



# Location

Japan is an island state in the Pacific Ocean off the east coast of Asia. It is made up of the four large islands of **Hokkaido, Honshu, Kyushu** and **Shikoku** as well as many other small islands.



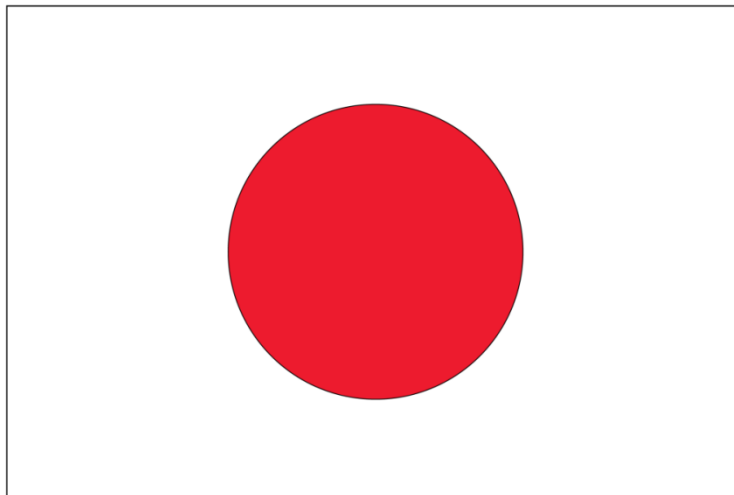
# Location

Japan's nearest neighbours are North and South Korea, China and Russia.



# Flag

The Japanese flag is a white rectangle with a solid red circle in the centre. The red circle represents the sun. Japanese people refer to the flag as the “**Hinomaru**” which means “sun disc”.



# Cities

Japan's capital, **Tokyo**, is situated on the island of Honshu. Other main cities are **Yokohama**, **Fukuoka**, **Osaka**, **Sapporo**, **Kyoto**, **Nagoya** and **Kobe**.



Tokyo



# Name & Language

Japan's local name is  
“**Nippon**” or “**Nihon**” and it is  
sometimes referred to as  
“**The Land of the Rising Sun**”.  
The official language is  
Japanese which is spoken by  
99% of the population



# History

Japan's history is heavily influenced by China. More than 1000 years ago warriors called **Samurai** became important in Japan. Years later, the real power lay in the hand of a military leader known as a **Shogun**.





# History

The first Europeans arrived in Japan in the mid 1500s. However, in the early 1600s, Japan's rulers decided to cut the country off from the rest of the world. This lasted until the mid-1800s when Japan began to trade with the US.





# History

Japan's history also includes wars against China over control of Korea (1894-1995), Russia over both country's expansion interests (1904-1905), China over Japan wishing to extend power into China (1937-1945).



# World War II

Japan entered World War II with its surprise attack on the US Naval Fleet at **Pearl Harbour** in Hawaii on December 7th 1941. Two days later Britain and the US declared war on Japan.



# Atomic Bombs

On August 6th 1945, the US dropped the first atomic bomb on the Japanese city of **Hiroshima**. 100,000 Japanese people were killed.



Atomic Bomb Dome, Hiroshima



# Atomic Bombs

Three days later, on August 9th 1945, a second atomic bomb was dropped on the Japanese city of **Nagasaki**. 40,000 Japanese were killed. This event marked the end of World War II and Japan surrendered.



# World War II

After the war, Japan was left in a state of destruction with many Japanese cities in ruins. However, after a period of hard work, by the 1970s Japan had become an industrial nation and its economy grew.



# Geography

The islands of Japan consist mainly of steep mountains with many **volcanoes**.

Honshu, the largest island includes the sacred **Mount Fuji** which is 3,776m high.



# Geography

Mount Fuji, Japan's tallest peak, is considered to be a sacred mountain. It is a dormant volcano situated 100km southwest of Tokyo. It is cone-shaped and its summit is covered in snow for about five months of the year.





# Geography

Kyoto, once the capital of Japan, is a city on the island of Honshu. It is considered to be the cultural capital of Japan and is a major tourist destination. It is home to several Buddhist temples, Shinto shrines, palaces and gardens.



# Earthquakes

Earthquakes frequently occur in Japan with about 1,500 occurring each year. Most are just minor tremors. Undersea quakes can sometimes cause huge waves called **tsunamis**. These can cause great destruction.



