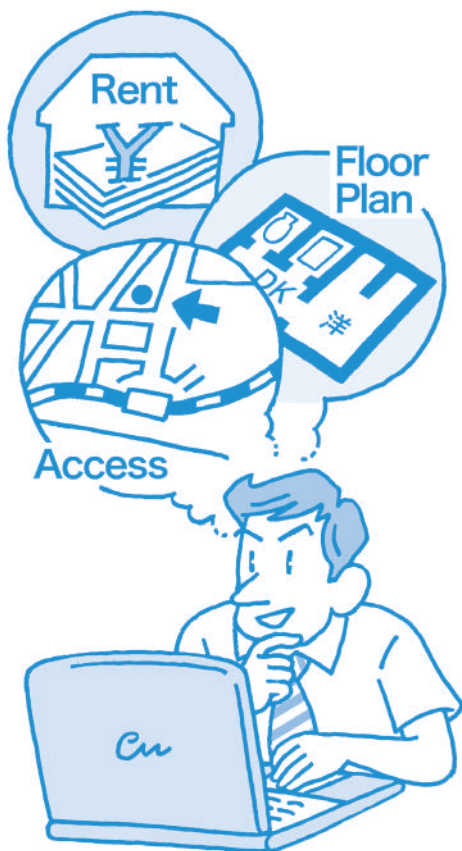


Apartment Search Guidebook



English

E02

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※The **bold and underlined words** are explained in “**6** Real Estate Terms You Should Know When Renting Housing.”

From Looking for Rental Housing to Moving In

1 Rental Procedures and Contract Flow When Renting Housing

Flow When Renting Housing

Look for housing on the Internet.
Specifically, look for rental housing
on real estate information sites or the
Safety Net Housing website.

*If you find housing that matches
your requirements, contact the real
estate agent.

Visit real estate
agents in the
neighborhood.

Tell the real estate agent the requirements for the housing you are seeking.

Go to look at the rental housing.

If you want to contact for the rental housing, fill out the tenant application.

※A guarantor or use of a rental guarantee
company is often required when making
an application.

Tenancy examination and decision by the real estate agent.

Make an appointment

Important points explanation
Receive an explanation of the terms of the contract.

Sign the contract and pay the required fees,
including the security deposit, key money, agency fee,
damage insurance premium, rent, and common services fee.

An original copy of the contract is retained by the leaser and renter.

Receive the key to the housing and move in.

1 How to Look for Rental Housing

- You can search for housing using an Internet real estate information websites.

There is a website (in Japanese) called “Safety Net Housing” where you can search for rental housing that accepts foreigners: <http://www.safetynet-jutaku.jp/guest/index.php>

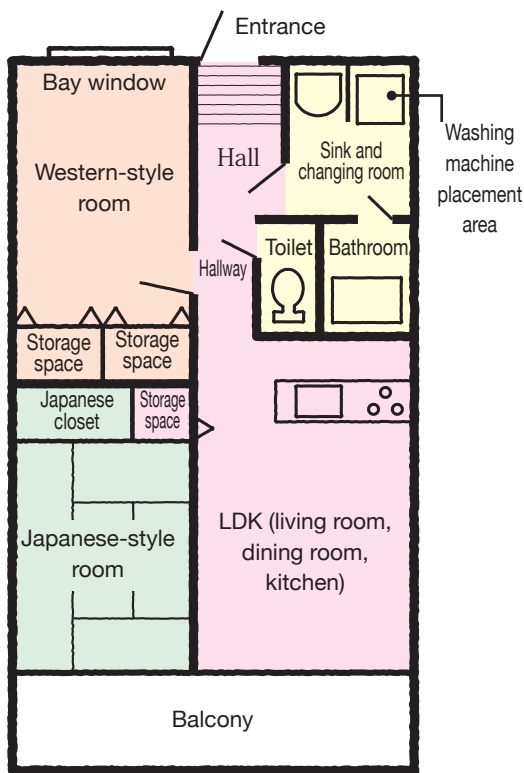


website (in Japanese) called “Safety Net Housing”

- If you cannot acquire the required information from the Internet, go to local real estate agents and tell them the requirements for the housing you are seeking and have them introduce housing to you. Real estate agents post rental housing information so that it can be viewed from outside their offices. Looking at the postings will give you an idea about the rents in the area you want to live in.
- If you are a foreign student, ask at the section in charge of students at your school if the school has student housing information.
- You also might try asking acquaintances about housing they have heard of.

