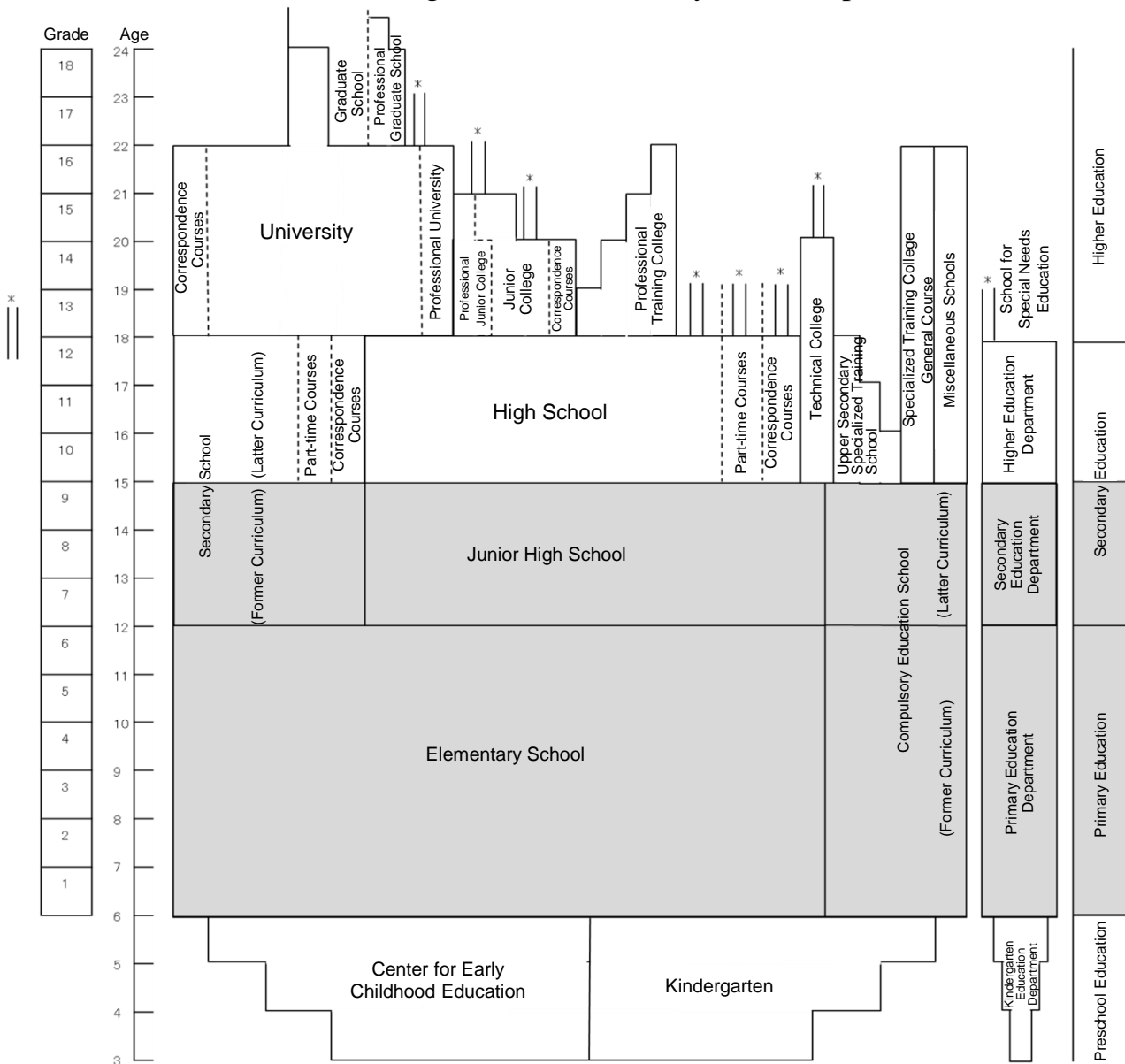


1 Education system in Japan

The education system currently used in Japan is called a 6-3-3-4 system, with 6 years of elementary school, 3 years of junior high school, 3 years of high school, and 4 years of university. Elementary school and junior high school are compulsory. Kindergartens and other facilities offer preschool education.

Diagram of the school system in Japan



- Notes: (1) The gray sections are compulsory education.  
 (2) Asterisks denote specialist education.  
 (3) For a special course with a minimum term of study of one year can be placed in high schools, latter curriculum of secondary schools, universities, junior colleges, and higher education departments of schools for special needs education.  
 (4) Centers for early childhood education are both schools and child welfare facilities and children aged 0 to 2 years can also enroll.  
 (5) There are no uniform specifications for age and enrollment requirements for specialized training college general courses and miscellaneous schools.

## 1-1 Elementary school and junior high school

Parents and guardians with children aged 6 to 15 who have Japanese nationality are obligated to have those children attend elementary school and junior high school.

A foreign child may transfer to a public elementary school or junior high school and receive education at no cost (no tuition or textbook costs). Tell your local municipal office you wish to enter your child into a Japanese school. Then, take the Enrollment Permit for Non-Japanese Students and other documents you receive from the office and go to the school that was specified.