# Climate

Climates in Japan vary greatly from island to island. It varies from short warm summers and severe winters with heavy snow in the north to hot summers and almost subtropical winters further south.



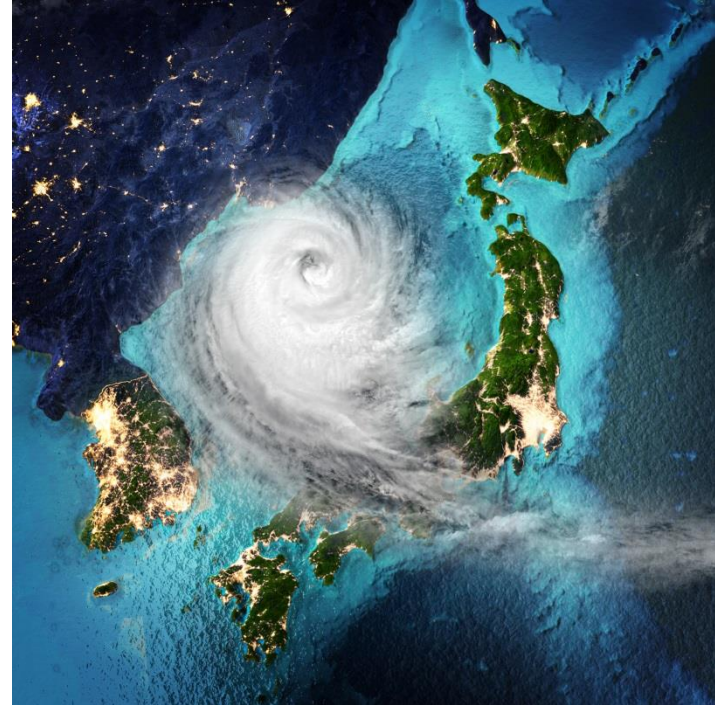
# Climate

Seasonal winds called **monsoons** also affects the Japanese climate. These can occur in both winter and summer. Most areas of Japan get lots of rain. Japan has two main rainy seasons: mid-June to mid-July and September/October.



# Climate

Several **typhoons** strike Japan each year, chiefly in late summer and early autumn. They bring heavy rain, violent winds and stormy conditions.



# Population

Latest figures show that Japan has a population of about **126.8million**, the 11th largest in the world. The vast majority of the population live in cities with a very small rural population.



# Time Zone

Japan Standard Time (**JST**) is nine hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). This means that when it is midday in Ireland, it is 9pm in Japan.





# Currency

Japan's currency is called the **Yen**. The symbol for the Yen is **¥** Currently  $\text{€}1 = \text{¥}118.62$



# Religion

Many people in Japan claim that they do not have strong religious beliefs. However, most people engage in some religious practices or rituals based on the religions of **Shinto** and **Buddhism**.



# Government

Japan is a constitutional monarchy with an Emperor as head of State. **Naruhito** is the current Emperor of Japan. He succeeded his father Akihito in May 2019



Image © [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Emperor\\_Naruhito\\_\(may\\_2019\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Emperor_Naruhito_(may_2019).jpg)

# Government

The Diet (**Hokkai**) is the national legislature consisting of a 465 member House of Representatives (**Shugiin**) elected at least every four years and a 245 member House of Councillors (**Sangiin**) elected every six years.



# Government

A Prime Minister leads the government and appoints members of the government to run the country. **Shinzō Abe** is the current Prime Minister.



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# Economy

Japan is one of the world's leading countries in the value of its exports and imports. Japanese people enjoy one of the highest standards of living in the world.



# Economy

Natural resources are limited in Japan so it must buy many of its necessities like coal, copper, iron and petroleum. Less than 20% of the land is under cultivation.





