

Finances

“You know what they did to me? They’re charging me money for not having enough money. Apparently, when you’re broke, that costs money.”
– *Louis CK.*



Bank Vocab Words!

Bank ぎんこう 銀行
 Money おかね お金
 Cash げんきん 現金
 Saving's account ふつうよきん 普通預金
 Transfer ふりこみ 振込
 Transfer account こうざふりかえ口座振替
 Withdraw おろす
 I want to withdraw ¥1,999
 ¥1,999 をおろしたいんです。



In this finance section we’re going to try to teach you the basics of finances and banks to make sure you don’t end up like Ronnie here.

Setting up your bank account → Things to bring:

- +*Inkan / Hanko*. It is the same as your fingerprint! Don’t lose it.
- +Resident Card. *Zairyuu Ka-do* 在留カード
- +Some money to have a starting balance.
- +Proof of address. Mail, bills, or some official paper by the BoE.
- +A person who can speak Japanese fluently.

@the bank you get:

- Bank book (tsuuchou) 通帳
- Cash Card キャッシュカード
- Pin number (ansho bangou) 暗証番号 [[varies]]

In Kumamoto, you can sign up at Higo Bank or Kumamoto Family bank. Another option, the Post Office Bank, has a requirement of ¥10,000 minimum at all times. Operating hours are limited to weekdays and end at around 3, but after making the account, unless you have urgent business or like the way banks smell, you won’t need to come again.

ATMs Your bank will provide you with no-fee withdrawal times. Charges for other banks and convenience store ATMs range from 105yen during weekdays to 210 yen on weekends. Plan your withdrawals ahead of time to save money. See a chart about ATM times and charges in the appendix.



ATM Vocab Words!

Withdrawal お引き出し ohikidashi Deposit お預入れ oazukeire
 Balance Inquiry 残高照会 zandaka shoukai Passbook Update 通帳記入 tsuchou kinyuu

※If your tsuchou doesn’t register in the ATM you have to get it updated manually.

BILLS Once you start livin' the high life in your sweltering tatami heaven people are going to expect you to pay them for stuff. Until automatic payments go through the bank for the first months you will have to pay for the bills in person. You can just pay it at the register of the convenience store.



Some BoEs cover different expenses for their JETs. Here are some bills, tips and over 3 years the average least and most I've paid for each (monthly):

Rent 家賃やちん	Varies wildly from location, proximity to stations and the year the building was made. Mine is covered by the BoE, but the room costs about ¥30,000
Gas ガス	Turn it off if not in use. ¥3,000 ~ ¥5,000
Electricity 電気 でんき	Unplug anything you're not using. Close off rooms you don't need for the day so you can maintain one area nice and cool or warm. Put sticky foam to fill the gaps between doors. Turn the thermostat to just comfortable enough. The highest was in February. Brrr ¥1,000 ~ ¥6,000
Water 水道 すいどう	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When washing dishes by hand, don't let the water run while washing. Wash veggies and produce in a basin. 2. You have to rinse out many items before you can recycle them in Japan. They don't have to be glorious though. Fill one bottle halfway and then pour it out into the next bottle. 3. Turn off the water while you wash your hair. (pretty constant) ¥2,500
Phone 電話 でんわ	Most of you will have a landline in place when you arrive. You can't do much about this since it is a form of identification for all your bills and utilities. But if you don't use it, it won't go up. ¥1,749
Cellphone 携帯けいたい	Varies on your carrier and your usage. I have an iPhone with AU. ¥10,000 ~ ¥18,000
Internet インターネット	Varies on your carrier. I used to have EMobile which was around ¥5,000 a month. Now I have Hikari which is around ¥5,000 but a lot faster.
NHK	I don't even watch my TV so I've tried to get it disconnected but you have to prove there isn't a TV in your home and also no devices with TV reception. Let me know if you did it somehow.

I don't recommend being late with your bills, but if it happens once or twice they do not charge late fees, as far as I've seen. For some examples of bills, see the appendix.

TRANSPORTATION



I asked some ALTs to give me some of their car expenses but please check out Erika's driving worksheet for a detailed look at car ownership.

