

# THE WORLD FACTBOOK



## Japan



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In general, information available as of 1 January, 2004 was used in the preparation of The World Factbook 2004.

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**Introduction****Japan**[Top of Page](#)**Background:**

While retaining its time-honored culture, Japan rapidly absorbed Western technology during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. After its defeat in World War II, Japan recovered to become an economic power and a staunch ally of the US. While the emperor retains his throne as a symbol of national unity, actual power rests in networks of powerful politicians, bureaucrats, and business executives. The economy experienced a major slowdown starting in the 1990s following three decades of unprecedented growth.

**Geography****Japan**[Top of Page](#)**Location:**

Eastern Asia, island chain between the North Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Japan, east of the Korean Peninsula

**Geographic coordinates:**

36 00 N, 138 00 E

**Map references:**

[Asia](#)

**Area:**

*total:* 377,835 sq km

*note:* includes Bonin Islands (Ogasawara-gunto), Daito-shoto, Minami-jima, Okino-torishima, Ryukyu Islands (Nansei-shoto), and Volcano Islands (Kazan-retto)

*water:* 3,091 sq km

*land:* 374,744 sq km

**Area - comparative:**

slightly smaller than California

**Land boundaries:**

0 km

**Coastline:**

29,751 km

**Maritime claims - as described in UNCLOS 1982 (see Notes and Definitions):**

*territorial sea:* 12 NM; between 3 NM and 12 NM in the international straits - La Perouse or Soya, Tsugaru, Osumi, and Eastern and Western Channels of the Korea or Tsushima Strait

*contiguous zone:* 24 NM

*exclusive economic zone:* 200 NM

**Climate:**

varies from tropical in south to cool temperate in north

**Terrain:**

mostly rugged and mountainous

**Elevation**  **extremes:***lowest point:* Hachiro-gata -4 m*highest point:* Mount Fuji 3,776 m**Natural resources:**  

negligible mineral resources, fish

**Land use:**  *arable land:* 12.13%*permanent crops:* 1.01%*other:* 86.86% (1998 est.)**Irrigated land:**  




26,790 sq km (1998 est.)

**Natural hazards:**  


many dormant and some active volcanoes; about 1,500 seismic occurrences (mostly tremors) every year; tsunamis; typhoons

**Environment - current issues:**  

air pollution from power plant emissions results in acid rain; acidification of lakes and reservoirs degrading water quality and threatening aquatic life; Japan is one of the largest consumers of fish and tropical timber, contributing to the depletion of these resources in Asia and elsewhere

**Environment - international agreements:**  *party to:* Antarctic-Environmental Protocol, Antarctic-Marine Living Resources, Antarctic Seals, Antarctic Treaty, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Environmental Modification, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Marine Dumping, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Tropical Timber 83, Tropical Timber 94, Wetlands, Whaling**Geography - note:**  

strategic location in northeast Asia

**People****Japan**[Top of Page](#)**Population:**   

127,333,002 (July 2004 est.)

**Age structure:**  *0-14 years:* 14.3% (male 9,337,867; female 8,876,996)*15-64 years:* 66.7% (male 42,697,264; female 42,196,835)*65 years and over:* 19% (male 10,169,190; female 14,054,850) (2004 est.)**Median age:**  *total:* 42.3 years*male:* 40.5 years*female:* 44.1 years (2004 est.)

**Population growth**  **rate:** 0.08% (2004 est.)**Birth rate:**   



9.56 births/1,000 population (2004 est.)

**Death rate:**   

8.75 deaths/1,000 population (2004 est.)

**Net migration rate:**  

0 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2004 est.)

**Sex ratio:**  *at birth:* 1.05 male(s)/female*under 15 years:* 1.05 male(s)/female*15-64 years:* 1.01 male(s)/female*65 years and over:* 0.72 male(s)/female*total population:* 0.96 male(s)/female (2004 est.)**Infant mortality**   **rate:** *total:* 3.28 deaths/1,000 live births*female:* 3 deaths/1,000 live births (2004 est.)*male:* 3.54 deaths/1,000 live births**Life expectancy at birth:**   *total population:* 81.04 years*male:* 77.74 years*female:* 84.51 years (2004 est.)**Total fertility rate:**   

1.38 children born/woman (2004 est.)

**HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:**   

less than 0.1% (2001 est.)

**HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:**   

12,000 (2001 est.)

**HIV/AIDS - deaths:**   

430 (2001 est.)

**Nationality:**  *noun:* Japanese (singular and plural)*adjective:* Japanese**Ethnic groups:**  

Japanese 99%, others 1% (Korean 511,262, Chinese 244,241, Brazilian 182,232, Filipino 89,851, other 237,914)



*note:* up to 230,000 Brazilians of Japanese origin migrated to Japan in the 1990s to work in industries; some have returned to Brazil (2004)

**Religions:**  

observe both Shinto and Buddhist 84%, other 16% (including Christian 0.7%)

**Languages:**  

Japanese

**Literacy:**  

*definition:* age 15 and over can read and write

*total population:* 99% (1995 est.)



*male:* NA%

*female:* NA%



**Government****Japan**[Top of Page](#)**Country name:**  

*conventional long form:* none

*conventional short form:* Japan

**Government type:**  

constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary government

**Capital:**  

Tokyo

**Administrative divisions:**  

47 prefectures; Aichi, Akita, Aomori, Chiba, Ehime, Fukui, Fukuoka, Fukushima, Gifu, Gumma, Hiroshima, Hokkaido, Hyogo, Ibaraki, Ishikawa, Iwate, Kagawa, Kagoshima, Kanagawa, Kochi, Kumamoto, Kyoto, Mie, Miyagi, Miyazaki, Nagano, Nagasaki, Nara, Niigata, Oita, Okayama, Okinawa, Osaka, Saga, Saitama, Shiga, Shimane, Shizuoka, Tochigi, Tokushima, Tokyo, Tottori, Toyama, Wakayama, Yamagata, Yamaguchi, Yamanashi

**Independence:**  

660 BC (traditional founding by Emperor Jimmu)

**National holiday:**  

Birthday of Emperor AKIHITO, 23 December (1933)

**Constitution:**  

3 May 1947

**Legal system:**  

modeled after European civil law system with English-American influence; judicial review of legislative acts in the Supreme Court; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction with reservations

**Suffrage:**  

20 years of age; universal

**Executive branch:**  

*chief of state:* Emperor AKIHITO (since 7 January 1989)

*note:* following the resignation of Prime Minister Yoshiro MORI, Junichiro KOIZUMI was elected as the new president of the majority Liberal Democratic Party and soon thereafter designated by the Diet to become the next prime minister

*elections:* none; the monarch is hereditary; the Diet designates the prime minister; the constitution requires that the prime minister must command a parliamentary majority; therefore, following legislative elections, the leader of the majority party or leader of a majority coalition in the House of Representatives usually becomes prime minister

*cabinet:* Cabinet appointed by the prime minister

*head of government:* Prime Minister Junichiro KOIZUMI (since 26 April 2001)

**Legislative branch:**  

bicameral Diet or Kokkai consists of the House of Councillors or Sangi-in (247 seats - members elected for six-year terms; half reelected every three years; 149 members in multi-seat constituencies and 98 by proportional representation); House of Representatives or Shugi-in (480 seats - members elected for four-year terms; 300 in single-seat constituencies; 180 members by proportional representation in 11 regional blocs)

*election results:* House of Councillors - percent of vote by party - NA%; seats by party - LDP 110, DPJ 59, Komeito 23, JCP 20, SDP 8, Liberal Party 8, Conservative Party 5, independents 14; distribution of seats as of July 2001 was: LDP 115, DPJ 60, Komeito 24, JCP 20, SDP 8, Liberal Party 8 (merged with DPJ in 2003), independents 6, others 6; House of Representatives - percent of vote by party - LDP 49.38%, DPJ 36.88%, Komeito 7.09%, JCP 1.88%, SDP 1.25%, NCP .84%; seats by party - LDP 237, DPJ 177, Komeito 34, JCP 9, SDP 6, NCP 4, others 13; distribution of seats as of 13 November 2003 was: LDP 244, DPJ 177, Komeito 34, JCP 9, SDP 6, others 10

*note:* the Liberal Party merged with the Democratic Party of Japan in September 2003; the New Conservative Party merged with the Liberal Democratic Party following the election in November 2003


