is a list of some of the many Japanese words commonly anglicized:

aikido	ikebana	kimono	shakuhachi
anime	jinrikisha	koan	shiatsu
banzai	judo	koto	shoji
bonsai	jujitsu	manga	soroban
daikon	kabuki	mikado	sukiyaki
daimyo	kami	netsuke	sumo
genro	kanban	obi	sushi
haikai	kanji	pachinko	tanka
haiku	karaoke	sake	tatami
haori	katakana	shamisen	ukiyo-e
hibachi	keiretsu	samurai	zaibatsu
hiragana	kendo	sashimi	zori

Style Options for Italicization

Having decided which words to treat as English and which to treat as Japanese, the editor or writer must next select a style that will govern how italics will be used in the text. There are three main options.

AVOIDING CONFUSION

In spite of the recognized anglicization of words like *nō* (as No or Noh) and *sake*, it is often a good idea to identify them in some way—by italicizing or, for instance, by placing an accent on the final *e* in *saké*—because they are so easily confused with other English words.

Note that “shogunate” is English, not Japanese, and should never be italicized. The same applies to “rickshaw” (the Japanese is *jinnikisha*) and “adzuki” (*azuki*) beans.

ITALICS IN TITLES AND SUBHEADS

For design consistency, Japanese words normally italicized in a text can receive special handling when they appear in a title or subhead. For example, if an entire subhead is set in plain small caps, setting a Japanese word in italics might upset the look of the line.

Italicize Each Japanese Word Every Time

Italicizing Japanese words every time they occur coincides with standard usage and has the advantage of consistency; the reader needs no explanation. A drawback is that in texts where such words appear frequently, the page may become overladen with italics, detracting from the overall design.

Italicize Nothing

While less popular with editors and readers, not using italics may be more agreeable to some designers. If a Japanese term is defined on its first appearance in the text, it can be used throughout the rest of the publication like a specialized English term. If there are many such terms in a lengthy text, a glossary is a useful support for the reader. This approach is not recommended for publications whose readers cannot be expected to be familiar with Japanese terms.

Italicize on First Appearance Only

The compromise between the two systems above is to italicize a word on first appearance only and not thereafter. (In an anthology, particularly one with contributions by many authors, this method may be modified to cover the first appearance within each chapter. Similarly, magazines often italicize the first occurrence in every feature.) First-word-only italicization eliminates the problem of excessive italics in a text and is preferred by a number of publishers and journals whose readers are assumed to have special interest in or knowledge about Japan. It can, however, be confusing to readers who are not reading a text straight through. And it requires a great deal of editorial diligence.

PERSONAL NAMES

- **If possible, use Japanese name order: family name first, personal name last.**
- **Do not reverse name order for pseudonyms and titled names.**
- **Respect idiosyncratic romanized spellings.**

Name Order

Japanese write their names in their own language surname first, as do Chinese and Koreans. After contact with the West was reestablished in the mid-nineteenth century, many Japanese adopted the practice of giving their surname last in international contexts. Japanese learn in school to reverse their names when writing or speaking in English and their domestic English-language media follow this practice, as do almost all other media around the world. Especially in translations, either name order may be adopted. Writers and editors may also choose a hybrid approach.

Japanese Order: Surname, Personal Name

Readers who know Japan well often prefer to see Japanese names in customary order:

Sakamoto Ryōma Mukai Chiaki Tezuka Osamu

This practice is adopted by most scholarly publications in the humanities and social sciences and is consistent with contemporary treatment of Chinese and Korean names (e.g., Deng Xiao-ping and Kim Dae Jung). It also assures consistency throughout history: Fujiwara no Narihira, Ashikaga Takauji, Tokugawa Ieyasu, Itō Hi robumi, Nagai Kafū, Hosokawa Morihiro.

NOTICE TO READERS

Publications that use Japanese order for personal names often include an editorial note such as the following:

“Throughout this work, Japanese names are given in traditional order, surname first.”

IMPORTANT EXCEPTION

Even when Japanese name order is used throughout a book, it may be advisable to put the author’s name in Western order on the title page, on the jacket and spine, and in the copyright information in order to prevent misshelving or incorrect data entry in libraries and bookstores.

NAMES IN BACK MATTER

Compiling indexes and bibliographies also requires special attention to name order. Be sure to follow the same style used in the main text, and be aware that, as such material is often compiled from various different sources, inconsistencies may have slipped into the final manuscript. Double-check all names to be sure. See also the section **Note, Bibliography, and Index Styles** on pages 59–62.

Western Order: Personal Name, Surname

You can give Japanese names following the common practice in the West (with the notable exception of Hungary): personal name first, surname last. There are several good reasons for handling names this way.

- Japanese active in the international arena since the Meiji era (1868–1912) often adopted the practice of switching their names around to accommodate the assumptions of Westerners. Many Japanese prefer seeing their names in Western order when in a Western context.
- Since English-language news media like the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Japan Times* consistently use Western order for contemporary Japanese figures, a reference to Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichirō may cause confusion.
- If the name of the author of a book or article is given in Japanese order, the name may appear reversed in library catalogs or other reference works compiled by someone not familiar with Japanese names. Watch out for mistaken placement of a work under an author's personal name in large alphabetical listings—Kōbō instead of Abe, for example, could put an item in an entirely different place. A few publications give surnames in CAPS or SMALL CAPS to avoid this mix-up, but this is troublesome for the editor and wins no plaudits from designers or typesetters.
- Since English readers assume that the last name given is the surname, no further explanation is necessary.

Western name order is particularly suitable for documents that rarely refer to historical figures, such as newspapers, magazines, and conference papers that deal with current international affairs, science, technology, advertising, business, and so on.

The disadvantage of using Western order is discovered when pre-Meiji historical or literary figures are mentioned. Reversing

the names of well-known and important people like Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Katsu Kaishū, and Sen no Rikyū sounds very odd (as odd as Shakespeare William or Da Gama Vasco).

Pre-Meiji Japanese, Post-Meiji Western

You can adopt a hybrid approach. For Meiji and post-Meiji (that is, post-1868) figures, use Western order; for pre-Meiji figures, use traditional Japanese order. Always make a point of explaining this practice in a preface or in a footnote on the first appearance of a name. However, inevitably there appears a historical figure whose prominence spans the pre- and post-Meiji years—for example, Saigō Takamori (1827–1877) or Takasugi Shinsaku (1839–1867). In such a case you simply have to choose.

A variation on the hybrid approach is to use Japanese name order in publications on Japan's literature, history, or culture (regardless of the period) and Western name order in publications in other disciplines, such as economics, geology, or medicine. The idea here is that readers of the former type of publication are accustomed to Japanese order—and would even be put off by the use of Western order—while those of the latter type are more comfortable with Western order.

Our Recommendation

The decision on which style to adopt must be made with the readers of your publication in mind. We encourage use of Japanese name order—family name first, personal name last—on the principle that, notwithstanding the willingness of Meiji leaders to accommodate the West, Japanese should be as free as Chinese and Koreans to present their names in customary order.

**NAME REVERSAL AND
PSEUDONYMS**

For names in which the given name is a pseudonym or art name, it sounds very odd to reverse the name (for example, Sōseki Natsume); this should be avoided.

Common Problems with Japanese Names

Editors and translators of specialized works, particularly in history, the arts, and literature, face many difficulties when working with Japanese names. Several of the most problematic name-related issues are addressed here.

Pseudonyms and Art Names

For historical personages, be sure to check reliable dictionaries or online sources for correct readings of names and for sorting out the pseudonyms and “art” names used extensively in pre-twentieth-century Japan.

An art name is a bit like a pen name; it is generally a personal name adopted by or bestowed on an artist or writer and becomes the name by which he is known in the art or literary world. For example, the late-Meiji writer Natsume Sōseki’s art name is Sōseki, so he is referred to on second mention as Sōseki, even though his family name is Natsume. Mori Ōgai and Shimazaki Tōson are other examples, referred to respectively by their art names Ōgai and Tōson. The writer Kawabata Yasunari used his birth name, so he is referred to as Kawabata. Novelist Mishima Yukio used a pseudonym, so the writer is referred to as Mishima. The use of art names, while unavoidable, can be confusing when the rule of adhering strictly to Japanese name order is adopted and readers are not familiar with the customary references to certain people.

For artists’ names, it is standard practice among specialists to use only the artistic or given name on second mention. For example, Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849) will be referred to as Hokusai; Itō Jakuchū (1716–1800) will be called Jakuchū. From the second generation in the Meiji era (c. 1890s), surnames are used for Western-style artists, while artist names or first names are used for Japanese-style (Nihonga) artists. In specialist art

history works, therefore, one may find the following, each of which is correct in a specialist context:

Yokoyama Taikan, 1868–1958 (Nihonga artist: second mention
“Taikan”)
Yorozu Tetsugorō, 1885–1927 (Western-style artist: second
mention “Yorozu”)

Variant Readings

Japanese personal names, written in characters for which there are often variant readings, present translators with many difficulties. Characters used in names can be unusual and obscure, and their readings—for historical or other reasons—may sometimes differ from those customarily used in standard texts. However, each individual’s name has only *one* correct reading, and reliable sources should be checked to ascertain it. Also, care should be taken to always give the correct *contextual* reading; checking in a dictionary and finding the reading of a particular character does not guarantee that that character is read the same way when used in a particular personal name.

Different reference works sometimes give different readings for the same names. Established printed and online reference works can be relied on for standard readings to a certain extent, but it is best to have the author or initiator query any names for which the transcriptions seem questionable. See **Further References** for some established sources by content field.

Imperial Names

Members of the Japanese imperial family have two names: (1) names that are used during their lifetimes and (2) posthumous titles. The emperor of Japan from 1926 to 1989 was Hirohito. Since his death he has been known as the Shōwa Emperor or Emperor Shōwa (the period of his reign was called the Shōwa period during his lifetime, and that name has not changed). For

TEMPLE SUFFIXES

The character that acts as a suffix to indicate the name of a Buddhist temple can be read *-ji* or *-tera/dera*, depending on whether the Chinese- or Japanese-style reading is used. This is determined by convention, and editors and writers should try in all cases to follow customary usage.

a complete listing of imperial and era names, see the tables in the **Appendices**.