Price of car: 20,000 to 360,000 **Shakken:** 60,000 ~ 80,000 **Change title:** 5,000 **Tank of gas:** around 4,000 **Car tax:** 7,000 for yellow, 30,000 for white **Car wash:** 1,500
Insurance: For a white plate 8,000 to 13,720 (changes with age and car accidents)

Later on (renewal time): **Test at the center:** 2,200 every time **Driving school:** 5,700 ~ 11,000 per hour or per class

Random: **License translation:** 3,000 **Spark plugs:** 9,000 **New tire for white plate:** 14,000 **Toll to Fukuoka:** Around 3,000 (from Tamana area) **Air Freshner:**105

Blasting Swedish pop songs in Amakusa on a night drive: Priceless.

****Hands on the wheel, *please!*****



In my case, I got a GIANT road bike. It's the best thing I ever got. It's so much faster than mama-charis. Besides no car expenses, it can save me up to ¥3,000 in public transport. It's great exercise and you can go on excursions with friends! Thankfully, I haven't had any accidents but always be on the offensive. My bike guy usually gives me free maintenance and inner tubes.

Road bike: ¥600,000 Strong bike light: ¥6,000 Helmet: ¥4,000 Bike bags: ¥10,000
 Kick stand: ¥2,000 New Tape:¥1000~1,500 Air Pump: ¥2,000 above-ish?

Some bus fares	1 way	Round Trip
Kumamoto Bus Center to Hondo, Amakusa –	¥2,180	¥3,800
“ to Aso Station -	¥1,220	¥2,100
“ to Hitoyoshi Area –	¥2,120	¥4,000
“ to Fukuoka -	¥2,000	

iPhone Apps
 for trains:
 Jorudan,
 Hyperdia

Kumamoto City Tram 150¥ everywhere.

To Tenjin, Fukuoka – If you take trains, you can transfer at Omuta station to the Nishitetsu trains. If you go often(through Nishitetsu), you can get 回数券 6 tickets for ¥5,000. They expire though, so use them wisely.

Once in Fukuoka, look for the ¥100 bus. Runs between the Hakata and Tenjin areas.

SENDING ¥ £ \$ HOME

Go Remit (formerly GoLloyds)

You can send money for ¥2,000 (+handling fees). It usually takes 1~3 days.

Once you set up your account you can make a *furikomi* card so it's easy.

For more information, go to: <https://www.goremit.jp/index/en>

Japan Post. Ask for *Gaikoku Yuubin Kawase*. Costs ¥700 for the first ¥100,000.

A) To a mailing address (住所あて送金 *kyusho ate soukin*). ((The only reason I had to use this was to renew my passport to the American Embassy in Tokyo.))

B) To a bank account. In payment Money Order (post) (振替口座 *furikae kouza*) or you can send it directly by telegraphic transfer to the bank (銀行口座). Telegraphic transfer is faster (2~3 days) but costs more.

7-11 If GoRemit doesn't send to your country the Western Union here may help you.

<http://www.sevenbank.co.jp/soukin/en/service/>

¥990 for ¥10,000 or less

¥1,500 for ¥50,000 or less

List of countries you can send to:

http://www.sevenbank.co.jp/soukin/shared/pdf/currency_list.pdf

GOING OUT

Work Parties – *Enkai*.

It's not mandatory to go, but it is essential to the Japanese work culture. If you don't drink, it may be difficult, but you can check if you can be exempted from the all-you-can-drink fee (*nomihoudai*). If you have special dietary requirements, that may also affect your prices. Here are some parties I recommend you go to and what I've paid on average:

- *Bonenkai* – (December) ¥5,000 ~ 8,000
- *End of the Year* – (March) ¥3,000 ~ ¥5,000
- *Otsukare* parties – after the Sports Festival (May or October) and the Culture Festival (October or November). ¥2,500 ~ ¥5,000.

Additional Costs: If you drive and end up drinking, it can add another ¥2,000+. Watch out for the after and after-after party (*nijikais* and *sanjikais*). This can add up quickly. You can easily use up to ¥10,000 at the end of the year, so just decide how much you want to spend beforehand and don't worry about calling it a night when you've reached your spending limit.



**LOVE YOU
KOCHO-sensei!**

What happens
at an *enkai*...

Look for: All you can eat 飲み放題 *nomihoudai* (Average 2,000+)

All you can drink 食べ放題 *tabehoudai* (Average 1,500+)

Bars: Just a note - if the bar tender brings over a tray of goodies, ask if it is free! They will try to add it to your tab when you leave. Not cool man, I thought you loved me.

