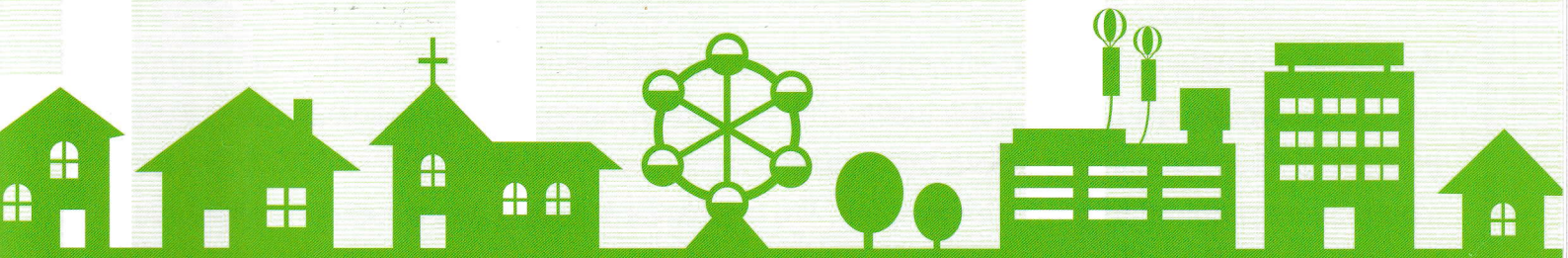
We created this pamphlet for people
who live in Hyogo or are planning to live in Hyogo

English

for Foreigners

Guidebook for Finding Rental Housing

NGO Network for Foreigners' Assistance KOBE



This pamphlet will introduce the language you need
and the rules you need to follow
when finding a room to rent in Japan

- Vocabulary
- Finding a house
- Once the room is decided...
- When canceling (moving out) a room
- QR code for "Apartment Search Guidebook"

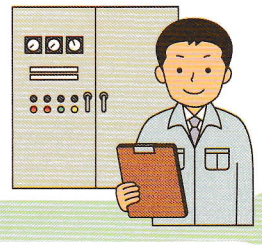
1. Vocabulary

Rent

The charge for renting the apartment /house/or room. Generally, the rent is paid one month in advanced. For example, by the end of January, the renter is expected to pay the rent for February.

Common Service Fee (Administrative Fee)

This is the money used for upkeeping the shared areas of the property. Typical examples include cleaning and electricity fees for hallways and elevator maintenance. This is to be paid with the rent.



Guarantee Fee

This is one of the costs you have to pay when you move in. If the rent is delinquent, the guarantee company will pay the rent instead. If the guarantor pays the rent you, as the renter, must pay the guarantor back the amount you didn' t pay. This money is due when the contract is to be renewed (along with the renewal fee.) In most cases, even if you have a guarantor, you will be asked to pay.

Renewal Fee

This is the money that the borrower pays to the owner of the house to continue the contract. The contract period is usually two years. In most cases, the contract period is two years, but if nothing is mentioned in the contract it will be renewed automatically.

About housing expenses when receiving welfare (*Seikatsu Hogo*)

If you are on welfare, the rent will be paid as housing assistance. The maximum amount that can be paid depends on the municipality. (In Kobe City, one-person households are 40,000 yen, two-person households are 48,000 yen, and three-person households are 52,000 yen.)

You may be required to pay a renewal fee, fire insurance fee, and guarantee fee (often every two years), but this may be covered by welfare, so please show the invoice to your caseworker and ask for payment.

There is also a system in which the welfare office pays the rent and common service fee (administrative fee) directly to the owner (“payment by proxy”). People who tend to be late in paying rent should use it.

If the rent is high and exceeds the housing assistance payment limit and you move to a house with a rent within the standard amount, a security deposit (in this case the security deposit, key money, real estate fee, fire insurance fee, guarantee fee) will be paid.

In certain cases (such as when evacuating due to domestic violence.) Security deposit may be provided. Please consult with a support group.