Ancient Clan or Family Names

Japan's ancient aristocracy consisted of a limited number of clans (*uji*; e.g., Fujiwara, Taira). The *uji* name and given name are connected with *no*. The same name may be appear as a modern surname without the *no* (e.g., Fujiwara Tatsuya).

Fujiwara no Teika Kamo no Mabuchi Ono no Komachi

The same practice is sometimes used to denote art lineages.

Sen no Rikyū Ike no Taiga

Personal Variants

For present-day names, a person's preference for the romanized spelling of his or her name should always be respected, even when it differs from your romanization of choice.

HEPBURN ROMANIZATION	VARIANT
Ōmae Ken'ichi	Kenichi Ohmae
Irie Akira	Akira Iriye
Katō Shizue	Shidzue Katō

Whenever possible, check with the individual in question.

PLACE NAMES

- Either transliterate or translate place-name suffixes.
- Retain Japanese suffixes that are an established part of the place name.
- Beware of transcription and consistency errors when working with Japanese postal addresses.

Descriptive Suffixes

Japanese place names, especially for administrative units, often include a descriptive suffix. In English text, often these can be dropped as superfluous. For example, Tōkyō-to is, literally, “Tokyo metropolis,” and *-to* is an official administrative category. Hinohara-mura is, literally, “Hinohara village,” *-mura* meaning “village.”

Descriptive suffixes are also used for major topographical features such as rivers and mountains: Sumida-gawa (*-gawa* means “river”) and Fuji-san (*-san* means “mountain”). Regarding the use of hyphens in these terms, see the section **Hyphens**.

There are three methods for handling these suffixes.

Transliterate the Suffix

Place names can be simply transliterated (romanized).

Setagaya-ku (The suffix *ku* refers to one of Tokyo’s 23 “wards”)

Ōita-ken (*-ken* is “prefecture”)

Yamanote-sen (*-sen* is “line,” as in train or subway line)

Setonaikai (*-nai* is “inland” and *-kai* is “sea”)

Sumida-gawa (*-gawa* is “river”)

Heian Jingū (a *jingū* is a large head shrine)

Tōdaiji (*-ji* is “temple”)

Chūō-dōri (*-dōri* is “avenue”)

PLACE NAME READINGS

Correct readings of current place names can often be found at the Japan Post postal code search site at <https://www.post.japanpost.jp/zipcode/> (in Japanese). For more detailed local or historical place names, check a geographical dictionary or historical atlas or search online. Be prepared for differences in readings (Ibaraki/Ibaragi; Shiroganedai/Shirokanedai/Shirokane-dai, etc.). Preferences as to readings of place names should be respected. (See **Further Resources** for further tips.)

Mashuko (*ko* is “lake”)

Tōmei Kōsoku Dōro (*kōsoku dōro* is “expressway”)

Hakkōda-san (*-san* is “mountain”)

This system may be preferred because such names sound “right” to people who know Japan well and will enable a reader, for example, to ask directions to a place using the Japanese word. Its disadvantage is that the *-ji*, *-gawa*, and so on do not communicate meaning to readers who do not know Japanese and will be considered part of the proper noun.

To clarify the meaning, some writers tack an English geographical term onto the Japanese, rendering Shiga-san as “Mt. Shiga-san” or Biwako as “Lake Biwako.” This is obviously redundant and represents an unnecessary attachment to the original Japanese. Just as we say Mt. Fuji, we can say Mt. Shiga, Mr. Tanaka (Tanaka-san), or Professor Suzuki (Suzuki Sensei).

Translate the Suffix

You can leave out the Japanese suffixes that describe the place; instead, use the English equivalents.

USE SHORT FORMS

It is administrative practice in many government offices in Japan to translate all municipalities as XXX City or YYY Town because every administrative unit has an official designation: *shi* (city), *machi* (town), *mura* (township, village), etc. In English, the name of the place alone should suffice: Kyoto, rather than Kyoto City; Tokyo, rather than Tokyo Metropolis; Hachiōji, rather than Hachiōji City. In some contexts, consider “city of Kyoto.”

Setagaya Ward

Yamanote Line

Chūō Avenue

Mt. Fuji

Ōita Prefecture

Tōdai Temple

Tōmei Expressway

Nihon Bridge

This method is often used by newspapers like the *Japan Times*. The major problem here is that some place names become unrecognizable or confusing without the suffix: “Nihon Bridge” does not immediately bring the word “Nihonbashi” to mind, especially if one is referring to the well-known Nihonbashi area of Tokyo.

Transliterate and Explain

You can also solve the recognition problem by combining the

two methods above: Keep the Japanese place name intact and add a word of explanation at least on first mention, e.g., “Nihonbashi bridge” or “Tōdaiji temple,” despite the redundancy. Using a lowercase noun is preferable to uppercase (“Tōdaiji Temple”), which would make the redundancy all the more noticeable. A better approach is to introduce the term with a broader, descriptive definition: Ryōanji might be introduced first as “the famous Kyoto temple Ryōanji,” and then given as “Ryōanji” thereafter.

Styles for Japanese Addresses

Administrative Divisions

In English, Japan’s 47 major administrative divisions are called prefectures; in Japanese, however, four different terms are used: *to*, *dō*, *fu*, and *ken* (capital, territory, metropolis, and prefecture). Tokyo is a *to*—the capital; the entire island of Hokkaido is a *dō*—a territory; Osaka and Kyoto, which both encompass much more than the cities of the same names, are *fu*—they are chiefly metropolitan prefectures; the other 43 are *ken*—ordinary prefectures. The main local government units within prefectures are

<i>shi</i>	city; municipality
<i>machi</i> (or <i>chō</i>)	town
<i>mura</i> (or <i>son</i>)	village; township

A *shi* centers on a city and embraces outlying suburbs that may be very rural. A *machi* (the same character can also be read *chō*), is an internal municipal unit; despite the name it may be quite rural. *Mura* is especially tricky, since it can mean literally “village,” as in “a cluster of dwellings,” as well as a large administrative unit resembling a township. A *mura* may consist of multiple *buraku* or “hamlets”—clusters of dwellings—separated by fields or mountains.

NOTES ABOUT “PREFECTURE”

Although Kyoto and Osaka are *fu*, it is possible in English to refer to them as prefectures (normally indicated by the suffix *-ken*). Hokkaido and Tokyo are almost never referred to as prefectures, however.

Address-Line Sequence

Addresses in Japanese publications are customarily given in order of large to small (prefecture, city, block area, block subsection, house number, name of addressee). This is the reverse of Western address-line sequence (name, street, city, state). When Japanese addresses are presented in English texts, all the elements thus need to be reversed.

JAPANESE ORDER	WESTERN ORDER
Japan	Fujimichi Hanae
Hiroshima 722-0011	1-2-70 Sakura-machi
Onomichi-shi	Onomichi-shi
Sakura-machi 1-2-70	Hiroshima 722-0011
Fujimichi Hanae	Japan

This reversal often occasions transcription errors. Editors and writers should be sure to double-check all Japanese street addresses for consistency of sequence. The following are important points:

- The seven-digit postal code is placed after the prefecture name.
- Some cities and prefectures have the same name. Chiba City is in Chiba Prefecture. Thus, addresses that end “Chiba, Chiba 260-0852” are not necessarily incorrect.
- The local portion of the address can be given in one of three ways in English.
 - (A) 1-2-70 Sakura-machi
 - (B) Sakuramachi 1-2-70
 - (C) 2-70 Sakura-machi, 1-chōme
- These all refer to the 70th building in the 2nd subsection of the 1st block area (*chōme*) of the district Sakura-machi. Style A is the way it appears in most English-language listings in

Japan. Style B places the three numbers at the end, as in Japanese. Style C is officially recommended by Japan Post. Any of these styles may be used, but consistency should be observed within a single document or publication.

- Many Japanese commercial buildings and apartment houses have names that include “exotic” non-Japanese terms like *heights*, *maison*, *casa*, *plaza*, and so on. When transcribing these addresses in English text, you should in most cases use the original non-Japanese spelling of the word instead of the less-than-obvious romanization of the Japanese. See also **Loanwords**.

CAPITALIZATION

- Follow English style; capitalize as little as possible.
- Avoid using all caps for publication titles and subtitles, family names of individuals, and company or organization names. (Note: In lists of corporate sponsors or credits, defer to corporate preferences regarding capitalization; follow your style sheet for other mentions in the text.)

Since written Japanese makes no distinction between upper and lower case, your rules for capitalization can follow the same standards used for English, as prescribed by the *Chicago Manual of Style* and other style guides. See **Note, Bibliography, and Index Styles** for treatment of titles of works.

“Down” Style vs. “Up” Style

The editorial shorthand for texts that capitalize as little as possible—only personal names, official titles, and names of places and institutions—is the “down” style. For aesthetic purposes, this is preferred in books and other documents consisting predominantly of text. Using fewer capped words makes for less distraction and a more aesthetically pleasing page. For texts of a promotional or informational nature (such as tour guides, information data, or corporate PR text), where the proper nouns have an advertising dimension, the “up style” may be more appropriate.

Words such as sumo, ikebana, and kabuki have been lowercased in English dictionaries for decades, but Noh is still sometimes capped, perhaps because it is less well known outside Japan. (In Japanese these are all generic terms, not proper nouns.) Always consider the context when deciding whether to capitalize or use

lower case. Even if Webster's dictionary is specified in the publisher's style guide, you can make exceptions (to lowercase *noh* and *bunraku*, for example, in a book on Japanese theater), as long as they are treated consistently.