Restaurants: Check for a lunch or dinner set which are usually cheaper! Get a point card at your favorite place and you'll get a free something once you accumulate enough points. Restaurants will insist you can't take home the leftovers because of the liability of food poisoning. Just be smart and don't let that *basashi* sit in your car for 2 hours in the summer heat. If you want to be really sneaky bring your own carry home containers.

Music: Can range from 1,000 ~ 8,000 for regular bands and impossible to get for the mega idols. If it's at a smaller venue a drink may be included.

SHOPPING

☆ Food

The following is an excerpt from Foreigners Finances, an online blog of a former Fukui JET participant. It's an interesting read for those interested in managing their money while living abroad or as an investor: <http://www.foreignersfinances.com/>

Bread <i>Japan:</i> \$1.33 for 6 french-toast style pieces <i>America:</i> \$2.50 for approximately 20 pieces <i>*77% more expensive in Japan*</i>	Milk <i>Japan:</i> \$1.33 for ~.25 gallons <i>America:</i> \$2.50 for 1 gallon <i>*113% more expensive in Japan*</i>
Cereal <i>Japan:</i> \$2.19 for 7 oz. <i>America:</i> \$3.50 for 15 oz. <i>*34% more expensive in Japan*</i>	Eggs <i>Japan:</i> \$2.74 for 10 eggs <i>America:</i> \$1.90 12 eggs <i>*73% more expensive in Japan*</i>
Potato chips <i>Japan:</i> \$2.75 for 4.7 oz. <i>America:</i> \$3.50 for 11 oz. <i>*84% more expensive in Japan*</i>	Lunch meat <i>Japan:</i> \$2.73 for 6 oz. <i>America:</i> \$2.99 for 8 oz. <i>*21% more expensive in Japan*</i>
Ice cream sandwiches <i>Japan:</i> \$3.59 for 6 <i>America:</i> \$4.75 for 6 <i>*24% cheaper in Japan*</i>	Beer <i>Japan:</i> \$30.92 for 24, 11.8 fl. oz. cans <i>America:</i> \$18.99 for 24, 12 fl. oz. cans <i>*63% more expensive in Japan*</i>

These numbers are pretty staggering, but the Japanese don't usually eat these types of food

which helps explain their inflated prices. The portions are less so I constantly feel like I'm getting a greater bang for my buck when, in reality, I'm paying over 65% more for groceries in Japan.

The dollar amounts from the September 25th, 2009 exchange rate of 90.38 yen for \$1 USD

You can come to different conclusions on your own. I recommend buying locally. Go shopping later at your local grocer in the evening for cheap sushi, bentos, fruit, etc. Look for the yellow or red stickers.

 <p>half price</p>	 <p>¥100 off</p>	 <p>80% off this great 80% cup!</p>
---	---	--

Also, you can elongate the life of your produce by putting certain things away. How long can food can last? Go to:

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



Just make sure your fridge is clean so no mold can get at the veggies. Also, you can exponentially increase the life of various items by freezing or even pickling them!

“ No kittens were harmed
in the making of these pickles.” – *Portlandia*

You can find many foreign goods at your local Kaldi, or Tsuruya but they will be at import prices. At Costco in Fukuoka, you can buy in bulk and stock up for a few months.

☆ Clothes

New clothes:

- Uniqlo. Medium range of simple everyday work clothes. They also carry season conscious clothing such as heat-tech in the winter, and cool-tech in the summer.
- G.U. Cheap variety of fun clothing.
- Take a trip out to Tosu Premium Outlet Mall in Saga or Marina City in Fukuoka.

Second Hand ~ Furugiyasan

- There's a few thrift shops drifting off the Kamitori area in Kumamoto city. They can range from dirt cheap to collector items expensive.

Recycle / Flea Markets:

- These shops are finally increasing! These recycle shops are based on heavily trafficked roads. They have a giant inventory of dusty eerie clothes for you to bring back to life! There are some interesting shops on the side streets of Kamitori and beyond. There is also a flea market going on at the Food-Pal ways down from Kami-Kumamoto Station.