*elections:* House of Councillors - last held 29 July 2001 (next to be held in July 2004 - number of seats to be reduced by five to 242); House of Representatives - last held 9 November 2003 (next election by November 2007)

**Judicial branch:**  

Supreme Court (chief justice is appointed by the monarch after designation by the cabinet; all other justices are appointed by the cabinet)

**Political parties and leaders:**  

Democratic Party of Japan or DPJ [NA, leader; Katsuya OKADA, secretary general]; Japan Communist Party or JCP [Kazuo SHII, chairman; Tadayoshi ICHIDA, secretary general]; Komeito [Takenori KANZAKI, president; Tetsuzo FUYUSHIBA, secretary general]; Liberal Democratic Party or LDP [Junichiro KOIZUMI, president; Shinzo ABE, secretary general]; Social Democratic Party or SDP [Mizuho FUKUSHIMA, chairperson; Seiji MATAICHI, secretary general]

**Political pressure groups and leaders:**   NA

**International organization participation:**

AfDB, APEC, ARF, AsDB, ASEAN (dialogue partner), Australia Group, BIS, CE (observer), CERN (observer), CP, EBRD, FAO, G-5, G-7, G-8, G-10, IADB, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC, ICFTU, ICRM, IDA, IEA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCs, IHO, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, ISO, ITU, NAM (guest), NEA, NSG, OAS (observer), OECD, OPCW, OSCE (partner), Paris Club, PCA, UN, UNCTAD, UNDOF, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNITAR, UNMISSET, UNMOVIC, UNRWA, UPU, WCL, WCO, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WToO, WTrO, ZC

**Diplomatic representation in the US:**

*chief of mission:* Ambassador Ryozo KATO

*FAX:* [1] (202) 328-2187

*consulate(s):* Saipan (Northern Mariana Islands)

*consulate(s) general:* Anchorage, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Denver, Detroit, Hagatna (Guam), Honolulu, Houston, Kansas City (Missouri), Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, Portland (Oregon), San Francisco, and Seattle

*chancery:* 2520 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20008

*telephone:* [1] (202) 238-6700

**Diplomatic representation from the US:**

*chief of mission:* Ambassador Howard H. BAKER, Jr.

*embassy:* 10-5 Akasaka 1-chome, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-8420

*mailing address:* Unit 45004, Box 258, APO AP 96337-5004

*telephone:* [81] (03) 3224-5000

*FAX:* [81] (03) 3505-1862

*consulate(s) general:* Naha (Okinawa), Osaka-Kobe, Sapporo

*consulate(s):* Fukuoka, Nagoya

**Flag description:**

white with a large red disk (representing the sun without rays) in the center

**Economy****Japan**[Top of Page](#)**Economy - overview:**

Government-industry cooperation, a strong work ethic, mastery of high technology, and a comparatively small defense allocation (1% of GDP) helped Japan advance with extraordinary rapidity to the rank of second most technologically-powerful economy in the world after the US and third-largest economy after the US and China. One notable characteristic of the economy is the working together of manufacturers, suppliers, and distributors in closely-knit groups called keiretsu. A second basic feature has been the guarantee of lifetime employment for a substantial portion of the urban labor force. Both features are now eroding. Industry, the most important sector of the economy, is heavily dependent on imported raw materials and fuels. The much smaller agricultural sector is highly subsidized and protected, with crop yields among the highest in the world. Usually self-sufficient in rice, Japan must import about 50% of its requirements of other grain and fodder crops. Japan maintains one of the world's largest fishing fleets and accounts for nearly 15% of the global catch. For three decades overall real economic growth had been spectacular: a 10% average in the 1960s, a 5% average in the 1970s, and a 4% average in the 1980s. Growth slowed markedly in the 1990s, averaging just 1.7%, largely because of the after effects of overinvestment during the late 1980s and contractionary domestic policies intended to wring speculative excesses from the stock and real estate markets. Government

efforts to revive economic growth have met with little success and were further hampered in 2000-2003 by the slowing of the US, European, and Asian economies. Japan's huge government debt, which is approaching 150% of GDP, and the ageing of the population are two major long-run problems. Robotics constitutes a key long-term economic strength with Japan possessing 410,000 of the world's 720,000 "working robots." Internal conflict over the proper way to reform the ailing banking system continues.

