

I WANT TO TEACH IN JAPAN

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



DONALD ASH

WHERE'S THE BEST PLACE TO FIND A JOB?

The best place to land those hidden gem jobs is through word of mouth. However, when WOM isn't possible, it pays to have a reliable source of great job opportunities.

Here are **three sites** that I've used to find quality teaching jobs:

- 1. Gaijinpot.com (<http://gaijinpot.com>)**
- 2. Ohayo Sensei (<http://ohayosensei.com>)**
- 3. Dave's ESL Café (<http://daveseslcafe.com>)**

Many of the jobs on these sites seem to be geared towards those who are already here in Japan. However, there are job offerings from companies seeking teachers from abroad.

WHAT'S THE INTERVIEW PROCESS LIKE?

Interviews for English-teaching positions in Japan are fairly similar across the board.

As a general rule, be prepared to do any, or all, of the following:

- **A brief teaching demonstration**
(usually between 3 and 5 minutes)
- **Face-to-face interview**
- **A written, grammar/usage test**
- **A basic, Japanese conversation**
(not always necessary, but REALLY nice to have)

Yes, teaching demos can be nerve-wracking! But use the demo as your time to shine! What are they using the demo for? To gauge your diction & clarity, to get a sense of your communication style - to see if you're a good fit.

My philosophy on these interviews is to
"Be so good that they can't tell you 'no.' "

CAN I SURVIVE WITHOUT JAPANESE?

YES! I'm living, breathing proof of that.

When I came, I could literally count on one hand the number of Japanese phrases that I knew.

Luckily, you can live here pretty comfortably without knowing a lick of the language. Japan increasingly caters to foreigners & tourists - especially the English-speaking ones.

Will you still have language barrier challenges?

ABSOLUTELY!

DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU:

Once you've overcome the initial challenges of being here, life can become so routine that you neglect learning Japanese altogether.

It's way more common than you might think.

DO I HAVE TO GIVE UP MY CITIZENSHIP?

NO, you don't. I have been in Japan for over a decade now. While I'm officially a permanent resident, I'm still an American citizen - always will be.

As long as you have a company that will sponsor your visa and you have a working contract, you could potentially work in Japan indefinitely... as a citizen of your home country.

DO I NEED A DRIVER'S LICENSE

NO! I haven't owned or driven a car the entire time I've lived here. Public transportation is **INCREDIBLY** convenient.

KEEP IN MIND: It is possible to get a license, if you do end up wanting to drive in Japan.

HOW DO I HANDLE MY BILLS BACK HOME?

I remember the initial hassle of standing in line every month to wire money home via the Japan post. Yeah, that frickin' sucked, but it got the job done.

I then upgraded to a service called GoLloyds which made things WAY easier. This service is now called **GoRemit** and it's offerered through **Shinsei Bank**. BLAZINGLY FAST!

Currently though, I sacrifice a bit (*and only a bit*) of speed for lower fees. I'm using a **service** called **Transferwise** that **I love**. I will do a full review of it on the Japan Guy blog.

You do a domestic bank transfer and they send the money straight to your overseas account for a fee. You can then pay bills, student loans, or whatever else you need to.

IS JAPAN A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE?

Overall? **YES! ABSOLUTELY!**

Considering that **citizens aren't allowed to carry guns** and that I'm significantly larger than most people I meet, I've never felt safer.

However, with any country though, crime IS going to happen. You will see the odd news report of some mentally unstable person committing a heinous crime, but these are rarities.

Earthquakes can and do happen. The one on **3/11/2011** was **SCARY**, but for the most part, earthquakes are mild and many people don't pay them much attention.

Despite those anomalies, **I feel safer here than I feel in America** (there, I said it).

THANKS FOR READING!

I wouldn't say this is an exhaustive FAQ list, but it touches on some major questions that teach-in-Japan hopefuls will have at some point.

MORE QUESTIONS?

Should you think of any additional, pressing questions, please feel free to drop me a line via the contact form on The Japan Guy blog. While I may not be able to answer immediately, I do try my best to respond to as many as I can.

STAY TUNED!

There's more great content heading your way via Japanese Mavericks, where I'll be sharing useful & fun Japanese that sticks.

UNTIL NEXT TIME...