[Reading floor layouts]

- In Japan, floor layouts are expressed using such terms as “2LDK.”
- The “L” stands for living room, the “D” for dining room, and the “K” for kitchen. “DK” means one room jointly serves as the dining room and kitchen. “LDK” means one room jointly serves as the living room, dining room, and kitchen.
- If there is a number, such as “1” or “2” in front, such as “1DK” or “2LDK,” it shows the number of independent rooms. For example, “2LDK” means there are 2 independent rooms in addition to the LDK.



2LDK

※This is an example floor layout.

E06

2 Visit a real estate agent

- When visiting a real estate agent, dress appropriately to give a good first impression to the agent.
- If you do not speak Japanese well, bring someone who does speak Japanese well with you when you visit a real estate agent.
- Some local governments and businesses provide services in which staff will accompany you to assist you when visiting a real estate agent.

3 Your housing requirements

- Be sure to clearly state your housing requirements, such as the closest train station, rent, size, and furnishings and equipment.
 - ➡ It would be good to fill out the Requirements Check Sheet on page E21-22 in advance and show it to a real estate agent.

4 Things you will be asked by a real estate agent

- Generally, a real estate agent will ask you about the following.

Your name, occupation, co-occupants (number of people), income, Japanese language capability, the reason you are looking for housing, etc.
- Since in some cases you might be asked to fill out a rental application on the day you visit the agent, take identification (such as your residency card or passport) with you.
- You also might be asked if you have a guarantor.

5 Viewing the housing

- If you find housing that matches your requirements, go and look at it with the real estate agent. You can view housing free of charge. You do not need to apply to rent the apartment if you are not satisfied with it after viewing it.

- When viewing the housing, check facilities such as the kitchen and air-conditioning, and check to make sure there is enough room for items such as a refrigerator and washing machine.
- In addition to the housing, also check the surrounding environment and the convenience. Ask where are the train stations and bus stops, supermarkets and convenience stores, post office, banks, hospitals, parks, etc.

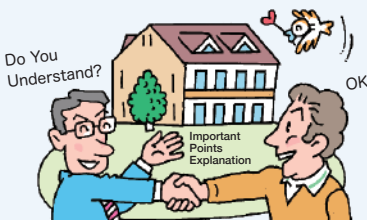
6 Applying to rent the housing

- If you like the housing, apply to rent it and submit the documents needed for the tenancy examination.
➔ Use the checklist on pp. E23.
- The real estate agent and landlord will conduct a tenancy examination and if you pass the examination, you can move in.
- It usually takes 1-2 weeks from when you apply to rent until you can move in.
- When forming a rental agreement in Japan, use of a rental guarantee company or providing a guarantor is necessary, in case the tenant is unable to pay the rent. Ask the real estate agent for more information.



7 Explanation important points

- Before signing the rental agreement, have the real estate agent explain the important points to you regarding the rental agreement and the housing.



8 Rental agreement

- When you rent housing, you will form a rental agreement. The rental agreement is a document that specifies the promises between the landlord and the renter. Read the terms of the rental agreement, have them explained to you, and sign the agreement only after you understand the terms well. Signing the rental agreement means that you understand its terms and promise to observe them. If a real estate agent is acting as an intermediary, you will be charged an agency fee.
 - Before signing the rental agreement, check the following items when receiving the important points explanation.
 - Whether the rental agreement is a regular rental agreement or a lease agreement.
 - Ask about the amount of the security deposit, key money, etc., required at contract signing, and the amount of the Shikibiki (non-refundable restoration fee) if any.
 - For a regular rental agreement, ask if there is an agreement renewal fee, and if there is, how much it is.
 - Can the housing be redecorated and is co-occupancy by anyone other than the tenants, or keeping pets, prohibited?
 - What are the original condition restoration conditions?
- Check on the cost of original condition restoration at the time of vacating to prevent trouble from arising.