If you wish to have your child transfer to a public elementary school or junior high school (mid-year), tell your local municipal office you wish to enter your child into a Japanese school. Then, take the Enrollment Permit for Non-Japanese Students and other documents you receive from the office and go to the school that was specified.

Tuition and textbook costs for public elementary schools and junior high schools are free.

In Japan, in addition to elementary schools and junior high schools, there are also compulsory education schools that offer integrated compulsory education for nine years and schools for special needs education for children with disabilities.

- Guidebook for Starting School

(English, Korean, Vietnamese, Filipino, Chinese, Portuguese, and Spanish versions are available)

[http://www.mext.go.jp/a\\_menu/shotou/clarinet/003/1320860.htm](http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/clarinet/003/1320860.htm)



Schools for special needs education

For children with disabilities, the educational needs of each individual must be assessed and appropriate education must be given with special considerations to maximize their abilities and potential, promote their independence, and allow them to participate in society. To achieve this, various systems are used depending on the type and level of disability, such as a special curriculum in schools for special needs education or classes for special needs education at elementary and junior high schools, small class sizes, textbooks created with special considerations, staff and faculty with expertise and experience working with children with disabilities, and facilities and equipment designed to accommodate disabilities.

Note that the elementary school department and junior high school department in schools for special needs education are part of compulsory education.

one point



PTA

The PTA is an organization that aims to promote healthy development of children and comprises parents, guardians, and teachers working together to deepen ties and learn from one another. Most PTAs in Japan are formed for each school by the parents and guardians of children attending the school and the staff and faculty at the school.

Note that the PTA is a volunteer organization of members who join because they agree with the objectives of activities proposed by the respective PTA.

### 1-2 High school

High schools take on the later stage of secondary education following junior high school and before university and offer not only regular secondary education, but also specialized education.

High schools are divided into full-time, part-time, and correspondence courses depending on the educational format.

As a rule, students must participate in a selection process when enrolling in a high school.

### 1-3 Schools for foreign nationals

In addition to elementary schools, junior high schools, and high schools, there are also various forms of educational facilities for foreign national students. They are grouped under the term 'schools for foreign nationals.' So-called International Schools are also included as schools for foreign nationals. As foreign nationals each have different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, languages, educational curricula, and school advancement and employment experience, when enrolling in school, it may be best to choose one that is most suited for their needs. (For details on admission qualifications for university for students who have graduated from schools for foreign nationals in Japan, see '1-7. Higher Education Institutions (e.g. universities).')

#### 1-4 Evening junior high school

There are 33 evening junior high schools in 27 cities in 9 prefectures in Japan for students past the age for compulsory education who could not complete compulsory education for various reasons.

Foreign nationals who could not complete compulsory education in their country of origin or in Japan may attend evening junior high school. If there is an evening junior high school nearby, consult the board of education in that jurisdiction.

#### 1-5 Examination for Granting an Equivalency Certificate of Lower Secondary School Graduation

If you did not graduate from junior high school in Japan for reasons such as lacking Japanese citizenship, this exam measures whether or not you have an equivalent level of academic skills or higher as someone who graduated from junior high school. The exam is held once a year, and those who pass are certified to have an equivalent level of academic skills as someone who graduated from junior high school and are given a qualification (for candidacy for an examination) that makes them eligible to take the entrance examinations for higher education schools in Japan.

#### 1-6 Upper Secondary School Equivalency Examination

If you did not graduate from high school in Japan, this exam measures whether or not you have an equivalent level of academic skills or higher as someone who graduated from high school. The exam is held twice a year, and those who pass are certified to have an equivalent level of academic skills as someone who graduated from high school and are given a qualification for candidacy for an examination that makes them eligible to take the entrance examinations for universities, professional universities, junior colleges, professional junior colleges, professional training colleges (specialized training college post-secondary course) in Japan. The qualification can also be used in job hunting and qualification examinations, for example.

#### 1-7 Higher education institutions (e.g. universities)

In Japan, students who have completed high school, secondary school, or a designated school for foreign nationals ([http://www.mext.go.jp/a\\_menu/koutou/shikaku/07111314/003.htm](http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/shikaku/07111314/003.htm)) are qualified for admission to a university, professional and vocational university, junior college, professional and professional training college (specialized training college post-secondary course).

The International Baccalaureate, Abitur, Baccalaureate, or GCE Advanced Level qualifications that are international qualifications for admission to university are also recognized as admission qualifications for university. (List of International Baccalaureate authorized schools in Japan: <https://ibconsortium.mext.go.jp/ib-japan/authorization/>)

Students who received education outside of Japan and have completed a 12-year program at an educational institution that has been accredited by an international evaluation organization (WASC, CIS, ACSI) are also recognized as having admission qualifications for university in Japan.

In addition to the above, institutions of higher education in Japan include graduate schools and professional graduate schools usually attended after graduating from university and technical college attended after graduating from junior high school, for example. Each of these have their own admission qualifications.

