

Living in the Inaka

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Traditional Japanese culture ● Learn Japanese ● Countryside <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community oriented ○ Countryside living <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fruits & Veggie gifts ■ Can be cheaper/quieter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Transportation (or lack thereof) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nightlife ○ Businesses close early, post offices are closed on weekend ● Privacy/Gossip ● Loneliness and isolation ● Insects

How to overcome those obstacles

Social

1. Join a village sports club, hobby club, or the local Young People Association
 - a. Sometimes you will find that you might have more friends that are significantly older than you, but those relationships can be very rewarding
2. Attend village events
 - a. Check out your local TV or regional newspaper for events.
 - b. Be sure to check out your bulletin boards at your BOE to see if there are any events happening in the area
 - c. Check out leaflets that are left on your desk or your mailbox
3. KumAJET
 - a. Volunteer
 - b. Join KumAJET events
 - c. Hang out with someone in the JET or expat community
 - i. It may seem like it's taking a long time to develop friendships when you live far apart, but keep persisting!
4. Travel
 - a. Trains and buses may be sparse, so it's good to get used to driving.
 - i. If you don't have a car but have a bike, then hope on that bike and go explore!
 - b. Go with a group of friends or by yourself, there are many beautiful places to visit and fun activities to do!

- i. Check out the Kuma AJET website for information (www.kumajet.org) and Kumamoto JET (www.kumamotojet.com)

School/Environment

1. Learning some Japanese
 - a. If you study during some free time at work, maybe your co-workers will be curious and want to help you learn more. Develop those conversational muscles!
2. Start an English Club or join after school clubs with the students
3. Work on an English board to generate interest in foreign cultures
4. Get as creative and genki as you can in your own classes. Encourage the students when they get something right.
 - a. If it is possible, sit in other classes
 - b. Read library books (keep on practicing)
 - c. Play with the kids during recess, talk to them during lunch

Self

1. Step out of your comfort zone
 - a. Try out new things - Say "Hai!" to everything
2. You'll stand out, so just try to embrace it
 - a. Since people will know about you be mindful of how you behave in public or what you say
3. Try to escape social media FOMO (fear of missing out) and comparing your life with your JET friends. All JETs experience highs and lows throughout their contract, but those low points may be well-concealed.
 - a. Seek and offer support, and be confident in your own successes!
4. Although you will want to keep busy, remember that you don't want to burn yourself out. You have to find sometime for you, a chance to relax and unwind.
5. Keep in contact with your support network back home too. Don't let that pesky time zone difference affect your skype/line dates.

Services and certain needs

1. Look online to see if you can find services that meet your dietary or medical needs
 - a. Online services like Foreign Buyers Club, Flying Pig
 - b. Kumamoto JET also has information about English-speaking doctors
 - c. Ask a trusted coworker to come with you to the doctor if you're nervous, or make a trip to The City for clinics with English-speaking staff.
2. CLAIR offers an AJET Peer Support Group and a Tokyo English Lifeline
 - a. AJET Peer Support Group can be reached 8PM to 7AM, 050-5534-5566
 - b. PA's are always available too, you can reach them at kumamotopa@gmail.com

3. Be aware of your trash days and hours for facilities like the post office, bank, or doctor's office.
 - a. Most BoEs and schools will let you go to the post office or bank during office hours if you aren't scheduled for a class or during lunch time. Discretion is up to your JTE/Supervisor.

Enjoy the inaka JET life as an opportunity for self-improvement, a chance to devote some time to new skills and self-care. Learning a new language, picking up new hobbies based on what's available in your area, and opening yourself to new experiences will make your Japanese experience richer. You've got 52 Mondays to get kids excited about English, and 52 weekends to explore all aspects of your new home!