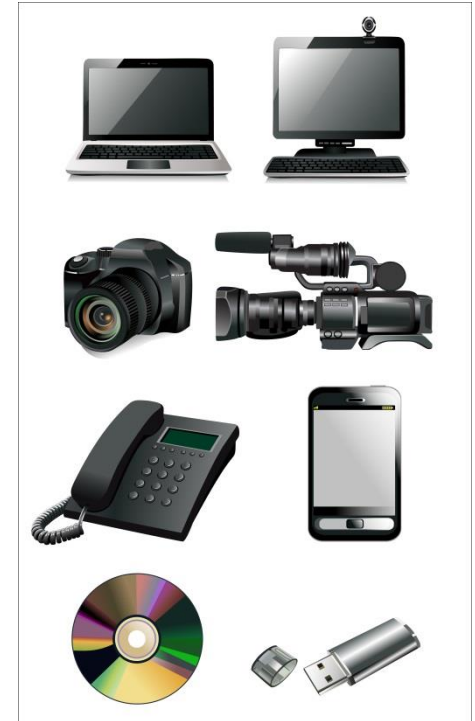
# Manufacturing

Manufacturing is very important to the Japanese economy. Well known Japanese manufacturers include **Honda**, **Nissan**, **Sony** and **Toyota**.



# Manufacturing

Other goods manufactured in Japan include cars, trucks, watches, TVs, computers and peripherals, steel, mobile phones, electrical goods, chemicals and textiles.



# Agriculture

Rice is Japan's leading crop. Japanese farmers also grow apples, cabbage, onions, potatoes, sugar beets, and tomatoes. The country raises beef and dairy cattle, chickens for eggs and meat, and hogs. Much of Japan's agricultural output comes from the island of Hokkaido.



# Fishing

Fishing is a very important industry in Japan. Japanese fishermen catch anchovies, pollock, mackerel, salmon, squid, tuna as well as crabs and other shellfish.



# Whaling

Controversially, Japan is one of the few nations in the world that hunt whales. In July 2019, Japanese fishermen resumed commercial whale hunting for the first time in 30 years.



# Education

Japanese children between the ages of 6 and 14 spend six years in Elementary School followed by three years at a Junior High School. These nine years of education at public schools is free. Most Japanese children wear uniforms to school.



# Education

Japanese children study subjects such as science, art, the Japanese language, mathematics, music, PE, social studies, homemaking and moral education. Many Junior High School students also study English or another foreign language.



# Education

After Junior High School, most students attend Senior High School for three years. Many of these are fee-paying private schools. Many students then progress onto third level colleges.





# Education

Public school students attend classes from Monday to Friday as well as a half a day on Saturday, except for two weeks each month when they have Saturdays off.



# Food

Japan is well known for its distinctive food. Traditional Japanese dishes includes **sushi** (cured raw fish), **sashimi** (thinly sliced raw food), **tempura** (battered and fried fish), **ramen** (noodles in broth), **yakitori** (chicken on a skewer) and **miso** (soup).



# Drink

Japanese people drink soft drinks, wine and Japanese beer. Teas, such as **matcha** (green tea) and **sakura** tea (made from cherry blossoms) are traditional.

**Sake**, a traditional Japanese-style rice wine, is also popular.



Sake



# Clothing

Most Japanese people wear clothes similar to those worn in Europe and the US. On special occasions, women and girls may wear the traditional long dress called a **kimono**. This is tied around the waist with a sash called an **obi** and worn with sandals known as **zori**.



# Homes

People in Japan live in high rise apartments as well as traditional Japanese houses. These houses tend to be small with rooms separated by sliding paper screens. Straw mats called **tatami** cover the floors. People sit on cushions and sleep on a type of padded quilt called a **futon**.



# Sport

**Kendo**, a Japanese form of fencing in which bamboo or wooden sticks are used instead of swords, is popular in Japan. Traditional martial arts like **judo**, **aikido** and **karate** are also popular. **Sumo** wrestling is a popular spectator sport.

Sumo wrestlers in training



# Sport

Baseball, horse racing, soccer and rugby are all popular spectator sports in Japan. The 9th Rugby World Cup will be held in Japan in 2019. This is the first time that the tournament will be held in Asia.





# Music

Traditional Japanese music includes music played on a **biwa**, **koto** and a samisen or **shamisen**.



Shamisen



Koto



Biwa





# Origami

Origami, the art of paper folding, is often associated with Japanese culture. The word comes from the words ori (meaning folding) and kami (meaning paper).



# Pupil Task

Write what you have learned about Japan. Think about including some of the following: Location, Climate, Population, Cities, Currency, Religion, Flag, Government, Culture, Food etc.



## Resources used in this file from:



<https://depositphotos.com/>



<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Dancing-Crayon-Designs>

## Information sourced from:

- Allinson, GD 2019, 'Japan' , *World Book Student*, World Book, Chicago, viewed 3 August 2019 <https://www.worldbookonline.com/student-new/#/article/home/ar285600>
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