2 Documents and Fees Required

Item	Description
Documents required when applying to rent	Passport, residency card, proof of earnings, employment certificate, student registration certificate, etc. (If using a <u>guarantor</u> , the <u>guarantor's</u> proof of earnings and seal registration certificate)
Payments required when making a rental agreement	<u>Security deposit</u> , <u>key money</u> , <u>agency fee</u> , <u>damage insurance premium</u> , <u>rent</u> (paid one month in advance in Japan), <u>common service fee</u> , etc. These vary by region, but a rule of thumb is an amount equivalent to 4 to 7 months rent. Generally, payment is made in cash or by bank transfer. (If using a rental guarantee company, the guarantee fee [often, about one-half month's rent for a two-year guarantee])

3 Move-in Procedures

1 Receiving the key

- You will be given the key to the housing after the rental agreement is signed and you have paid the amount due at signing. This key must be returned to the landlord at the end of the contract period, so be careful not to lose it.

2 Checking the interior

- When receiving the key, if possible, have the real estate agent accompany you to check the condition of the housing and it is a good idea to create a checklist. Drawing a simple floor layout and marking the damaged or dirty areas and attaching dated photographs are useful in avoiding trouble in the future. Also be sure to check that all furnishings and equipment operate properly.



3 Applying for electricity, gas, and water

- To apply for electricity, write your name, address, and usage start date on the postcard attached to the breaker and mail it in.
- For gas, contact a gas company ahead of time and request that the gas be turned on before the move-in date. You must be present when the gas is turned on.
- For water, contact the section in charge of waterworks at your local government office and follow the procedure for having the water turned on. Write your name, address, and usage start date on the provided postcard and mail it in.
- Ask the real estate agent whom to contact for each of the above services.

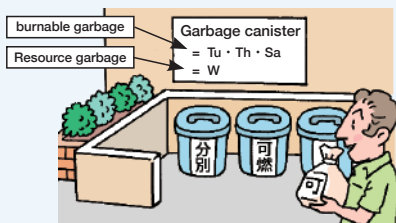
4 Telephone and Internet procedures

- For fixed telephone lines, contact the telephone company and complete the procedures for a new line.
- For the Internet, contact an Internet service provider to begin Internet service.
- Check with the real estate agent for contact information.

4 Post-Move-in Residency Rules

1 Setting out the garbage

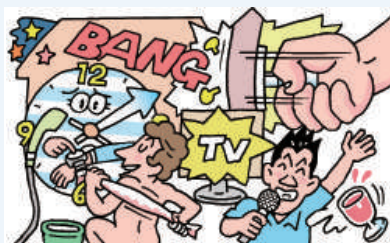
- The way for taking out the garbage differs depending on the neighborhood in which you live (city, ward, town, or village). The day and time period when different types of garbage are to be set out is decided, so when you move in ask the real estate agent, the neighbors, or the local government office about the set day and time.



- If you do not set out the garbage at the appointed time, it will not be collected even if you separate it properly, and this will often cause trouble with the neighbors. Be especially careful to observe the appointed day and time.
- Items that need to be checked
 - Days and time the garbage is to be set out
 - Location where the garbage is to be set out
 - Separation of burnable and non-burnable
 - Separation of recyclable waste (bottles, cans, PET plastic bottles, newspapers, etc.)
 - How to dispose of large items, etc.
- In cities, wards, towns, or villages with many foreign residents, there may be pamphlets with illustrations in foreign languages that explain how to put out the garbage. Ask at the local government office or the waste collection office.