All Caps

Translators and editors often encounter full caps in Japanese texts that may not need to be transferred to the English version. Titles of manga, brand names, family names of individuals, and the names of organizations or companies that are not acronyms would ordinarily be set with initial caps only following English-language practice. Client preferences for full caps are often rigid, but no legal stipulations require use of full caps. Company names can generally be given with initial caps only, even if the logotype or brand shows all caps, as is standard practice in English. Furthermore, numerous instances of a full-capped name that is not an acronym may impair the appearance of the text (see *Chicago Manual* 17 8.76, 10.6, and 10.8 and Wikipedia: Manual of Style/Japan-related articles; section 8).

PLURALS

- **Let the same romanized Japanese word serve for both singular and plural forms.**

Generally speaking, Japanese nouns do not have a plural form different from the singular, so the writer or editor must decide what to do about the plural of Japanese words used in English.

Ryōkan wrote three *rengas* during this period.

Ryōkan wrote three *renga* during this period.

AVOID THE ITALIC "S"

We don't recommend adding an *s* to make a Japanese noun plural (see discussion on this page). But if for some reason you do, be sure the final *s* that indicates the plural is **not** italicized along with the Japanese word:

tokonomas *rojis*

The mixing of type styles in a single word is profoundly unattractive—all the more reason to avoid using the *s* in the first place.

We advise omitting the plural *s* in English, regardless of whether the word is italicized to indicate a foreign word or treated as an anglicized word in regular type.

three genro *not* three genros

three kimono *not* three kimonos

Chinese publishers are rapidly translating manga for a thirsty domestic readership.

Keiretsu all over Japan are being challenged by companies from overseas.

LOANWORDS

- Except in bibliographic entries, use the original-language spelling of a foreign word when referring to publications and organizations.

The Japanese language uses a large number of loanwords from other languages, particularly English. These loanwords are generally written in katakana, which effectively “Japanizes” the foreign word. For example, the English-language term “part-time” in English is used frequently in Japan, where it is pronounced *pāto taimu*. (Some “loanwords” are purely Japanese inventions; e.g., *naitā*, sports events that take place at night.)

When loanwords are used in the names of organizations and publications, they must sometimes be transliterated. An option here is to give the original English or other foreign spelling instead of transliterating the Japanized version.

ROMANIZED JAPANESE	EQUIVALENT FOREIGN TERM
<i>Ekonomisuto</i>	<i>Economist</i>
Rikuruto	Recruit
Riburopoto	Libroport
Purejidento Sha	President Sha

The advantage of using the original spelling is that the word will be instantly recognizable, whereas the Japanese version of a loanword can require puzzling out or result in awkward spellings. Use of the exact transliteration, however, does make it clear that it is a *Japanese* magazine called *Economist* that is being talked about rather than the one published in English. In general, except when it is necessary to transliterate these loanwords exactly for bibliographic purposes, they should be given in their original form.

KANJI IN ENGLISH TEXT

- Use kanji in publications for specialists; when they are important to the content discussed; and when the intended audience includes readers of Japanese, Chinese, or Korean.
- Do not use kanji when they create problems in proofreading or production.

TRADITIONAL VS. SIMPLIFIED CHARACTERS

Another complication is traditional versus simplified characters. For modern publications, SWET recommends using the simplified Japanese form, but when quoting or citing old documents, whenever possible use the traditional (original) characters as they appeared in the source document. For example, *butsuzō* 佛像 is the traditional form for *butsuzō* (Buddhist statue), but the modern Japanese simplified characters are 仏像.

Thanks to advances in digital publishing technology, it is no longer difficult to include Japanese and other non-Latin characters in English publications.

The guidelines given here are useful for English texts that include Japanese kanji as well as Chinese and Korean ideographic characters and East Asian phonetic scripts, all of which involve the same kinds of issues. As a general rule, texts intended for readers who are specialists in academic, business, and other fields related to China, Japan, or Korea should include characters by adopting one of the easy-to-follow conventions described below. Texts addressing a general audience (newspapers, magazines, government reports, web news or blogs, etc.), even if they are translations, rarely include kanji, or even transliterated terms. Characters are ordinarily not needed for a full understanding of such texts and can be distracting to the reader.

Characters in Text

Among specialist publications, the academic journal *Monumenta Nipponica* (MN) offers detailed and reliable advice:

For Japanese, Chinese, and Korean names and terms, provide characters at the first mention of a person, place-

name, literary work, era name (*nengō*) up to Meiji, or romanized term, with the following exceptions: do not give characters for anglicized terms or for prefectures, provinces, major cities, or well-known topographical names.

MN incorporates characters into the main text of articles, footnotes, captions, and other features. The example below uses kanji, macrons for Japanese romanization, and diacritical marks for Sanskrit romanization.

Among the most famous in this category are the Śākyamuni at Seiryōji 清涼寺 temple in Kyoto, said to have been brought to Japan from China in 987 (or 986) by Chōnen 喬然 (938–1016) and traditionally regarded as a true-scale depiction of the Buddha made during his lifetime; and the Amida 阿弥陀 triad at Zenkōji 善光寺 in Nagano, claimed to be the first Buddhist image to arrive in Japan in 552.

Even in texts for specialists, characters should be included sparingly and only when necessary for the benefit of the reader. An English text cluttered with kanji is best avoided. Clear criteria should be established for inclusion of characters (e.g., for names, titles, place names, or special terms), such as those recommended by MN. (The MN Style Sheet is available online at <https://dept.sophia.ac.jp/monumenta/pdf/MN-Style-Sheet-September-2018.pdf>).

Arguments in Favor

For the benefit of readers who specialize in Asian studies and those who are starting to learn Japanese, the inclusion of kanji is a definite plus. Because of the many homonyms in Japanese, even when a word, name, or title is romanized, its meaning may still be unclear (e.g., *kaidan* can mean “talks” 会談, “stairs” 階段, or

“ghost story” 怪談). Moreover, for readers interested in looking up further information about the topic in original Japanese sources, bibliographic entries in their original form are often essential, and the inclusion of kanji makes the publication more useful internationally.

Arguments against

- For readers not conversant with Japanese, kanji are not meaningful and can be distracting.
- For authors, editors, and publishers, the inclusion of kanji adds to their workload and requires special care in inputting, proofreading, and dealing with typographical considerations (e.g., getting size and spacing of kanji to harmonize with the surrounding English text).

Other Considerations

- Can the author (or designated editor or designer) skillfully create a complete document, inclusive of kanji, proofread it, and ensure that the characters harmonize typographically with the surrounding English text? If so, then there should be no barrier to their inclusion.
- Can the publisher’s production team handle the inclusion of kanji, proofreading, and harmonizing the characters and English text in a way that is satisfactory to the author? If inclusion of characters is left up to the publisher, is the editorial staff able to check for accuracy after design and layout and advise about typographical adjustments?
- When the subject matter is of a general or journalistic nature or based on non-Japanese sources, use of kanji should be avoided except where the content discusses the characters themselves.

Conventions

While the inclusion of kanji directly in the main English text is the optimal approach, there are other acceptable conventions: listing kanji in an appendix or glossary at the end of a document, or placing kanji in the margins, in footnotes or endnotes, or in the index.

Characters in Separate Lists

Publishers not equipped to typeset kanji efficiently may ask the author to use kanji only in a separate list; for example, as front matter, as a text box of some kind, or as back matter in a glossary or index, thus avoiding potential layout and production problems. Art historians may prefer to separate the kanji from the text in the interests of the aesthetics of their books or exhibition catalogs. Rationale aside, the separate-list option allows the pages requiring special technical know-how and equipment to be handled separately.

Moving the characters to a list elsewhere in a book, however, disrupts the reading process, forcing the reader to flip back and forth to look up the kanji.

Characters in Marginal Space

Characters can be set in text boxes located in the margins and aligned with the relevant text, thereby leaving the text uncluttered and allowing the characters to appear close to the text where they are discussed.

Typesetting in marginal space can be complicated for the layout and may become misaligned if the text lines shift. If marginal kanji are numerous and appear as a well-integrated part of the text, this is an acceptable strategy. But if scattered, they may seem untidy and distract from the design.

Technical Hints

Inputting kanji on English-language computers is now relatively straightforward and no longer requires third-party add-on software. The newer Mac and Windows machines come pre-installed with input method editors (IMEs) that allow users to switch between English, Japanese, Chinese, or Korean (or other language) input systems. Google also offers the excellent “Google Japanese Input” IME for the Mac as a free download to replace the built-in Kotoeri. The process of enabling and using input editors differs between Mac and Windows, but essentially involves (1) installing the IME if it is not already on your computer; (2) selecting the input language to add it to your system settings/preferences; and (3) switching to the language when typing. For example, if you use a Windows 10 English operating system, you can still input East Asian languages by installing the appropriate IME: Click the Start Menu button, select Settings, select Time & Language, then Region & Language, and then Add a Language.

Another welcome technological advance is Unicode, the computing industry standard for encoding the scripts of over 100 languages. Unicode handles nearly all the kanji (and diacritics) required for traditional publishers and digital publishers (websites, blogs, etc.), so font and other technical problems need not be an insurmountable or costly problem. Kanji should be input at the manuscript stage. (For more on Unicode and typography-related technology, see unicode.org/versions/latest/)

One solution for providing kanji in electronic text is illustrated in the web-based German-language handbook of Japanese religion edited by Bernhard Scheid, where the kanji equivalent appears in a pop-up note upon clicking the term. See for example, <https://religion-in-japan.univie.ac.at/Handbuch/Ikonographie/Jizo>

Aesthetic Considerations

- **Type size:** In composing typography for printed texts, the standard size of kanji should be set smaller than the surrounding English text, often as much as 2 points smaller. This rule of thumb, developed by typographers and graphic designers when combining English and kanji, allows the line height of the English text and kanji to be in natural proportion.
- **Punctuation:** Use English punctuation (commas, periods, quotation marks) for surrounding text and Japanese punctuation (commas, periods, *kagi-kakko*, and *nakaguro*) within quoted Japanese material. For colons within Japanese titles of works, however, the spacing looks tidier if the English colon and spacing are used. The examples below show the use of surrounding punctuation with Japanese characters and colons in Japanese titles in English text.