Brokerage Fee

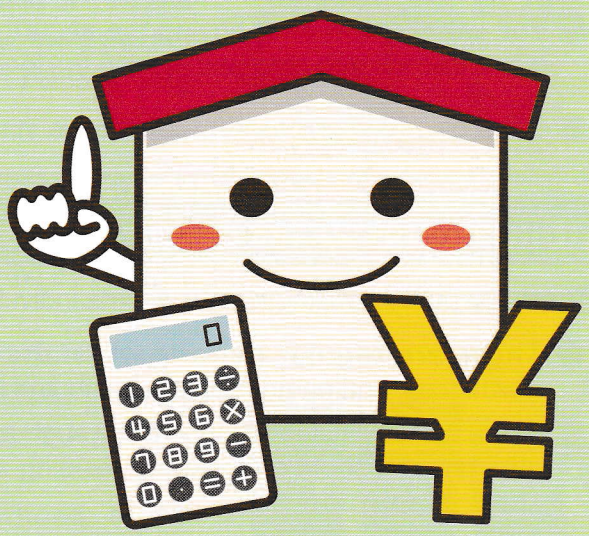
This is the money you pay as a fee when you have a real estate agent find you a house. In most cases, you will pay one month's rent + sales tax.

Fire Insurance Fee

This is the cost of insurance to be insured in case of a fire. It is often a condition to join in order to move in. The real estate agent typically takes care of the enrollment process.

Security Deposit / Key Money

Both the security deposit and key money are to be paid shortly before you move in. Combined they will be about 1-3 months worth of rent. The key money will not be returned, but the security deposit may be returned. The security deposit is used in case the rent is unpaid or surrendered, or if the room requires to be cleaned or repaired in anyway. Recently, the number of houses that do not require security deposit or key money is increasing.



Joint Guarantor / Emergency Contact

A joint guarantor is a person who has to pay the rent on behalf of the resident when he / she is unable to pay the rent or repair costs when he / she surrenders the room.
When you move into a house, you may be asked for a "joint guarantor". They need to live separately and have a stable income.
Even if you cannot find a "joint guarantor", some houses do not require one so please consult with your real estate agent. Even then, you are usually asked for "emergency contact." The person who becomes the emergency contact will be contacted when something goes wrong with the resident, but if there is rent delinquency, there is no obligation to pay it.
In addition, on lease agreements contracted after April 1, 2020, if the maximum amount that the "joint guarantor" must pay is not stated, the guarantee contract will be invalid and the joint guarantor will not be obliged to pay.
This joint guarantor system has no longer applies to public housing

2. Finding a house

Private Rental Housing

- When searching for a house at a real estate agent, tell the agent the conditions such as where you want to live, the amount of rent, and what kind of house you want.
- When you are introduced to a house, you can actually preview it and apply if you like it.
- When you apply, the contractor can submit a review to the rent liability guarantee company and make a contract if they approve.
- Until the guarantee company approves, you cannot move in.
- Before signing the contract, the contractor will explain important matters pertaining to the housing as well as the contents of the contract.
- You will move in after paying the security deposit / key money, brokerage fee, fire insurance fee, guarantee fee and rent, and signing the lease contract.
- Recently, some real estate agents have staff who can speak foreign languages.

Public housing (prefectural housing, municipal housing (city・village))

There are public housing for low income individuals struggling to find housing.

- There are regular periods when the government looks for residences, and pamphlets are distributed in public offices
- There are conditions for application such as having an income below a certain threshold and already residing and or working within that area.
- Who gets the contract will be decided by a raffle.
- Rent is cheap and depends on your income.
- We may be looking for housing that you can move in on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Payment of security deposit is required when moving in.
- Med- to long-term residents and special permanent residents can also move in.
- For details, please contact the housing section of the government office.

UR Rental Housing

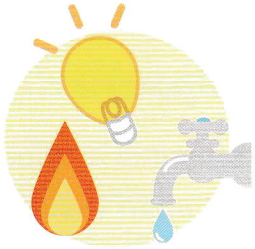
- This is a house or room managed by the UR (Urban Residence Agency)
- The security deposit is for two months of monthly rent, and no key money, brokerage fee, or guarantee fee is required. No renewal fee is required. The expenses required when moving in are a security deposit, daily rent, and common service fee.
- It is necessary to have income above the fixed amount, however even with a low income you can still move in if you have savings or the support of dependent relatives.
- Med- to long-term residents and special permanent residents can also move in.