2 Caution regarding noise

- In multi-family dwellings, sound travels easily to the neighbors or to the floors above and below, so be careful not to be noisy especially late at night or early in the morning.
- For example, loud voices, parties, televisions and stereos, musical instruments, vacuum cleaners and washing machines, the sound of children running around, slamming of doors, taking a bath at midnight, and similar actions can lead to noise-related problems, so be careful not to disturb the neighbors.



3 How to use Japanese housing

In Japan, tenants are obligated to restore rental housing to its original conditions. You must pay the expense incurred to restore the rental housing to its original conditions when it has been damaged or dirtied as a result of failing to follow the tips above.

[1] Housing in general

- Japanese houses have a step up from the entrance to the hall or room. Shoes are removed in the entrance before entering the rest of the house.

In Japan, people sit directly on the floor or on a cushion placed on the floor. So be sure to remove your shoes in the entrance. You must not enter the rest of the house with your shoes on.



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- Japan is very humid (especially in the summer time), so take care to air out the inside of the housing. If condensation forms, wipe it off. Leaving condensation could cause mold and mildew to form.
- Putting nails in the walls of the housing or painting it are often prohibited, so be sure to check what is prohibited by the rental agreement.



[2] Kitchen

- Do not wash grease or food scraps down the sink drain. Absorb the grease with newspaper or other material and put it in the burnable garbage.
- When cooking generates strong smells or smoke, turn on the exhaust fan and make sure the smell does not linger in the housing.



[3] Bathroom and toilet

- Generally, bathrooms in Japan have a separate washing area from the bathtub.
- Do not wash waste and other matter down the bathroom drain, since it could become plugged.
- The bathtub is only used to hold hot water and washing

of the hair or body is done outside of the bathtub in the washing area. First rinse off all of the shampoo and soap before soaking in the bathtub.

- If more than one person will take a bath, the hot water in the bathtub is not drained and can be used as is for the next person. Some tubs have reheating features to warm the water if it cools off.



- Do not flush anything but bodily waste and toilet paper down the toilet.
- You will cause your neighbors trouble if a drain or toilet becomes plugged and overflows. If you cause damage to housing below yours, you will be responsible for paying for it.

[4] Common service areas and balconies

- In multi-family dwellings, the halls, stairs, and other locations outside of your housing are common service areas. Do not place garbage or personal property in these areas. These common service areas are also used as escape routes in times of emergency.
- Balconies might also be used as escape routes in times of emergency. Do not block the escape routes, etc., with belongings.



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[5] Bicycle parking space

- Line up your bicycle in an orderly fashion in the designated area, such as a bicycle parking space. When there are rules, such as affixing a special sticker to the bicycle, these rules must be followed.

5 Moving (Vacating) Procedures

1 Moving notice

- When moving out, notify the landlord or real estate agent within the period specified in the rental agreement (usually 1 to 2 months in advance) that you will be terminating the rental agreement (termination notice).

2 Turning off electricity, gas, and water

- At least 1 week before moving out, notify the electric power company, gas company, and section in charge of waterworks at your local government office to have the services turned off.
- Staff from the electric power company, gas company, and section in charge of waterworks at your local government office will come to the housing on the move-out day to have you complete the turn-off procedures. You will be charged for the service provided up to that day.

3 Telephone and Internet procedures

- For fixed telephone lines, contact the telephone company and complete the moving procedures.
- For the Internet, notify the contracting provider of your change of address, etc.

4 Postal matter procedures

- Go to the post office and complete procedures for having your mail forwarded. If you do this, mail going to your former address will be sent to the new address for a set period of time (within Japan, etc.).

5 Returning the key and vacating the premises

- Return the key when vacating the premises.
- Original condition restoration means repairing areas of the housing you have broken or damaged before vacating the housing. The real estate agent or landlord will accompany you for an inspection of the housing to compare the condition of the housing and the furnishings and equipment with that at the time of move-in to check how much original condition restoration, etc., is required.