**GDP:**   

purchasing power parity - \$3.567 trillion (2003 est.)

**GDP - real growth rate:**   

2.3% (2003 est.)

**GDP - per capita:**   

purchasing power parity - \$28,000 (2003 est.)

**GDP - composition by sector:**  

*agriculture:* 1.4%

*industry:* 30.9%

*services:* 67.7% (2001 est.)

**Population below poverty line:**  

NA%

**Household income or consumption by percentage share:**  

*lowest 10%:* 4.8%




*highest 10%:* 21.7% (1993)

**Distribution of family income - Gini index:**  



24.9 (1993)

**Inflation rate (consumer prices):**   

-0.3% (2003 est.)

**Labor force:**   



66.66 million (2003)

**Labor force - by occupation:**  

services 70%, industry 25%, agriculture 5% (2002 est.)

**Unemployment rate:**   

5.3% (2003)

**Budget:**  

*revenues:* \$380 billion




*expenditures:* \$746 billion, including capital expenditures (public works only) of about \$71 billion (FY03/04 est.)





**Industries:**  



among world's largest and technologically advanced producers of motor vehicles, electronic equipment, machine tools, steel and nonferrous metals, ships, chemicals, textiles, processed foods



**Industrial production growth rate:**     
1.9% (2003 est.)

**Electricity - production:**     
1.037 trillion kWh (2001)




**Electricity - production by source:**    
*fossil fuel:* 60%  
*hydro:* 8.4%  
*other:* 1.8% (2001)  
*nuclear:* 29.8%

**Electricity - consumption:**     
964.4 billion kWh (2001)




**Electricity - exports:**    
0 kWh (2001)

**Electricity - imports:**    
0 kWh (2001)

**Oil - production:**     
17,330 bbl/day (2001 est.)

**Oil - consumption:**     
5.29 million bbl/day (2001 est.)




**Oil - exports:**     
93,360 bbl/day (2001)



**Oil - imports:**     
5.449 million bbl/day (2001)

**Oil - proved reserves:**     
29.29 million bbl (1 January 2002)

**Natural gas - production:**     
2.519 billion cu m (2001 est.)

**Natural gas - consumption:**     
80.42 billion cu m (2001 est.)

**Natural gas - exports:**     
0 cu m (2001 est.)

**Natural gas - imports:**   

77.73 billion cu m (2001 est.)

**Natural gas - proved reserves:**   

20.02 billion cu m (1 January 2002)

**Agriculture - products:**  

rice, sugar beets, vegetables, fruit, pork, poultry, dairy products, eggs, fish

**Exports:**   

\$447.1 billion f.o.b. (2003 est.)

**Exports - commodities:**  

motor vehicles, semiconductors, office machinery, chemicals

**Exports - partners:**  

US 28.8%, China 9.6%, South Korea 6.9%, Taiwan 6.3%, Hong Kong 6.1% (2002)

**Imports:**   



\$346.6 billion f.o.b. (2003 est.)

**Imports - commodities:**  

machinery and equipment, fuels, foodstuffs, chemicals, textiles, raw materials (2001)

**Imports - partners:**  

China 18.3%, US 17.4%, South Korea 4.6%, Indonesia 4.2%, Australia 4.1% (2002)

**Debt - external:**   

\$NA (2002 est.)

**Economic aid - donor:**  

ODA, \$7 billion (FY03/04)

**Currency:**  

yen (JPY)

**Currency code:**  

JPY

**Exchange rates:**  

yen per US dollar - 115.93 (2003), 125.39 (2002), 121.53 (2001), 107.77 (2000), 113.91 (1999)

**Fiscal year:**  




1 April - 31 March

**Communications** **Japan**

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**Telephones - main lines in use:**   

71.149 million (2002)

**Telephones - mobile cellular:**     
81,118,400 (2002)

**Telephone system:**  

*general assessment:* excellent domestic and international service

*domestic:* high level of modern technology and excellent service of every kind

*international:* country code - 81; satellite earth stations - 5 Intelsat (4 Pacific Ocean and 1 Indian Ocean), 1 Intersputnik (Indian Ocean region), and 1 Inmarsat (Pacific and Indian Ocean regions); submarine cables to China, Philippines, Russia, and US (via Guam) (1999)