Share House

Typically in shared houses:

- Multiple people share and live in one house.
- Kitchen, living rooms, bathrooms are shared however typically each residents have their own room.
- In most cases, for singles.

3. Once the room is decided...

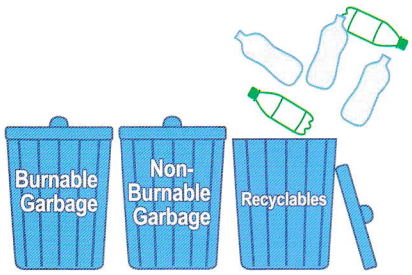


If you decide to move, contact your gas company, electricity company, or city water department to assure there is no break in the service.
When you move in please be aware of the following

Caution regarding noise

In apartments and condominiums, the sound is easily transmitted to the neighbors and the upper and lower floors, so be careful especially from night to early morning. Be aware that loud voices and parties, the sound of TVs and musical instruments, vacuum cleaners and washing machines, the sound of children running around, the rough opening and closing of doors, and late-night bathing can cause noise problems.

Throwing away garbage. (How to throw the garbage)



In Japan, the day of the week and the time of day are determined by the type of garbage.
We divide it into burnable garbage, non-burnable garbage, recyclables (such as cans, bottles, Pet Bottles, plastic, paper, etc.), and oversized garbage (large garbage such as furniture) and put them out at designated garbage stations.
Ask the real estate agent, people living in the neighborhood, or the government office for the place to put out the garbage. You must also use the garbage bag specified by the local government.
Please note that garbage placed in bags other than the designated bag will not be collected and will often annoy neighbors.

Caution in other situations

- Because Japan has a lot of humidity, please try to ventilate the room. Wipe off any condensation that may occur. If left untreated, mold will develop.
- It is often prohibited to nail or paint the walls of a room, so please check the prohibited items in the contract.
- Do not allow oil or kitchen waste to flow directly into the kitchen drain. Soak up the oil with newspaper and dispose of it as burning garbage.
- Do not let dust or the like flow into the drain of the bathroom to clog the drain.
- Do not flush anything other than excrement and toilet paper into the toilet.
  When the drainage is clogged, the water overflows, causing trouble to the people around you. If the room below is damaged, you may have to provide reimbursement.
- In apartments and condominiums, corridors and stairs other than your own room are common areas. Please do not put garbage or personal belongings there. The common area is an evacuation passage in the event of a disaster.
- The balcony may be an emergency evacuation passage. Do not leave your luggage on the floor of the balcony or in front of or near the emergency exit.

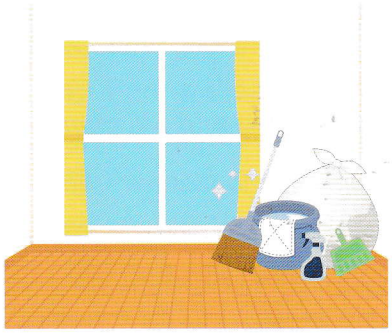
4. When canceling (moving out) a room

Move-out notice (cancellation notice)

When you move out of your home, you must notify the landlord or real estate company in advance of the cancellation (usually 1-2 months before the cancellation according to the contract). In most cases, you must pay the rent of the month you move out in, even if you move out in the middle of the month.

Cancellation of electricity, gas and water

When you decide on a day to leave your room, contact your electricity company, gas company, or city water department to stop these services



Obligation of Original Condition Restoration

If the room is damaged or soiled intentionally, negligently or inadvertently, you must bear the necessary costs to restore the room to its original cost.

The cost is called “restoration cost” and is deducted from the security deposit when you move out. Try to use the room cleanly. For changes that occur through normal use of the room, such as:

The color of wallpaper changing due to sun rays, The carpet where the furniture was placed was becoming dented, or the wall cover behind the TV or fridge changing” and such incidents fall under “aging and natural damage” and the resident is not required to pay for these repairs.