6 Security deposit settlement

- In principle, the security deposit will be returned after vacating the housing. However, if there are expenses for original condition restoration or to dispose of belongings left in the housing, etc., such expenses will be subtracted from the security deposit. If the cost of original condition restoration exceeds the amount of the security deposit, you must pay the difference.

6 Real Estate Terms You Should Know When Renting Housing

[Termination Notice]

When terminating the rental agreement before it expires, you will need to notify the landlord or real estate agent in writing within the period specified in the rental agreement (usually 1 to 2 months in advance).

[Common Service Fee (Management Fee)]

This is money that covers the cost of electricity used or cleaning fees, etc., for spaces used in common by the tenants, such as stairways and hallways. In Japan, you pay a common service fee (or management fee) that is separate from the rent. This is generally paid for the current month together with the rent at the end of the previous month.

[Original Condition Restoration]

You must pay the expense incurred to restore the rental housing to its original conditions when it has been damaged or dirtied willfully, negligently, or carelessly by you. This is called the original condition restoration fee and is subtracted from the security deposit when the housing is vacated. Take care to keep the housing clean and in good repair.

[Renewal Fee]

This is money paid to the landlord by the renter when the rental agreement is renewed to continue the agreement and is specified in a special term in the rental agreement. The contract period is normally 2 years.

[Security Deposit (Guarantee Money)]

The security deposit is deposited with the landlord at the time the rental agreement is signed as a safeguard against non-payment of rent or repairs required when the rental housing is vacated. As a guideline this is usually about the equivalent of 2 months rent. Any remaining security deposit after settle of expenses at the time the rental housing is vacated is returned to you.

In some areas the security deposit is called guarantee money. The guarantee money is often the equivalent of 6 months rent.

[Non-refundable Restoration Fee]

The non-refundable restoration fee is a contract method that sets in advance the amount of the portion of the security deposit or guarantee money that will not be returned when the housing is vacated. This is often required in the Tokai Region, Kansai Region, and Kyushu.

[Important Points Explanation]

When a real estate agent is acting as the agent for rental housing, the real estate agent will explain the important points of the rental agreement to the renter (potential renter) before the rental agreement is signed and an important points explanation sheet will be given to the renter. The important points regarding the state of equipment, handling of the security deposit, etc., will be explained, so listen carefully and ask questions when you do not understand something.

[Damage Insurance Premium]

It is common at rental agreement signing to acquire damage insurance coverage to protect against fire or water damage caused by the tenant.

[Lease Agreement]

A lease agreement is a rental agreement that covers a specified contract period and ends at the end of the contract period without being renewed. A new contract can be made by agreement between the landlord and renter.

[Co-occupants]

If there will be co-occupants in the rental housing, this must be stated to the landlord when the rental agreement is being formed. If this is not stated and you allow co-occupants without permission, you could be evicted from the housing.

[Agency Fee]

This is money that is paid as a fee to the real estate agent and is set within 1 month rent.

[Regular Rental Agreement]

A regular rental agreement is the type of rental agreement generally used in Japan. The landlord cannot refuse to renew the agreement at the end of the agreement period without due cause. In other words, the contract is automatically renewed even if there is no renewal agreement.

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[Real Estate Agent]

This is an agent that serves as the landlord's agent for renting housing and that buys and sells real estate.

[Application Fee]

This is money that is paid to the real estate agent when reserving a rental agreement. Check if the application fee is returned if a rental agreement is not formed.

[Rent]

This is the charge for renting the housing, and generally the rent for the current month is due at the end of the previous month. If you move into or out of housing after the first day of the month, the rent for that month in principle will be prorated.

[Rent Liability Guarantee Company]

A rent liability guarantee company is a company that guarantees to pay the rent to the landlord in the event that you do not pay the rent. To use such a company, you must pay a set guarantee fee (this is often 35% to 50% of one month's rent paid in advance as the guarantee fee for 2 years). However, this is not insurance. The guarantee company will bill you for the rent that it paid for you. You may be asked to use this service when applying to rent housing.