<http://www.foodpal-kumamoto.jp/index.html>



☆ **Electronics & Furniture**

The same as with clothes, you can find them at recycle shops or second hand stores, or even ALTs going home. You can't order online from IKEA, but they do deliver to Kumamoto. I got a couch delivered for around 5,000 (I live closer to Fukuoka though, so prices vary.) Shops offer free delivery sometimes, so make sure to ask!

☆ **M O V I E S**

Prices can range from 1,500 ~ 1,800. Check your local theater for special days, like ladies or couples days. The food at the theater is way cheaper than back home, so I think it balances itself out if you really love popcorn. Check out *Daikokuya* 大黒屋 (intersection of Ginza-doori and Shimo-tori in K-city) you can get cheaper movie tickets (average 1,300). Once you get the ticket go to the theater, reserve your seat and you're set!



You can also get a membership at your local DVD rental store and get rentals as cheap as ¥100 yen. Just beware of late fees, because they will eat your soul. **Just don't be late!** The late fees are ... mortifying.



TRAVELING

“The early bird gets the *peach*.” – me, on booking.

AIR ひこうき飛行機 Domestic travel is finally getting affordable with flight companies (LCCs) such as Jet Star, Skymark and Peach. Tickets go from around 6,000 to 10,000.

RAIL でんしゃ電車 From July 20th to September 10th you can use the Seishun 18 ticket. The ticket costs ¥11,500. You get 5 days worth of travel. It's one stub per person so you can share with friends.

Go to <http://www.jreast.co.jp/e/pass/seishun18.html>

LOCAL Once at your destination, ask for daily subway or bus tickets (¥500). You can also rent bicycles or cars. If you're there during a festival or special event, they may have free shuttles or special tickets. Look around and ask!

TIP: If you have a holiday – guess what? So does the rest of Japan. Check and book your destinations up to 5~6 months in advance (**not kidding**) for the most options, especially if you want to go to see super famous festivals (Sapporo Snow Festival, Kyoto Daimonji) or remote places such as Yakushima (must see!). Things such as space on ferries and places to stay are limited! So book early early *early!!*

Places to Stay If you're going for the cheaper options I recommend maintaining your network of JET friends by visiting them, or make a new network of friends by using Couch Surfing. Also, look at Hostelling International. If you're feeling confident in your Japanese, search for *yuusu hosuteru* ユースホステル or *yado* 宿 in the areas you want to stay and give them a call. Many places don't update availability so it's worth a try.

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

<https://www.couchsurfing.org/>

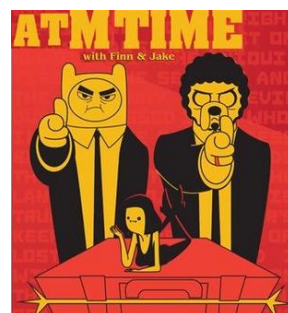
夜行バス Yakou Basu - Night Bus – Cheaper than trains. Bring a neck pillow.

Buying 往復 oufuku (round trip) tickets can save time and money.

Doing tours can save planning headaches. But at the same time, if it looks very expensive, it's probably because of the fancy hotel and meal plans. Make sure to look around for a price and plan that works for you.

Further Reading & Appendices

Austin Morgan, formerly of Foreigners Finances, recommends reading Ramit Sethi's "I Will Teach You To Be Rich!"



ATM Withdrawal Time! Appendix.

Just imagine Samuel L. Jackson is reading it to you.

Higo Bank ATMs


Bank	¥105	No money time:
Higo Bank Free Mon – Fri 8:45 to 18:00 ※	Mon – Fri 8:00 ~ 8:45 18:00 ~ 21:00 Sat & Sun 8:00 ~ 21:00	Everyday 21:00 ~ 8:00
Other Banks Mon – Fri 8:00 ~ 8:45 18:00 ~ 21:00 ¥210 ※	Mon – Fri 8:45 to 18:00	Everyday 21:00 ~ 8:00


肥後銀行

※Free balance check
For more Higo ATM info: http://www.higobank.co.jp/home/fee_p/atm.html