5. QR code for “Apartment Search Guidebook”

for foreigners looking for a room/house in Japan

Apartment Search Guidebook

More information on finding a room can be downloaded
from the QR code below.

日本語（にほんご）
Japanese

English
English

中文
Chinese

한국어
Korean

Español
Spanish

Português
Portuguese

Bản tiếng Việt
Vietnamese

नेपाली भाषा
Nepali

ภาษาไทย
Thai

Bahasa Indonesia
Indonesian

မြန်မာဘာသာ
Burmese

ភាសាស្មែរ
Cambodian

Tagalog
Tagalog

Монгол хэл
Mongolian

Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism
Japan Property Management Association
March, Reiwa 2 (2020) edition

Multilingual Consultation Hotline for Foreigners

078-232-1290

NGO Network for Foreigners Assistance KOBE

We are providing consultation for foreigners on issues related to status of residency, labor issues, social security, education, DV, and etc. If necessary, we can provide you with an interpreter who will accompany you to relevant organizations to support you in solving problems.

Friday (13:00 ~ 20:00)

English, Spanish, Portuguese, Tagalog, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Russian

Hyogo Multicultural Counseling Center

You can consult us about daily life issues.

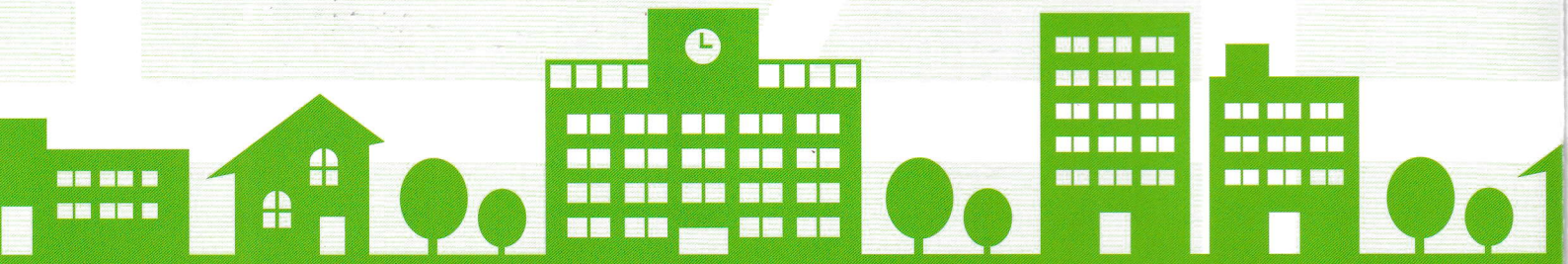
Saturday and Sunday (9:00 ~ 17:00)

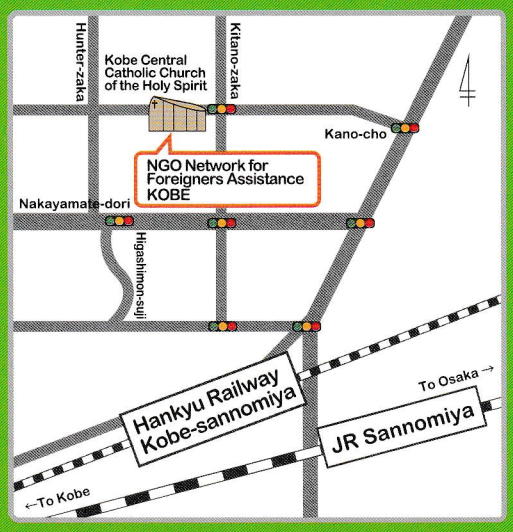
Japanese, English, Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese, Vietnamese

Korean, Tagalog, Indonesian, Thai, Nepalese etc. (We may use "three-way calling" or a "translation machine")

You can also ask for a consultation to Hyogo International Association Information and Advisory Service on Monday to Friday. (TEL: 078-382-2052)

- **If your income is low and you cannot pay the rent, or if you are having trouble with daily life, please consult with a support group or the welfare section of the government office as soon as possible.**
- **If you have any issues while moving in, consult with a support group or government office.**





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Monday・Wednesday 10:00 ~ 18:00 Friday 10:00 ~ 20:00

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