[Key Money]

This is money that is paid to the landlord at the rental agreement signing. Key money is often required in the Kanto Region and is usually 1 or 2 months rent. Key money is not returned. Recently there is some rental housing that does not require key money to rent.

[Guarantor]

This is a person who pays unpaid rent or unpaid repair costs after you vacate rental housing when you do not/cannot make the payment yourself. A guarantor is required when applying to rent rental housing. Guarantors must have an income that exceeds a certain level. It may be requested when you apply to rent housing.

Information Useful for Renting Housing

Foreigner Residency Support

① **Council of Local Authorities and International Relations**

[Multilingual Living Information Page]

Information necessary for renting a property is provided in Japanese, English, Chinese, Korean, German, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Thai, Russian, and Myanmar.

<http://www.clair.or.jp/tagengo/>

② **Sumasen Kanagawa Foreigner Living Support Center**

Offers various consultations and interpreting related to housing to foreigners in English, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, and Portuguese. Support for finding rental housing is also provided.

☎045-228-1752

<http://www.sumasen.com/>

③ **Saitama Prefecture Resident Living Department International Section**

[Trusted Renting Support Agent System]

Real estate agents registered with the prefecture as “Trusted Renting Support Agents” help foreigners to find housing. A list of member agents is available on the website.

☎048-830-2705

<http://www.pref.saitama.lg.jp/a0306/documents/201503anshinlistnihongo.pdf>

④ **“Consultation for Foreigners” of local governments and international exchange associations**

Consultation regarding housing is provided, so be sure to ask them.

Exchange Student/Regular Student Residence Support

① Japan Educational Exchanges and Services

[Comprehensive Renter's Insurance for Foreign Students Studying in Japan]

This is a support system that makes it easier for parties affiliated with schools to serve as guarantors for international students.

☎03-5454-5275

<http://www.jees.or.jp/crifs/index.htm>

② Chiba International Center

[Foreign Student Housing Advisor System]

This system gives referrals to real estate agents that support the finding of rental housing by exchange students and regular students in Chiba Prefecture. In addition, living information is provided in Japanese, English, Chinese, and Korean.

☎043-297-0245

<http://www.mcic.or.jp/>

③ Japan Property Management Association Kyoto branch

[Housing Search Site HOUSE navi]

This Internet site provides housing search information for the Kyoto area in Japanese, English, Chinese, and Korean.

It also introduces real estate companies capable of providing multilingual services and provides various housing-related information.

☎075-211-4774

<http://housenavi-jpm.com/>

3 Requirements Check Sheet

Please fill out this sheet and show it to shop (real estate agent) staff.

To be filled out by the non-Japanese national

What kind of apartment/house are you looking for?

① Preferred monthly payment (<u>rent</u>)	I can pay up to about () yen [¥] in total. * In Japan, renters must pay costs such as common area charges and building management charges in addition to rent.
② Location	I want to live near _____ station. I would prefer a location about () minutes' walk from the station.
③ Type	☐ Apartment/condominium ☐ House/single-family residence
④ Height (1st floor, 2nd floor, ...)	☐ I would prefer the () floor. ☐ No preference.
⑤ Space	I would prefer about () square meters.
⑥ Number of rooms	I am looking for () rooms.
⑦ Room type	☐ Japanese style ☐ Western style ☐ No preference
⑧ Toilet	☐ Western style ☐ Japanese style ☐ No preference
⑨ Bath	☐ Necessary ☐ Unnecessary
⑩ Air conditioner	☐ Necessary ☐ Unnecessary
⑪ Persons living together with you	() persons ☐ Family ☐ Friends ☐ Other
⑫ Guarantor	☐ I will use a guarantee company ☐ I have a joint and several guarantor
⑬ Period	I would like to rent for the period of roughly () year(s) from the following date (Y/M/D): ()/()/().
⑭ Initial payment (cost at time of concluding lease)	I can pay up to about () yen [¥] in total. * In Japan, initial costs include security deposit, key money, and fees.
⑮ Most important requirements	Of requirements ①-⑨ above, the most important is no. (), the second most important is no. (), and the third most important is no. ().