#### 1-8 Entrance examinations for higher education Institutions

To enroll in a higher education institution, you must take the exam held by the respective higher education institution and go through a document screening. However, special admission is sometimes available for foreign nationals as decided by the respective institution. The Examination for Japanese University Admission for International Students (EJU) held by the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) for international students can be used at many universities and other schools for special admission.

## 2 Financial aid for educational expenses

### 2-1 Financial school aid

There is a system that offers parents and guardians in low income households who have elementary or junior high school aged children partial assistance for the expenses such as school supplies and school lunch.

The types of assistance and income limits vary from municipality to municipality.

### 2-2 High school tuition support fund

This system provides subsidies to cover tuition for high schools and similar level schools for students in households with an annual income of less than about 9.1 million yen.

The amount provided for students attending national or public high school is the same as their school's tuition. For students attending private schools or other schools, the upper payment limit increases with their households' income.

In either case, an application must be submitted. Check with your school for information.

### 2-3 High school supplemental scholarship fund

This system subsidizes educational expenses other than tuition, such as costs of textbooks and school supplies only parents and guardians with high school students in low income households are eligible for this system.

The amount varies with the type of school students are-attending. To receive a scholarship, an application must be submitted. For details, please visit your school or local prefectural office.

### 2-4 Scholarships in the higher education stage

Scholarships are established by the national government, local governments, and private organizations.

The national scholarship system offers grants and loans. Foreign nationals whose status of residence is Special Permanent Resident, Permanent Resident, Spouse or Child of Japanese National, Spouse or Child of Permanent Resident, or Long-term Resident and who will attend a higher education institution are eligible for these grants and loans. There are also grant-type scholarships for foreign nationals with a 'Student' status of residence who meet criteria for grades.

While grants do not need to be paid back, loans are borrowed and must be paid back at some point. There are two types of loan-type scholarships: loans without interest (*murishi*) and loans with interest (*yurishi*).

### 3 Studying Japanese

Being able to speak Japanese expands your range of activities and helps facilitate day-to-day activities. You can make new friends and acquaintances and those people may help you during your life in Japan. Language has the power to make your dreams come true. Keep studying Japanese so you can live how you like in Japanese.

#### 3-1 Places for learning Japanese

In addition to Japanese study at regular Japanese language schools and universities or other higher education institutions, Japanese classes are also held by private organizations such as local government offices, international associations, and NPOs. Get information about daily life and make friends while studying Japanese. Look and see if there are any Japanese schools or Japanese classes in your area.

Also, a growing number of people are learning Japanese with distance learning using social media or e-learning. Find the learning method that works best for you.

##### (1) Japanese schools

There are different courses depending on your goal, such as furthering your education, finding a job, or preparing for an exam, and you can study at any level from beginner to advanced. You can choose the lesson style, such as classes, group lessons, or private lessons. Most places require a fee.

##### (2) Local Japanese classes

These are held by the local municipal government or private organizations, often in community centers, spare classrooms in schools, and churches. Many are taught by volunteers and are cheaper than Japanese schools, but few offer daily study and most are only once or twice a week.

\*Check the following when looking for a Japanese class:

(1) Name of class, (2) organizer, (3) location, (4) contact information, (5) contact method, (6) languages, (7) study period, (8) number of sessions, (9) day and time, (10) eligibility qualifications, (11) cost, (12) class format (e.g. group, one-on-one), (13) number of students, (14) level, (15) teachers, (16) curriculum, and (17) availability of parking and daycare services

##### (3) Correspondence and distance education

If you are too busy to attend Japanese classes because of work or caring for your children, for example, you can also learn Japanese through correspondence courses or e-learning. Fees and service format vary, so it is best to choose the one that is easiest for you to stick with.

#### 3-2 Japanese Language Education Program for "Foreigners Living in Japan"

Actions performed by foreign nationals living in Japan that are required for forming a basic life base in day-to-day life or are urgent in relation to safety are expressed as 'daily life actions' in 23 languages. Check what you are currently able to achieve in Japanese and what you want to be able to achieve. You can then convey this to your Japanese teacher or the person who is helping you study Japanese.

\*Examples of daily life actions (23 languages)

[http://www.bunka.go.jp/seisaku/kokugo\\_nihongo/kyoiku/nihongo\\_curriculum/index\\_2.html](http://www.bunka.go.jp/seisaku/kokugo_nihongo/kyoiku/nihongo_curriculum/index_2.html)

### 3-3 Teaching materials for learning Japanese

Before buying a textbook, consider if you want to study alone or with someone else. Most people have a friend, local volunteer, someone at their workplace, family member, or someone else who teaches them Japanese. When studying in a class, there is usually a textbook you have to use, but if you are just studying with someone, you can talk with them and decide what textbook to use together.

Next is the content for study. Do you want to study the Japanese writing system (hiragana, katakana, kanji, romaji), conversation, or comprehensive learning covering reading, writing, speaking, and listening? Textbooks vary depending on your needs.

You can find textbooks at large bookstores, and the Handbook of Learning Japanese and Life in Japan also has examples for your reference.

[http://www.bunka.go.jp/english/policy/japanese\\_language/education/handbook/](http://www.bunka.go.jp/english/policy/japanese_language/education/handbook/)