“In its atmospherics *Shaka no honji* strongly evokes the Japanese cultural past, a world of ‘brocade cushions and jeweled screens’ (*nishiki no shitone, tama no sudare* 錦のしとね、玉の簾).” (*Monumenta Nipponica* 62:3, p. 314)

Nishida Masayoshi 西田正好. *Mujōkan no keifu: Nihon bukkū bungei shisōshi; Kodai, chūsei hen* 無常觀の系譜: 日本仏教文芸思想史 古代・中世編. Ōfūsha, 1970. (*Monumenta Nipponica* 62:3, p. 319)

QUOTATION MARKS

- Delete unnecessary (false) quotation marks.
 - Check quoted material.
 - Use quotation marks to set off romanized Japanese words (if not italicized).
 - Keep quotation marks around the element highlighted (not including the gloss of the element).
- Editors of translated text should be aware of the possibility that the translator used quotation marks automatically whenever phrases or words in the original Japanese text were enclosed with *kagi-kakko* marks (「・」『・』). Those marks, however, are not necessarily used in the same way as English quotation marks. They may be used to highlight words used in a special sense or as spoken by someone, as in English, but they may also be used for emphasis, to mark titles of books, or to bring attention to topics or terms featured in the text.
 - Where quotation marks are used, editors should check—if the original language was English—whether the original wording was obtained. If not obtainable, the quotation should be revised to a paraphrase.
 - Quotation marks may be used to set off romanized words or phrases in Japanese, but do not use italics simultaneously. Restrict the quotation marks to the element to be highlighted:
 - “kikuzukuri” (chrysanthemum cut) sashimi
 - not “*kikuzukuri*” (chrysanthemum cut) sashimi or
 - “kikuzukuri (chrysanthemum cut)” sashimi

NOTE, BIBLIOGRAPHY, AND INDEX STYLES

- Use “sentence” style in transliterations of titles of Japanese works and “headline” style for English glosses of the titles.
- Treat Japanese names the same way as in the main text.

Listing the titles of Japanese-language publications (books and magazine and journal articles) in romanized form for a bibliography brings to the fore several of the style questions discussed in this book. For example:

- Capitalization: Should a book title follow the “sentence” style or the “headline” style of capitalization?
- Macrons: Is the publisher Kōdansha or Kodansha? Chikuma Shobō or Chikuma Shobo?
- Word formation: Should a book on Shōwa history be rendered Shōwa-shi, Shōwa shi, Shōwa Shi or Shōwashi?

These choices boil down to the same style decisions that must be made in assembling any English-language bibliography. The style followed in the publication determines the style followed in the back matter. If macrons and hyphens are used in the text, they are used in the notes, bibliography, and index as well.

Capitalization of Titles

For titles in a bibliographical list, the choice is essentially between “headline” style, which capitalizes all words except articles, prepositions, and conjunctions, and “sentence” style, which capitalizes only the first word and proper nouns.

ITALICIZATION OF TITLES

Titles of Japanese works can be handled the same as titles in English: Use italics for titles of books and periodicals, and quoted roman type for titles of articles.

“Sentence” style is recommended by the *Chicago Manual of Style*. For transliterated original titles it avoids the problem of having to decide what Japanese words are the “lowercase” equivalents of prepositions, articles, and conjunctions, and it can be handled more easily by someone with no knowledge of Japanese.

Sentence style:

Kyōiku kōjō no kodomotachi (Children of the education factory)

Gloss in headline style:

Tezuka Osamu no kimyō na sekai (The Curious World of Tezuka Osamu)

Transliterating and Translating Titles

The main purpose of providing bibliographic information is to enable readers to look things up. We recommend that the original Japanese title always be given in transliterated form, followed by a translation (gloss or working English title) enclosed in brackets; the transliterated title should appear in “sentence” style and in normal-style type. If only the translated gloss of the title is given, it may appear in the “headline” style in italics, but if the work is in Japanese and not published in English, the language should be noted. Use brackets and parentheses to enclose distinct groups of information.

WHAT “BUNKO” MEANS

Occasionally one sees the word “Bunko” given as part of a publisher’s name, but Bunko simply means “collection” or “series.” The publisher of books under the imprint Iwanami Bunko is Iwanami Shoten. Similarly, the publisher of Shinchō Bunkō is, properly, Shinchōsha.

Inose Naoki. *Mikado no shōzō* [Portrait of the Mikado]. Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1986.

Okamoto Tarō, “Yojigen to no taiwa: Jōmon doki ron” [Dialogue with the Fourth Dimension: A Theory of Jōmon Ceramics], *Mizue* 558 (February 1952), reprinted in *Traditions in Japan* (Tokyo: Kōbunsha, 1956), 25–42.

Inose, Naoki. *Portrait of the Mikado* (in Japanese). Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1986.

The gloss or tentative English title provided should be as literal as possible while remaining faithful to the rules of English. The punctuation used should be English punctuation; Japanese names should be given according to your style sheet; and non-Japanese names should use their own Latin alphabetic spelling:

Hayashi Yōko, ed. *Fujita Tsuguharu gashū* [Collected Works of Fujita Tsuguharu], 3 vols. (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2014). [Even though the artist is known internationally as “Léonard Foujita” Idekawa Naoki. “Richō kōgei” (Joseon Crafts).

Yamada Jun’etsu, et al. *Ō Yōmei no tetsugaku* [The Philosophy of Wang Yangming]. Tokyo: Ōokayama Shoten, 1942.

Publishers’ Names

Use the romanized name and hyphenation preferred by the publisher where possible, even when the style is inconsistent with the text.

Chuokoron-Shinsha	<i>not</i> Chuo Koron Shinsha
BungeiShunju	<i>not</i> Bungei Shunju
Shogakukan	<i>not</i> Shōgakkan

Note that some publishers, especially those with names derived from foreign words, have established English names.

Baseball Magazine-Sha	Diamond, Inc.
Froebel-Kan	Ohmsha
University of Tokyo Press	Sa-e-la Shobo

Authors’ Names

The style used throughout the text for Japanese names should be followed in the notes and other back matter. In the bibliography and index, if Japanese order is used in the main text, names are

presented as is, family name first, with no comma between the family name and the personal name.

Morita Akio Tsushima Yūko Ōta Hideaki

If Western order is used in the text, the Japanese name in the index is inverted and a comma added, as with a Western name:

Morita, Akio Tsushima, Yūko Ōta, Hideaki

In the bibliography, as elsewhere, the writer or editor should be aware of the different ways of handling these items and select one that agrees with the tone and style of the rest of the publication, always watching out for inconsistencies.

Appendices

Hepburn Orthography

Prefectures, Provinces

Numbers

Units of Measure

Imperial Reigns and Historical Eras

Historical Eras, Alphabetical List

Modern Era Conversion Chart

Principal Periods of Japanese History

Further References

Internet Resources

HEPBURN ORTHOGRAPHY

KEY

- R Romanization
 H Hiragana
 K Katakana
 * Romanized as *wa* when used as a particle.
 † Romanized as *e* when used as a particle.
 ‡ No longer in use.
 # Used only for the particle *o*.
 Δ Can be written *m* before *b*, *m*, and *p*.

SOUND CHANGES

The syllables *-chi* and *-tsu* can change their sounds when the following syllable begins with a consonant. This sometimes results in the following Hepburn spellings:

- kk Nikkō (ni-chi-ko-u)
 pp happō (ha-chi-po-u)
 ss bassuru (ba-tsu-suru)
 tch matcha (ma-tsu-cha)
 tt matte (ma-tsu-te)

Consonants in combination can also show sound shifts: *k* to *g*, *s* to *z*, *t* to *d*, and *h* to *b* or *p*. For example, *kawa* means “river,” and the *k* changes to *g* in the compound Sumida-gawa, or “Sumida River.”

The Hepburn system of transliterating Japanese words into a Western alphabet is used throughout the world. Words in the alternative Kunrei and Nippon systems can be respelled in Hepburn unless the alternative romanizations are well established or part of a bibliographical listing. *Hiragana* and *katakana* have the same character sets, but some *katakana* combinations used for “non-Japanese” sounds are almost never written in *hiragana*.

Simple Syllables

R	H	K	R	H	K	R	H	K	R	H	K	R	H	K
a	あ	ア	i	い	イ	u	う	ウ	e	え	エ	o	お	オ
ka	か	カ	ki	き	キ	ku	く	ク	ke	け	ケ	ko	こ	コ
sa	さ	サ	shi	し	シ	su	す	ス	se	せ	セ	so	そ	ソ
ta	た	タ	chi	ち	チ	tsu	つ	ツ	te	て	テ	to	と	ト
na	な	ナ	ni	に	ニ	nu	ぬ	ヌ	ne	ね	ネ	no	の	ノ
ha*	は	ハ	hi	ひ	ヒ	fu	ふ	フ	he [†]	へ	ヘ	ho	ほ	ホ
ma	ま	マ	mi	み	ミ	mu	む	ム	me	め	メ	mo	も	モ
ya	や	ヤ				yu	ゆ	ユ				yo	よ	ヨ
ra	ら	ラ	ri	り	リ	ru	る	ル	re	れ	レ	ro	ろ	ロ
wa	わ	ワ	wi [‡]	ゐ	ヰ				we [‡]	ゑ	ヱ	o [#]	を	ヲ
												n ^Δ	ん	ン

Voiced Consonants and “P”

ga	が	ガ	gi	ぎ	ギ	gu	ぐ	グ	ge	げ	ゲ	go	ご	ゴ
za	ざ	ザ	ji	じ	ジ	zu	ず	ズ	ze	ぜ	ゼ	zo	ぞ	ゾ
da	だ	ダ	ji	ぢ	ヂ	zu	づ	ヅ	de	で	デ	do	ど	ド
ba	ば	バ	bi	び	ビ	bu	ぶ	ブ	be	べ	ベ	bo	ぼ	ボ
pa	ぱ	パ	pi	ぴ	ピ	pu	ぷ	プ	pe	ぺ	ペ	po	ぽ	ポ