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To be filled out by the non-Japanese national

Please describe yourself.

① What is your occupation?

☐ Company employee

☐ Self-employed

☐ Student

☐ Other ()

② What is your form of employment?

☐ Permanent employee

☐ Contract employee

☐ Temporary employee

☐ Part-time employee

☐ Other

③ Can you speak Japanese? If so, how well?

☐ Can speak Japanese very well

☐ Can speak some Japanese (enough for everyday conversations)

☐ Cannot speak Japanese

④ Can you read Japanese? If so, how well?

☐ Can read Japanese including Kanji

☐ Can read hiragana

☐ Cannot read Japanese

To be filled out by the real estate agent

☐ Are you interested in any of the apartments shown on these flyers? If so, please bring somebody with you (who can speak Japanese) next time.

☐ Please read the brochure again carefully.

☐ There are no apartments available now (that meet your requirements).

☐ There are no apartments available now (that meet your requirements). An apartment of () square meters in the _____ area would cost about () yen [¥].

Please reconsider your requirements.

Tenancy Examination Required Documents Check Sheet

Please see the items checked (☑) below and submit the documents indicated.

	No.	Required	Documents
To check your identity	①	☐	Passport
	②	☐	Resident Card
To check your employment/school	③	☐	Certificate of employment
	④	☐	Certificate of school attendance
	⑤	☐	Certificate of authorized employment
	⑥	☐	xtra-status activity permit
To check your income/salary	⑦	☐	Certificate of tax withholding
	⑧	☐	Salary details
	⑨	☐	Certificate of tax payment
	⑩	☐	Copy of previous year's income tax return
	⑪	☐	Certificate of (planned) salary payment (If you have not yet started work)
	⑫	☐	Bank remittance details
	⑬	☐	Certificate of scholarship payment
	⑭	☐	Documentation of bank deposits and savings (copy of passbook)

No.	☒ I understand.	Details
When moving into and occupying the unit		
①	☐	I will pay rent and other charges for the next month by the ____ of each month, in the following amount: ____ yen (rent ____ yen, ____ charges ____ yen).
②	☐	I will complete contractual procedures for electricity, gas, and water service myself. This agreement covers rent only.
③	☐	I will remove my shoes when I enter the unit.
④	☐	I will not rent or lend the unit to others.
⑤	☐	No family members, relatives, friends, or others will live in the unit.
⑥	☐	I will not keep any pets or other animals.
⑦	☐	I will take out burnable wastes on () days, non-burnable wastes on () days, and recyclables on () days.
⑧	☐	I will refrain from making loud noises, particularly during the hours from roughly : pm to roughly : am.
⑨	☐	I will not leave items out in the corridors, stairwells, veranda, or similar places.
⑩	☐	I will keep the unit clean and will use the facilities (____, ____) properly.
⑪	☐	I will notify ____ before being away from the unit for a long period (____ weeks or longer).
When moving out from the unit		
⑫	☐	I will submit written notice to ____, ____ months before moving out.
⑬	☐	I will move out by the ending date of the lease (the ____ of the month).
⑭	☐	I will not leave anything, including wastes, behind in the unit.
⑮	☐	I will return the keys to the unit to ____.
⑯	☐	If I have made the room dirty, I will pay the costs of cleanup from my security deposit (deposited with the owner when concluding the lease). For example, I will pay the cost of replacing wallpaper if badly damaged by stains or odors from cigarette smoke.

Email address :

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name

Address

 Telephone No. ()

 Mobile telephone number ()

Passport No.

Name of place of
employment or school

Location

 Telephone No. ()

Emergency contact in Japan

Name

 Telephone No. ()

Emergency contact in home country

Name

 Telephone No. ()