Kumamoto Bank ATMs

Bank	¥105	No money time
Kumamoto Bank Free Weekdays 8:45 ~ 18:00	Mon – Fri 8:00 ~ 8:45 18:00 ~ 21:00 Sat & Sun 8:00 ~ 21:00	Everyday 21:00 ~ 8:00
Other banks Mon – Fri 8:00 ~ 8:45 18:00 ~ 21:00 Sat & Sun 9:00 ~ 17:00 ¥210	Mon – Fri 8:45 ~ 18:00	Everyday 21:00 ~ 8:00
Japan Post (Yuucho) Mon – Fri 8:00 ~ 8:45 18:00 ~ 21:00 Sat 14:00 ~ 19:00 Sun 9:00 ~ 19:00 ¥210	Mon – Fri 8:45 ~ 18:00 Sat 9:00 ~ 14:00	Weekdays 21:00 ~ 8:00 Sat & Sun 19:00 ~ 9:00


熊本銀行

For more info about Kumamoto Bank ATM services:
<http://www.kumamotobank.co.jp/personal/service/atm/tesuuryou/>

7-11 ATMs

Bank	¥ 105	No money time:
Citi Bank	Weekday 8:45 ~ 18:00 Sat 9:00 ~ 14:00 ☆※	Everyday 23:55 ~ 00:05
Higo Bank	Mon – Fri 8:45 ~ 18:00 ☆※	Sun 21:00 ~ Mon 7:00 Sat 21:00 ~ Sun 7:00
Kumamoto Bank	Mon – Fri 8:45 ~ 18:00 ☆※	Sun 21:00 ~ Mon 7:00 Sat 21:00 ~ Sun 7:00
Japan Post (Yuucho)	Mon – Fri 8:45 ~ 18:00 Sat 9:00 ~ 14:00 ☆※	Everyday 23:55 ~ 00:05 And Sun 21:00 ~ Mon 6:30
Any other ATM info: http://www.sevenbank.co.jp/personal/atm/bank.html ☆ Any time not listed under ¥105 is ¥210. ※Free balance check		



Lawson ATMs

Bank	¥105	No money time
Kumamoto Bank	Mon – Fri 8:45 ~ 18:00 ☆	Sat 21:00 to Sun 7:00 Sun 21:00 to Mon 7:00
☆Times not listed under ¥105 are ¥210. You cannot use Higo Bank cash cards here. You can use your Japan Post card at <i>limited</i> locations. For more Lawson ATM info: http://www.lawson.co.jp/service/counter/bank.html?ca=top_ser_102#page03		

Family Mart

Bank	¥ 105	No money time
Higo Bank Mon – Fri 7:00 ~ 8:45 18:00 ~ 24:00 Sat 0:00~21:00 Sun 7:00 ~ 21:00 ¥210	Mon – Fri 8:45 ~ 18:00	Sat 21:00 ~ Sun 7:00 Sun 21:00 ~ Mon 7:00
Kumamoto Bank Mon 7:00 ~ 8:45 Tues – Fri 18:00 ~ 8:45	Mon – Fri 8:45 ~ 18:00	Sat – Sun 21:00 ~ 7:00 Sun – Mon 21:00 ~ 7:00



Sat	0:00 ~ 21:00		
Sun	7:00 ~ 21:00		
¥210			
Japan Post		Mon – Fri 8:45 ~ 18:00	Everyday 23:55 ~ 0:05
Mon	6:30 ~ 8:45		Sun – Mon 21:00 ~ 6:30
Tues – Fri	18:00 ~ 8:45		
Fri – Sat	18:00 ~ 9:00		
Sat – Sun	14:00 ~ 21:00		
¥210			
For more info on Family Mart ATMs: http://www.enetcom.co.jp/s_contents/service/index.html			

If you need to see an ATM guide, the Hyogo-ken ALTs have made a guide for the post office ATM. http://www.hyogoajet.net/w/images/f/f3/ATM_Guide.pdf

Water Bill

Building name

Your account info

Your usage

This month

Last month

Water usage

For June, they charged on 7/20

Sewage charge

Total for August

Even after you get your bills to go through automatically at the bank, they will continue to send you these summaries of your usage and what they have and will charge you.

I'm Valeria. I live in Nagasu-machi, population: goldfish. If you have questions or if you want to talk / share stories about biking, please hit me up. I'd love to hear from you.

Welcome to the 'moto!

vreyes0915@gmail.com

Electricity Bill

Dates used

Total days

This month's meter:

Next month's meter:

Next payment

Types of electricity you used

Your account info

On the above date (12/16) they withdrew this amount