Short Compound Syllables

R	H	K	R	H	K	R	H	K
kya	きゃ	キヤ	kyu	きゅ	キュ	kyo	きよ	キョ
sha	しゃ	シャ	shu	しゅ	シュ	sho	しよ	ショ
cha	ちゃ	チャ	chu	ちゅ	チュ	cho	ちよ	チョ
nya	にゃ	ニヤ	nyu	にゅ	ニュ	nyo	によ	ニョ
hya	ひゃ	ヒヤ	hyu	ひゅ	ヒュ	hyo	ひよ	ヒョ
mya	みゃ	ミヤ	myu	みゅ	ミュ	myo	みよ	ミョ
rya	りゃ	リヤ	ryu	りゅ	リュ	ryo	りよ	リョ
gya	ぎゃ	ギヤ	gyu	ぎゅ	ギュ	gyo	ぎよ	ギョ
ja	じゃ	ジャ	ju	じゅ	ジュ	jo	じよ	ジョ
ja	ぢゃ	ヂヤ	ju	ぢゅ	ヂュ	jo	ぢよ	ヂョ
bya	びゃ	ビヤ	byu	びゅ	ビュ	byo	びよ	ビョ
pya	ぴゃ	ピヤ	pyu	ぴゅ	ピュ	pyo	ぴよ	ピョ

Long Compound Syllables

R	H	R	H	R	H	R	H
ū	うう	ō	おう				
kū	くう	kō	こう	kyū	きゅう	kyō	きょう
sū	すう	sō	そう	shū	しゅう	shō	しょう
tsū	つう	tō	とう	chū	ちゅう	chō	ちょう
nū	ぬう	nō	のう	nyū	にゅう	nyō	にょう
fū	ふう	hō	ほう	hyū	ひゅう	hyō	ひょう
mū	むう	mō	もう	myū	みゅう	myō	みょう
yū	ゆう	yō	よう				
rū	るう	rō	ろう	ryū	りゅう	ryō	りょう
gū	ぐう	gō	ごう	gyū	ぎゅう	gyō	ぎょう
zū	ずう	zō	ぞう	jū	じゅう	jō	じょう
zū	づう	zō	ぞう	jū	ぢゅう	jō	ぢょう
bū	ぶう	bō	ぼう	byū	びゅう	byō	びょう
pū	ぷう	pō	ぽう	pyū	ぴゅう	pyō	ぴょう

NON-HEPBURN SYSTEMS

Most Kunrei and Nippon romanizations are the same as Hepburn. Standard Kunrei and older Nippon variants (rarely seen) are

Hep	Kun	Nip	
ka	ka	kwa	
ga	ga	gwa	
shi	si	si	
ji	zi	zi	[voiced shi]
chi	ti	ti	
ji	zi	di	[voiced chi]
tsu	tu	tu	
zu	zu	du	[voiced tsu]
fu	hu	hu	
o	o	wo	

Kunrei/Nippon variants for compound syllables are

Hep	Kun	Nip
sha	sya	sya
shu	syu	syu
sho	syo	syo
		[voiced sha]
ja	zya	zya
ju	zyu	zyu
jo	zyo	zyo
cha	tya	tya
chu	tyu	tyu
cho	tyo	tyo
		[voiced cha]
ja	zya	dya
ju	zyu	dyu
jo	zyo	dyo

PREFECTURES, PROVINCES

Prefectures

NOTE

Proper names on this and the facing page appear with all macrons in place. However, in most nonspecialized text, macrons would not be used with familiar place names: Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe, Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu.

The provincial system was abolished in 1871, but the old names remain a source of regional pride and identity. Other regional names are also encountered, such as Tōhoku, for northern Honshu; Kantō, for the Tokyo area; Chūbu, for central Japan and Nagoya; Kansai and Kinki, for the Kyoto–Osaka region; and Chūgoku, for southwestern Honshu. There are numerous others, reflecting Japan’s long feudal history.

In general works it is often helpful to roughly locate a Japanese city or prefecture with a descriptive directional tag, e.g., “Morioka, a city in northern Honshu.”

Before Meiji, Tokyo (the name means “Eastern Capital”) was known as Edo. “Tokyo” should never be used anachronistically for “Edo” or vice versa.

Aichi	Hyōgo	Miyazaki	Shimane
Akita	Ibaraki	Nagano	Shizuoka
Aomori	Ishikawa	Nagasaki	Tochigi
Chiba	Iwate	Nara	Tokushima
Ehime	Kagawa	Niigata	Tōkyō
Fukui	Kagoshima	Ōita	Tottori
Fukuoka	Kanagawa	Okayama	Toyama
Fukushima	Kōchi	Okinawa	Wakayama
Gifu	Kumamoto	Ōsaka	Yamagata
Gunma	Kyōto	Saga	Yamaguchi
Hiroshima	Mie	Saitama	Yamanashi
Hokkaidō	Miyagi	Shiga	

Provinces

Pre-Meiji (1868) provincial names are encountered frequently in literary and historical works.

Aki	Hitachi	Kii	Settsu
Awa	Hizen	Kōzuke	Shima
Awaji	Hōki	Mikawa	Shimōsa
Bingo	Hyūga	Mimasaka	Shimotsuke
Bitchū	Iga	Mino	Shinano
Bizen	Iki	Musashi	Suō
Bungo	Inaba	Mutsu	Suruga
Buzen	Ise	Nagato	Tajima
Chikugo	Iwami	Noto	Tanba
Chikuzen	Iyo	Okii	Tango
Dewa	Izu	Ōmi	Tosa
Echigo	Izumi	Ōsumi	Tōtōmi
Echizen	Izumo	Owari	Tsushima
Etchū	Kaga	Sado	Wakasa
Harima	Kai	Sagami	Yamashiro
Hida	Kawachi	Sanuki	Yamato
Higo	Kazusa	Satsuma	

Prefectures and Principal Cities



NUMBERS

Problems in handling large Japanese numbers are most frequently encountered in material related to finance and economics, such as company annual reports and government-issued budgetary data. Japanese use the units *man* (10,000), *oku* (100 million), and *chō* (1 trillion) in conversation and in written texts, and it is extremely easy for translators and writers to shift one or two zeroes in the wrong direction when converting large numbers for publication in English. Common sense will often be a clue that something has gone wrong in the calculation (giving a city's population as 32 million instead of 3.2 million for example). But the best rule is: Always double-check large numbers derived from Japanese sources.

FOR CURRENCY, USE A CALCULATOR!

In specialized material you can keep currency amounts in yen. In material for general readers, however, currency amounts should also be converted into dollars (or whatever currency is appropriate for your readership). \$US amounts generally involve reducing the yen amount by several decimal places, since (as of 2018) \$1 is equal to somewhere between ¥110 and ¥115. Check all currency conversions carefully, *after* you check large-number conversions. A few currency examples figured at the rate \$1 = ¥125 are

¥10,000	\$80
¥1 million	\$8,000
¥1 <i>oku</i>	\$800,000
¥1 <i>chō</i>	\$8 billion

NUMBER	JAPANESE	ENGLISH
0		zero
1	ichi	one
10	jū	ten
100	hyaku	hundred
1,000	sen	thousand
10,000	man	ten thousand
100,000	jū man	hundred thousand
1,000,000	hyaku man	million
10,000,000	sen man	ten million
100,000,000	oku	hundred million
1,000,000,000	jū oku	billion [thousand million*]
10,000,000,000	hyaku oku	ten billion
100,000,000,000	sen oku	hundred billion
1,000,000,000,000	chō	trillion [billion*]
10,000,000,000,000	jū chō	ten trillion
100,000,000,000,000	hyaku chō	hundred trillion
1,000,000,000,000,000	sen chō	quadrillion
10,000,000,000,000,000		ten quadrillion

*British usage

UNITS OF MEASURE

Linear Measure

1	<i>rin</i>	=	.012 inch	=	.303 millimeter
10	<i>rin</i>	= 1 <i>bu</i>	= .12 inch	=	3.03 millimeters
10	<i>bu</i>	= 1 <i>sun</i>	= 1.20 inches	=	30.3 millimeters
10	<i>sun</i>	= 1 <i>shaku</i>	= .994 foot	=	30.3 centimeters
6	<i>shaku</i>	= 1 <i>ken</i>	= 1.99 yards	=	1.82 meters
6	<i>shaku</i>	= 1 <i>hiro</i>	= .944 fathom	=	1.82 meters
10	<i>shaku</i>	= 1 <i>jō</i>	= 3.31 yards	=	3.03 meters
60	<i>ken</i>	= 1 <i>chō</i>	= 119.0 yards	=	109 meters
36	<i>chō</i>	= 1 <i>ri</i>	= 2.44 miles	=	3.93 kilometers
1	<i>kairi</i>	=	1.0 naut. mile	=	1,852 meters

Square Measure

1	sq. <i>ken</i>	= 1 <i>tsubo</i>	= 3.95 sq. yards	=	3.31 sq. meters
1	sq. <i>ken</i>	= 1 <i>bu</i>	= 3.95 sq. yards	=	3.31 sq. meters
30	<i>bu</i>	= 1 <i>se</i>	= 119 sq. yards	=	99.3 sq. meters
10	<i>se</i>	= 1 <i>tan</i>	= .245 acre	=	993 sq. meters
10	<i>tan</i>	= 1 <i>chō</i>	= 2.45 acres	=	.992 hectare

Volume Measure

1	<i>shaku</i>	=	.0384 pint	=	.018 liter
10	<i>shaku</i>	= 1 <i>gō</i>	= .384 pint	=	.18 liter
10	<i>gō</i>	= 1 <i>shō</i>	= 1.92 quarts	=	1.8 liters
10	<i>shō</i>	= 1 <i>to</i>	= 4.77 gallons	=	18 liters
10	<i>to</i>	= 1 <i>koku</i>	= 47.7 gallons	=	180 liters
			or 5.12 bushels		

Weights

1	<i>monme</i>	=	.1325 ounce	=	3.75 grams
100	<i>monme</i>	= 1 <i>hyakume</i>	= 13.25 ounces	=	375 grams
160	<i>monme</i>	= 1 <i>kin</i>	= 1.32 pounds	=	.6 kilogram
1,000	<i>monme</i>	= 1 <i>kan</i>			
		or 1 <i>kanme</i>	= 8.72 pounds	=	3.75 kilograms
100	<i>kin</i>	= 1 <i>bikoro</i>	= 132 pounds	=	60 kilograms

TRADITIONAL UNITS OF MEASURE

In many fields, such as science and industry, the Japanese units of measure on this page have been supplanted by the same metric units that are used in the West. However, traditional units still appear in premodern writings as well as in the arts and building trades. A *tsubo* is still the most common unit used in discussions of floor dimensions, for example. Frequently heard, less formally, is *jō*, which refers to the area taken up by a single tatami mat. Because tatami sizes differ according to region and type of construction, so the measurement is inherently imprecise.