**Radio broadcast stations:**  

AM 215 plus 370 repeaters, FM 89 plus 485 repeaters, shortwave 21 (2001)




**Television broadcast stations:**  

211 plus 7,341 repeaters

*note:* in addition, US Forces are served by 3 TV stations and 2 TV cable services (1999)

**Internet country code:**    
.jp

**Internet hosts:**     
9,260,117 (2002)

**Internet users:**     
57.2 million (2002)

## Transportation **Japan**

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**Railways:**   

*total:* 23,167 km (15,995 km electrified)

*standard gauge:* 3,204 km 1.435-m gauge (3,204 km electrified)

*narrow gauge:* 77 km 1.372-m gauge (77 km electrified); 19,855 km 1.067-m gauge (12,683 km electrified); 31 km 0.762-m gauge (31 km electrified) (2002)

**Highways:**   

*total:* 1,161,894 km

*paved:* 534,471 km (including 6,455 km of expressways)

*unpaved:* 627,423 km (1999)

**Waterways:**  

1,770 km approximately

*note:* seagoing craft ply all coastal inland seas

**Pipelines:**  

gas 2,719 km; oil 170 km; oil/gas/water 60 km (2003)

**Ports and harbors:**  

Akita, Amagasaki, Chiba, Hachinohe, Hakodate, Higashi-Harima, Himeji, Hiroshima, Kawasaki, Kinuura, Kobe, Kushiro, Mizushima, Moji, Nagoya, Osaka, Sakai, Sakaide, Shimizu, Tokyo, Tomakomai



**Merchant marine:**  

*total:* 568 ships (1,000 GRT or over) 10,149,196 GRT/12,680,544 DWT

*foreign-owned:* China 1, Panama 1, Philippines 1, Singapore 1

*registered in other countries:* 1,989 (2003 est.)

*by type:* bulk 113, cargo 39, chemical tanker 18, combination bulk 31, combination ore/oil 1, container 14, liquefied gas 53, passenger 8, passenger/cargo 1, petroleum tanker 170, refrigerated cargo 6, roll on/roll off 58, short-sea/passenger 7, vehicle carrier 49

**Airports:**  

174 (2003 est.)

**Airports - with paved runways:**  

*total:* 143

*over 3,047 m:* 7

*2,438 to 3,047 m:* 37

*914 to 1,523 m:* 28

*under 914 m:* 32 (2003 est.)

*1,524 to 2,437 m:* 39



**Airports - with unpaved runways:**  

*total:* 31

*over 3047 m:* 1

*914 to 1,523 m:* 4

*under 914 m:* 26 (2003 est.)

**Heliports:**  

15 (2003 est.)

**Military****Japan**[Top of Page](#)**Military branches:**  

Ground Self-Defense Force (Army), Maritime Self-Defense Force (Navy), Air Self-Defense Force (Air Force), Coast Guard

**Military manpower - military age:**  

18 years of age (2004 est.)

**Military manpower - availability:**  




*males age 15-49:* 29,179,095 (2004 est.)

**Military manpower - fit for military service:**  

*males age 15-49:* 25,189,438 (2004 est.)

**Military manpower - reaching military age annually:**  

*males:* 700,931 (2004 est.)

**Military expenditures - dollar figure:**   



\$42,488.1 million (2003)

**Military expenditures - percent of GDP:**     
1% (2003)

**Transnational Issues**

**Japan**

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**Disputes - international:**  

The sovereignty dispute over the islands of Etorofu, Kunashiri, and Shikotan, and the Habomai group, known in Japan as the "Northern Territories" and in Russia as the "Southern Kuril Islands", occupied by the Soviet Union in 1945, now administered by Russia and claimed by Japan, remains the primary sticking point to signing a peace treaty formally ending World War II hostilities; intensified media coverage and protests highlight dispute over the fishing-rich Liancourt Rocks (Take-shima/Tok-do) also claimed by South Korea; China and Taiwan have intensified their claims to the Senkaku Islands (Diaoyu Tai) administered by Japan

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