Note: All nonmetric English measures shown in this table are in US (non-imperial) units.

IMPERIAL REIGNS AND HISTORICAL ERAS

Until the beginning of the Meiji era (1868), years were referred to by names and numbers in a system based on the reigns of emperors or empresses. Each time a new ruler took the throne, the name of the era (*nengō*) changed and the years were numbered, starting with 1, throughout that reign or until a new era was declared in recognition of some significant event. Today, Western dates and *nengō* are used in tandem. In the table below are all the imperial reigns and the *nengō* they comprise, listed chronologically, with their Western equivalents. In the table beginning on page 75, the era names are presented in alphabetical order.

NOTE

Early *nengō* are highly suspect; the first fourteen are considered legendary, and dates for the next fourteen are not certain.

Empresses are indicated by (F).

All dates shown, until 1873, are by the lunar calendar, as this is how they are typically given in Japan.

Entries in boldface type indicate imperial names and reign dates. Era names are given below the names of the respective emperors and empresses; before Meiji there was frequently more than one era name associated with a single ruler.

1	Jinmu		21	Yūryaku	
2.....	Suizei		22.....	Seinei	
3.....	Annei		23.....	Kenzō	
4.....	Itoku		24.....	Ninken	
5.....	Kōshō		25.....	Buretsu	
6.....	Kōan		26.....	Keitai	
7.....	Kōrei		27.....	Ankan	
8.....	Kōgen		28.....	Senka	
9.....	Kaika	<i>Legendary</i>	29.....	Kinmei	539–71
10.....	Sujin		30.....	Bidatsu	572–85
11.....	Suinin		31.....	Yōmei	585–87
12.....	Keikō		32.....	Sushun	587–92
13.....	Seimu		33.....	Suiko (F)	592–628
14.....	Chūai		34.....	Jomei	629–41
	Jingū Kōgō		35.....	Kōgyoku (F)	642–45
	(Regent)		36.....	Kōtoku	645–54
15.....	Ōjin			Taika	645–50
16.....	Nintoku			Hakuchi	650–54
17.....	Richū		37.....	Saimei (F)	654–61
18.....	Hanzei		38.....	Tenji	661–71
19.....	Ingyō		39.....	Kōbun	671–72
20.....	Ankō		40.....	Tenmu	673–86
				Shuchō	686

*Dates
Uncertain*

Legendary

*Dates
Uncertain*

- 41.....**Jitō (F)** 686–97
 42.....**Monmu** 697–707
 Taihō 701–4
 Kyōun (Keiun) 704–8
 43.....**Genmei (F)** 707–15
 Wadō 708–15
 44.....**Genshō (F)** 715–24
 Reiki 715–17
 Yōrō 717–24
 45.....**Shōmu** 724–49
 Jinki 724–29
 Tenpyō 729–49
 46.....**Kōken (F)** 749–58
 Tenpyō-kanpō 749
 Tenpyō-shōhō 749–57
 Tenpyō-hōji 757–65
 47.....**Junnin** 758–64
 48.....**Shōtoku (F)** 764–70
 Tenpyō-jingo 765–67
 Jingo-keiun 767–70
 49.....**Kōnin** 770–81
 Hōki 770–80
 50.....**Kanmu** 781–806
 Ten’ō 781–82
 Enryaku 782–806
 51.....**Heizei** 806–9
 Daidō 806–10
 52.....**Saga** 809–23
 Kōnin 810–24
 53.....**Junna** 823–33
 Tenchō 824–34
 54.....**Ninmyō** 833–50
 Shōwa (Jōwa) 834–48
 Kajō (Kashō) 848–51
 55.....**Montoku** 850–58
 Ninju 851–54
 Saikō 854–57
 Ten’an 857–59
 56.....**Seiwa** 858–76
 Jōgan 859–77
 57.....**Yōzei** 876–84
 Gangyō (Gankei) 877–85
 58.....**Kōkō** 884–87
 Ninna 885–89
 59.....**Uda** 887–97
 Kanpyō 889–98
 60.....**Daigo** 897–930
 Shōtai 898–901
 Engi 901–23
 Enchō 923–31
 61.....**Suzaku** 930–46
 Shōhei (Jōhei) 931–38
 Tengyō 938–47
 62.....**Murakami** 946–67
 Tenryaku 947–57
 Tentoku 957–61
 Ōwa 961–64
 Kōhō 964–68
 63.....**Reizei** 967–69
 Anna 968–70
 64.....**En’yū** 969–84
 Tenroku 970–73
 Ten’en 973–76
 Jōgen 976–78
 Tengen 978–83
 Eikan 983–85
 65.....**Kazan** 984–86
 Kanna 985–87
 66.....**Ichijō** 986–1011
 Eien 987–89
 Eiso 989–90
 Shōryaku 990–95
 Chōtoku 995–99
 Chōhō 999–1004
 Kankō 1004–12
 67.....**Sanjō** 1011–16
 Chōwa 1012–17
 68.....**Goichijō** 1016–36
 Kannin 1017–21
 Jian 1021–24
 Manju 1024–28
 Chōgen 1028–37
 69.....**Gosuzaku** 1036–45
 Chōryaku 1037–40
 Chōkyū 1040–44
 Kantoku 1044–46

- 70..... **Goreizei 1045–68**
 Eishō 1046–53
 Tengi 1053–58
 Kōhei 1058–65
 Jiryaku 1065–69
- 71..... **Gosanjō 1068–72**
 Enkyū 1069–74
- 72..... **Shirakawa 1072–86**
 Jōhō 1074–77
 Shōryaku (Jōryaku) 1077–81
 Eihō (Eiho) 1081–84
 Ōtoku 1084–87
- 73..... **Horikawa 1086–1107**
 Kanji 1087–94
 Kahō 1094–96
 Eichō 1096–97
 Jōtoku 1097–99
 Kōwa 1099–1104
 Chōji 1104–6
 Kajō 1106–8
- 74..... **Toba 1107–23**
 Tennin 1108–10
 Ten’ei 1110–13
 Eikyū 1113–18
 Gen’ei 1118–20
 Hōan 1120–24
- 75..... **Sutoku 1123–41**
 Tenji 1124–26
 Daiji 1126–31
 Tenshō 1131–32
 Chōshō 1132–35
 Hōen 1135–41
- 76..... **Konoe 1141–55**
 Eiji 1141–42
 Kōji 1142–44
 Ten’yō 1144–45
 Kyūan 1145–51
 Ninpei 1151–54
 Kyūju 1154–56
- 77.... **Goshirakawa 1155–58**
 Hōgen 1156–59
- 78..... **Nijō 1158–65**
 Heiji 1159–60
- Eiryaku 1160–61
 Ōhō 1161–63
 Chōkan 1163–65
- 79..... **Rokujō 1165–68**
 Eiman 1165–66
 Nin’an 1166–69
- 80..... **Takakura 1168–80**
 Kaō 1169–71
 Shōan 1171–75
 Angen 1175–77
 Jishō 1177–81
- 81..... **Antoku 1180–85**
 Yōwa 1181–82
 Juei 1182–84
- 82..... **Gotoba 1183–98**
 Genryaku 1184–85
 Bunji 1185–90
 Kenkyū 1190–99
- 83... **Tsuchimikado 1198–1210**
 Shōji 1199–1201
 Kennin 1201–4
 Genkyū 1204–6
 Ken’ei 1206–7
 Jōgen 1207–11
- 84..... **Juntoku 1210–21**
 Kenryaku 1211–13
 Kenpō 1213–19
 Jōkyū 1219–22
- 85..... **Chūkyō 1221**
- 86..... **Gohorikawa 1221–32**
 Jōō 1222–24
 Gennin 1224–25
 Karoku 1225–27
 Antei 1227–29
 Kangi 1229–32
- 87..... **Shijō 1232–42**
 Jōei 1232–33
 Tenpuku 1233–34
 Bunryaku 1234–35
 Katei 1235–38
 Ryakunin 1238–39
 En’ō 1239–40
 Ninji 1240–43

88..... **Gosaga** 1242–46
 Kangen 1243–47
 89..... **Gofukakusa** 1246–59
 Hōji 1247–49
 Kenchō 1249–56
 Kōgen 1256–57
 Shōka 1257–59
 90..... **Kameyama** 1259–74
 Shōgen 1259–60
 Bun'ō 1260–61
 Kōchō 1261–64
 Bun'ei 1264–75
 91..... **Gouda** 1274–87
 Kenji 1275–78
 Kōan 1278–88
 92..... **Fushimi** 1287–98
 Shōō 1288–93
 Einin 1293–99
 93..... **Gofushimi** 1298–1301
 Shōan 1299–1302
 94..... **Gonijō** 1301–8
 Kengen 1302–3
 Kagen 1303–6
 Tokuji 1306–8
 95..... **Hanazono** 1308–18
 Enkyō 1308–11
 Ōchō 1311–12
 Shōwa 1312–17
 Bunpō (Bunpo) 1317–19
 96..... **Godaigo** 1318–39
 Gen'ō 1319–21
 Genkō 1321–24
 Shōchū 1324–26
 Karyaku 1326–29
 Gentoku 1329–31
 Genkō 1331–34
 Kenmu 1334–36
 Engen 1336–40
 97.... **Gomurakami** 1339–68
 Kōkoku 1340–46
 Shōhei 1346–70
 98..... **Chōkei** 1368–83
 Kentoku 1370–72

Bunchū 1372–75
 Tenju 1375–81
 Kōwa 1381–84
 99.... **Gokameyama** 1383–92
 Genchū 1384–90
 Meitoku 1390–94

EMPERORS OF THE
 NORTHERN COURT

Kōgon 1331–33
 Kōmyō 1336–48
 Sukō 1348–51
 Gokōgon 1352–71
 Goen'yū 1371–82

100.... **Gokomatsu** 1382–1412
 Ōei 1394–1428
 101..... **Shōkō** 1412–28
 Shōchō 1428–29
 102... **Gohanazono** 1428–64
 Eikyō 1429–41
 Kakitsu 1441–44
 Bun'an 1444–49
 Hōtoku 1449–52
 Kyōtoku 1452–55
 Kōshō 1455–57
 Chōroku 1457–60
 Kanshō 1460–66
 103..... **Gotsuchi-**
mikado 1464–1500
 Bunshō 1466–67
 Ōnin 1467–69
 Bunmei 1469–87
 Chōkyō 1487–89
 Entoku 1489–92
 Meiō 1492–1501
 104..... **Gokashi-**
wabara 1500–1526
 Bunki 1501–4
 Eishō 1504–21
 Taiei 1521–28
 105..... **Gonara** 1526–57
 Kyōroku 1528–32

Tenmon (Tenbun)	1532–55	116	Momozono	1747–62
Kōji	1555–58		Kan'en	1748–51
106	Ōgimachi	1557–86	Hōreki	1751–64
	Eiroku	1558–70	117	Gosakura-
	Genki	1570–73		machi (F)
	Tenshō	1573–92		Meiwa
107	Goyōzei	1586–1611	118	Gomo-
	Bunroku	1592–96		mozono
	Keichō	1596–1615		An'ei
108 ...	Gomizuno-o	1611–29	119	Kōkaku
	Genna	1615–24		Tenmei
	Kan'ei	1624–44		Kansei
109	Meishō (F)	1629–43		Kyōwa
110	Gokōmyō	1643–54		Bunka
	Shōhō (Shōho)	1644–48	120	Ninkō
	Keian	1648–52		Bunsei
	Jōō	1652–55		Tenpō
	Meireki	1655–58		Kōka
111	Gosai	1654–63	121	Kōmei
	Manji	1658–61		Kaei
	Kanbun	1661–73		Ansei
112	Reigen	1663–87		Man'en
	Enpō	1673–81		BunKyū
	Tenna	1681–84		Genji
	Jōkyō	1684–88		Keiō
113 ...	Higashiyama	1687–1709	122	Meiji
	Genroku	1688–1704		Meiji
	Hōei	1704–11	123	Taishō
114 ...	Nakamikado	1709–35		Taishō
	Shōtoku	1711–16	124	Shōwa
	Kyōhō	1716–36		Shōwa
115 ...	Sakuramachi	1735–47	125	Akihito
	Genbun	1736–41		Heisei
	Kanpō	1741–44	126	Naruhito
	Enkyō	1744–48		Reiwa
				2019–

JAPANESE VS. WESTERN CALENDARS

Before the Western solar calendar came into use on January 1, 1873, the Chinese lunisolar calendar was the basis in Japan for dividing the year into months. The starting point and end of a year in the traditional calendar and its equivalent in the Western calendar do not coincide exactly. Make sure that any dates prior to 1873 given in Western style have been converted to the actual Western equivalent. To avoid confusion, it is customary in academic writing to leave traditional dates unconverted, referring to them instead as "first day of the first month," or by number (1711/1/1).

While Western dates—months, days, years—are the basis for the modern calendar in Japan, many official Japanese forms (such as bank forms and government documents) still give and require dates in *nengō*.

HISTORICAL ERAS, ALPHABETICAL LIST

This table gives historical eras (*nengō*) alphabetically for easy reference. In text intended for a general audience, *nengō* should be converted to their Western equivalents. In specialized material, provide the *nengō* in parentheses after the equivalent Western date, for example, “1708 (Hōei 4).” Note that the name of the emperor ruling during each era is not included here; imperial names can be found in the table beginning on page 70. A useful resource for converting specific dates is *Japanese Chronological Tables from 601 to 1872 A.D.* (see the listing in **Further References**).

An'ei	1772–81	Chōkyō	1487–89
Angen	1175–77	Chōkyū	1040–44
Anna	968–70	Chōroku	1457–60
Ansei	1854–60	Chōryaku	1037–40
Antei	1227–29	Chōshō	1132–35
		Chōtoku	995–99
		Chōwa	1012–17
Bun'an	1444–49		
Bun'ei	1264–75	Daidō	806–10
Bunchū	1372–75	Daiji	1126–31
Bunji	1185–90		
Bunka	1804–18	Eichō	1096–97
Bunki	1501–4	Eien	987–89
Bunryū	1861–64	Eihō (Eiho)	1081–84
Bunmei	1469–87	Eiji	1141–42
Bun'ō	1260–61	Eikan	983–85
Bunpō (Bunpo)	1317–19	Eikyō	1429–41
Bunroku	1592–96	Eikyū	1113–18
Bunryaku	1234–35	Eiman	1165–66
Bunsei	1818–30	Einin	1293–99
Bunshō	1466–67	Eiroku	1558–70
		Eiryaku	1160–61
Chōgen	1028–37	Eishō	1046–53
Chōhō	999–1004	Eishō	1504–21
Chōji	1104–6	Eiso	989–90
Chōkan	1163–65		

Eitoku	1381–84	Jian	1021–24
Eiwa	1375–79	Jingo-keiun	767–70
Enbun	1356–61	Jinki	724–29
Enchō	923–31	Jiryaku	1065–69
Engen	1336–40	Jishō	1177–81
Engi	901–23	Jōei	1232–33
Enkyō	1308–11	Jōgan	859–77
Enkyō	1744–48	Jōgen	1207–11
Enkyū	1069–74	Jōgen	976–78
En'ō	1239–40	Jōhei (Shōhei)	931–38
Enpō	1673–81	Jōhō	1074–77
Enryaku	782–806	Jōkyō	1684–88
Entoku	1489–92	Jōkyū	1219–22
		Jōō	1222–24
Gen'ei	1118–20	Jōō	1652–55
Gangyō (Gankei)	877–85	Jōryaku (Shōryaku)	1077–81
Genbun	1736–41	Jōtoku	1097–99
Genchū	1384–90	Jōwa (Shōwa)	834–48
Genji	1864–65	Juei	1182–84
Genki	1570–73		
Genkō	1321–24	Kaei	1848–54
Genkō	1331–34	Kagen	1303–6
Genkyū	1204–6	Kahō	1094–96
Genna	1615–24	Kajō	1106–8
Gennin	1224–25	Kajō (Kashō)	848–51
Gen'ō	1319–21	Kakitsu	1441–44
Genroku	1688–1704	Kanbun	1661–73
Genryaku	1184–85	Kan'ei	1624–44
Gentoku	1329–31	Kan'en	1748–51
		Kangen	1243–47
Hakuchi	650–54	Kangi	1229–32
Heiji	1159–60	Kanji	1087–94
Heisei	1989–2019	Kankō	1004–12
Hōan	1120–24	Kanna	985–87
Hōei	1704–11	Kannin	1017–21
Hōen	1135–41	Kanpō	1741–44
Hōgen	1156–59	Kanpyō	889–98
Hōji	1247–49	Kansei	1789–1801
Hōki	770–80	Kanshō	1460–66
Hōreki	1751–64	Kantoku	1044–46
Hōtoku	1449–52	Kaō	1169–71
		Karoku	1225–27

Karyaku	1326–29	Meireki	1655–58
Katei	1235–38	Meitoku	1390–94
Keian	1648–52	Meiwa	1764–72
Keichō	1596–1615		
Keiō	1865–68	Nin'an	1166–69
Keiun (Kyōun)	704–8	Ninji	1240–43
Kenchō	1249–56	Ninju	851–54
Ken'ei	1206–7	Ninna	885–89
Kengen	1302–3	Ninpei	1151–54
Kenji	1275–78		
Kenkyū	1190–99	Ōchō	1311–12
Kenmu	1334–36	Ōei	1394–1428
Kennin	1201–4	Ōhō	1161–63
Kenpō	1213–19	Ōnin	1467–69
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Kōchō	1261–64	Reiki	715–17
Kōgen	1256–57	Reiwa	2019–
Kōhei	1058–65	Ryakunin	1238–39
Kōhō	964–68		
Kōji	1142–44	Saikō	854–57
Kōji	1555–58	Shōan	1171–75
Kōka	1844–48	Shōan	1299–1302
Kōkoku	1340–46	Shōchō	1428–29
Kōnin	810–24	Shōchū	1324–26
Kōshō	1455–57	Shōgen	1259–60
Kōwa	1099–1104	Shōhei	1346–70
Kōwa	1381–84	Shōhei (Jōhei)	931–38
Kyōhō	1716–36	Shōhō	1644–48
Kyōroku	1528–32	Shōji	1199–1201
Kyōtoku	1452–55	Shōka	1257–59
Kyōun (Keiun)	704–8	Shōō	1288–93
Kyōwa	1801–4	Shōryaku (Jōryaku)	1077–81
Kyūan	1145–51	Shōryaku	990–95
Kyūju	1154–56	Shōtai	898–901
		Shōtoku	1711–16
Man'en	1860–61	Shōwa	1312–17
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Tengi	1053-58	Tenshō	1573-92
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Tenji	1124-26	Ten'yō	1144-45
Tenju	1375-81	Tokuji	1306-8
Tenmei	1781-89		
Tenmon (Tenbun)	1532-55	Wadō	708-15
Tenna	1681-84		
Tennin	1108-10	Yōrō	717-24
Ten'ō	781-82	Yōwa	1181-82
Tenpō	1830-44		
Tenpuku	1233-34		

MODERN ERA CONVERSION CHART

The table below gives year-by-year conversions for all dates of the modern era. For pre-Meiji (1868) dates see the preceding two sections.

	<i>Meiji</i>	30	1897	11	1922
		31	1898	12	1923
		32	1899	13	1924
1	1868	33	1900	14	1925
2	1869	34	1901	15	1926
3	1870	35	1902	<i>to December 24</i>	
4	1871	36	1903		
5	1872	37	1904		
6	1873	38	1905	<i>Shōwa</i>	
7	1874	39	1906	<i>from December 25</i>	
8	1875	40	1907		
9	1876	41	1908	1	1926
10	1877	42	1909	2	1927
11	1878	43	1910	3	1928
12	1879	44	1911	4	1929
13	1880	45	1912	5	1930
14	1881	<i>to July 29</i>		6	1931
15	1882			7	1932
16	1883	<i>Taishō</i>		8	1933
17	1884	<i>from July 30</i>		9	1934
18	1885			10	1935
19	1886			11	1936
20	1887	1	1912	12	1937
21	1888	2	1913	13	1938
22	1889	3	1914	14	1939
23	1890	4	1915	15	1940
24	1891	5	1916	16	1941
25	1892	6	1917	17	1942
26	1893	7	1918	18	1943
27	1894	8	1919	19	1944
28	1895	9	1920	20	1945
29	1896	10	1921	21	1946

NOTE

In Meiji 5, on 1872/12/3, the solar calendar was adopted, and that date became the start of Meiji 6 (1873/1/1 by the solar calendar).

22	1947	52	1977	12	2000
23	1948	53	1978	13	2001
24	1949	54	1979	14	2002
25	1950	55	1980	15	2003
26	1951	56	1981	16	2004
27	1952	57	1982	17	2005
28	1953	58	1983	18	2006
29	1954	59	1984	19	2007
30	1955	60	1985	20	2008
31	1956	61	1986	21	2009
32	1957	62	1987	22	2010
33	1958	63	1988	23	2011
34	1959	64	1989	24	2012
35	1960		<i>to January 6</i>	25	2013
36	1961			26	2014
37	1962		<i>Heisei</i>	27	2015
38	1963		<i>from January 7</i>	28	2016
39	1964			29	2017
40	1965			30	2018
41	1966	1	1989	31	2019
42	1967	2	1990		<i>to April 30</i>
43	1968	3	1991		
44	1969	4	1992		<i>Reiwa</i>
45	1970	5	1993		<i>from May 1</i>
46	1971	6	1994		
47	1972	7	1995		
48	1973	8	1996	1	2019
49	1974	9	1997	2	2020
50	1975	10	1998	3	2021
51	1976	11	1999	4	2022

PRINCIPAL PERIODS OF JAPANESE HISTORY

Political Periods

Cultural Periods

PREHISTORIC (GENSHI)

Jōmon, ca. 10,000 B.C.–ca. 300 B.C.
Yayoi, ca. 300 B.C.–A.D. 300
Kofun (Tumulus), ca. 250–552

ANCIENT (KODAI)

Yamato, 300–710

Nara, 710–94
Heian, 794–1185

Asuka, 552–645
Hakuhō, 645–710
Tenpyō, 710–94
Kōnin-Jōgan, 794–894
Fujiwara, 897–1185

MEDIEVAL (CHŪSEI)

Kamakura, 1185–1333
Kenmu, 1333–36
Muromachi (Ashikaga), 1336–1573
Nanbokuchō or “Northern and Southern
courts,” 1336–92; *Muromachi*, 1392–1573
Sengoku (“Warring States”), 1467–1568

Kitayama, 1367–1408
Higashiyama, 1449–73

EARLY MODERN (KINSEI)

Azuchi-Momoyama, 1568–1603
Edo period, 1603–1868; also 1600–1868
Tokugawa period, 1603–1867

Momoyama, 1568–1600
Genroku, 1688–1704
Bunka-Bunsei, 1804–29

MODERN (KINDAI)

Meiji, 1868–1912
Taishō, 1912–26
(prewar) Shōwa, 1926–45

CONTEMPORARY (GENDAI)

(postwar) Shōwa, 1945–89
Heisei, 1989–2019
Reiwa, 2019–

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL PERIODS

A period or *jidai* denotes a major historical division and spans several *nengō*. Depending on one’s interpretation of events the beginning and ending dates vary slightly, and there is some overlap in different categorizations of periods, particularly for the medieval period. Historians, nevertheless, generally agree on the broad outlines of these divisions. While the major dividing points are based on political events, works dealing with cultural and artistic developments often emphasize particular subdivisions within such politically based spans of time. Cultural periods often derive from a particular center of culture.

In most work published about Japan it is customary to refer to *jidai* as “periods” and *nengō* as “eras.” Kamakura (1185–1333) is a period, while Bunpō (1317–19) is an era.

Further References

Whatever choices you make based on the advice in this guide, you may need to remind yourself of the rules from time to time or you may want to show clients who query your decisions the authorities upon which your decisions rest. Many of the works that wordsmiths have long relied on to ensure the accuracy and professionalism of Japan-related material are now available online as well as in print editions. Links to a wide variety of more specialized reference sources available online as recommended by SWET members and updated regularly may be found at japanstylesheet.com.

Style and Writing Manuals

The *Chicago Manual of Style*. University of Chicago Press. Use the most recent edition.

The *Chicago Manual* has been the authoritative manual for American-style book editing for over a century. Reliable advice for not only scholarly works, but popular writing, reports, promotional materials, and other non-fiction texts. Online access by subscription.

The Copyeditor's Handbook. By Amy Einsohn. Berkeley: University of California Press. Use the most recent edition. This essential guide is updated to reflect changes in the *Chicago Manual* and other style manuals. Its explanations of the reasoning behind copyediting decisions are particularly useful.

Grammatically Correct: The Writer's Essential Guide to Spelling, Style, Usage, Grammar, and Punctuation. By Anne Stilman. 2nd edition. Cincinnati: Writer's Digest Books, 2010.

Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace. By Joseph M. Williams and Joseph Bizup. 12th edition. New York: Pearson, 2016. Those aiming to produce writing that goes beyond merely “correct, concise, and consistent” will find any edition of this book informative and inspiring.

The Subversive Copy Editor: Advice from Chicago (Or, How to Negotiate Good Relationships with Your Writers, Your Colleagues, and Yourself). By Carol Fisher Saller. 2nd edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016.

References on Japan

Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan. 9 vols. Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1983. Still the most comprehensive reference work on Japan available to date, this book is most useful in the social sciences and humanities. It is also a reliable source for background information on historical, literary, and other matters related to biography, culture, ideas, etc. Use in combination with online and standard Japanese sources.

Japan: An Illustrated Encyclopedia. Tokyo: Kodansha, 1993. This is an updated and abridged version of the nine-volume *Encyclopedia of Japan*, while revising and supplementing its entries. The 1,924-page tome enjoys the confidence of translators and editors in the shifting world of online resources.

Concise Dictionary of Modern Japanese History. Compiled by Janet E. Hunter. Berkeley and Tokyo: University of California Press and Kodansha International, 1984. Hardback and paperback editions.

For quick access to essential and reliable information on events, people, and themes of modern history often assumed to be understood in Japanese texts, this is a valuable source.

Japanese Chronological Tales from 601 to 1872 A.D. By Paul

Y. Tsuchihashi. Tokyo: Monumenta Nipponica, Sophia University Press, 1988.

Mainly for use in scholarly publications, the charts provided allow for accurate transcription of dates between the traditional and Western calendars.

Dictionaries

Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition.

A reliable English dictionary not only aids with spelling, but allows for rapid checking of hyphenation, reveals which Japanese words have entered the English lexicon, and confirms correct word division. This is SWET's house dictionary, and it has a free online version at www.merriam-webster.com.

Kenkyusha's New Japanese-English Dictionary, 5th edition. Print, computer application, and online subscription editions.

Updated in 2017, this J-E dictionary is still the most comprehensive paper dictionary. The features that made it difficult to use in previous editions are overcome in the online version, which continues to be updated regularly, but looking up words in a paper dictionary still makes them stick longer than quick searches in an electronic version. Have both paper and digital versions at your fingertips for greatest convenience.

Internet Resources

A list of online dictionaries, glossaries, editorial guidelines, and other resources for various specialized fields and aspects of translation and editing as recommended by SWET members is maintained at SWET's dedicated website for the *Japan Style Sheet* at japanstylesheet.com.

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About SWET

The Society of Writers, Editors, and Translators (SWET), founded in 1980, is an association of professionals engaged not only in writing, editing, and translating, but also in teaching, research, rewriting, design and production, copywriting, and other areas related to the written English word in Japan. SWET has no officers; its activities are planned and implemented by the society's steering committee and other cooperating members.

SWET organizes and publishes reports on events—lectures, panel discussions, workshops, social gatherings—in Tokyo, the Kansai region, and elsewhere. The aim of these events and reports is to share expertise and experience and promote collaboration and mutual support among members, thereby pursuing higher standards in professional work relating to the use of the written English word in Japan-related contexts.

The *SWET Newsletter*, published from 1981 through 2012, records the know-how, experience, and insights of SWET members and other professional wordsmiths. Selections from the *Newsletter*, including some complete issues, are available in an archive on the SWET website, www.swet.jp. The website, redesigned in 2012, serves as a medium for publication of new articles and reports on SWET events and as a venue for networking among members across Japan and around the world.

SWET also supports the SWET-L mailing list, a free service open to non-SWET members for discussion of topics related to English writing, editing, translating, and publishing of Japan-related content. To subscribe, see the tab on the SWET website.

In 1991, SWET published *Wordcraft: English Writing, Editing*

and Translation in Japan, an anthology of articles published in the *SWET Newsletter* between 1980 and 1990. Continuing the spirit of that first anthology, which is now out of print, SWET published *Wordcraft: The SWET Files in 2014*. The *Japan Style Sheet* is supported and updated by the members of SWET.

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