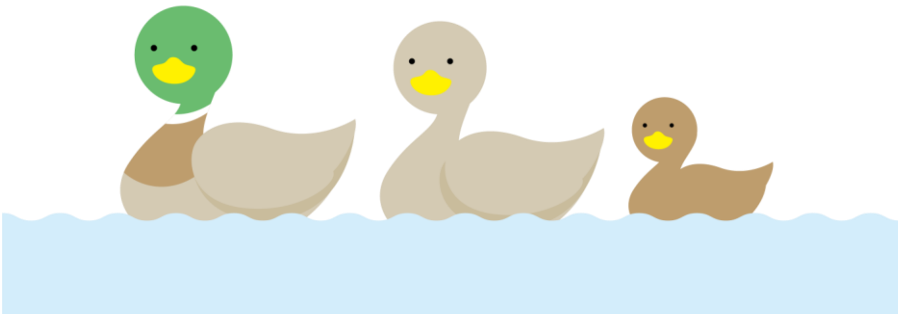
Chapter 4

Other Procedures



4 Other Procedures

4-1 Opening a Bank Account

通預金(*futsu yokin*)
a general account

通帳(*tsucho*)
a bankbook

キャッシュカード
(*kyasshu kado*)
a cash card

Under the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Act, international students are classified as "non-residents" for their first 6 months in Japan. During this period, you cannot open a standard bank account, except at JP Bank or Seven Bank or Suruga Bank.

Here is a comparison table of the account opening methods and available services for these three banks.

	JP BANK ゆうちょ銀行	SURUGA BANK	7 BANK セブン銀行
At a branch	✓ (Personal Seal required)	✓ (Personal Seal required)	×
Account opening app or Convenience store ATM (No Personal Seal required)	Account Opening App	Account Opening App	 Convenience Store ATM
Issuance of card and bankbook	At a branch: on the spot App: No passbook / Cash card in about 2 weeks	At a branch: on the spot App: No passbook / Cash card in about 2 weeks	No passbook / Cash card in about 2 weeks
Available Services	Deposits and withdrawals until your 6th month. *After residing in Japan for 6 months, you need to visit the bank branch to change your "Non-Resident account" to a "Resident account"	Deposits and withdrawals until your 6th month. *After residing in Japan for 6 months, you need to visit the bank branch to change your "Non-Resident account" to a "Resident account"	Classified as a "Resident" from day one, allowing you to use all standard services. (Deposits, Withdrawals, Transfers, Debit Card, and Overseas Remittances)

*MEXT scholarship recipients are required to open a JP Bank account in person at a branch counter to receive their scholarship.

*Account opening at Seven Bank ATMs is currently available only for Residence Cards issued on or before June 14, 2026. Support for Residence Cards issued after that date are scheduled for December 2026. For the latest information, please check the Seven Bank ATM Account Opening website. https://www.sevenbank.co.jp/english/personal/atm/madoguchi.html

Personal Seal 

You will need a personal seal when opening an account at a branch, so please prepare one in advance at a seal shop. (around 400 JPY~) Seals can be made using kanji, hiragana, katakana, or the alphabet.

印鑑 (*Inkan*) or 印 (*In)*
a personal seal

Seal Shop near Shonandai-Station:

Yumekobo
(On the first floor of Ito-Yokado)
(Japanese Only)
https://www.ekiten.jp/g0337/st4188/

Which Bank to Choose After 6 Months in Japan?

Banks in Japan are primarily divided into three types: major banks (mega-banks), regional banks, and highly convenient, modern "internet banks" like Seven Bank. Major banks—such as Mizuho Bank, MUFG Bank, and SMBC—have their head offices in large cities like Tokyo and operate branches nationwide. On the other hand, regional banks, including Suruga Bank and the Bank of Yokohama, focus on providing financial services within specific prefectures or regions.

Students usually choose their banks based on convenience, but please keep in mind that some scholarship providers designate specific banks for their payments.

There is a "Lawson" convenience store on campus that has an ATM inside. Although you cannot open an account at that ATM, you can withdraw cash there once you have set up your account at an off-campus branch. (You can find bank branches near major train stations such as Shonandai, Tsujido, and Fujisawa.)

Mega Banks

Mizuho Bank
みずほ銀行

Bank of Mitsubishi UFJ
三菱 UFJ 銀行

Sumitomo Mitsui Bank
住友三井銀行

JP Bank
ゆうちょ銀行

Local Banks

Yokohama Bank
横浜銀行

Suruga Bank
スルガ銀行

English Friendly Banks

SBI Shinsei Bank
SMBC Trust Bank
Sony Bank
Rakuten Bank
Seven Bank

Closing Your Bank Accounts

Please make sure to close all your bank accounts when you leave Japan.
If your unused account is exploited for wire transfer fraud or other scams, you could be held criminally liable.

Bank Services

A wide range of banking services—including deposits, savings, utility bill payments, credit card auto-debits, and remittances—are available at banks and post offices (ゆうちょ銀行/*Yucho Bank*). If you need to send money to family or overseas, please consult your financial institution, as fees and available options vary. Please note that a valid photo ID (such as a Residence Card or Health Insurance Card) is required for any domestic or international remittance exceeding 100,000 JPY.

When making a cash withdrawal at a bank counter, you will need either your registered personal seal or your signature, depending on how you opened your account. If you use a bank card, cash can be withdrawn from ATMs. However, please be aware that there may be daily limits on both the number of withdrawals and the amount you can withdraw.

Bank counters are normally open 9:00–15:00 and are usually closed on weekends and holidays.

As each financial institution has different service hours and fees at their branches and ATMs, please check their websites for more detailed information.

Foreign Currency Exchange

Bank branches outside of Tokyo rarely handle foreign currency exchange.
Instead, you can find currency exchange shops, such as World Currency Shop, in major cities. Currency exchange machines are also available at major train stations like Akihabara, Ginza, Shinjuku, and Kamakura. For example, there is a Travelex shop just outside the JR ticket gates at Fujisawa Station, as well as a currency exchange ATM in Enoshima.
You can also exchange currency at discount ticket shops, and some places even offer great rates. Be sure to check out (大黒屋/*Daikokuya*) near Shonandai Station.

Bank Terminology

口座開設(*koza kaisetsu*)
opening a bank account

預け入れ(*azukeire*)
Deposit

振替(*furikae*) Transfer

通帳記入(*tsucho kinyu*)
Update bankbook

引き出し(*hikidashi*)
Withdrawal

振込み(*furikomi*)
Remittance

残高照会
(*zandaka shokai*)
Checking Balance

残高照会後お引き出し
(zandaka shokaigo ohikidashi)
Withdrawal After Checking Balance

外貨両替
（*gaika ryogae*）
Money Exchange

海外送金(*kaigai sokin*)
Overseas Remittance

手数料(*tesuryo*)
Handling Charge

大黒屋（*Daikokuya*）
discount ticket shop
https://shop.e-daikoku.com/info/spot/detail?code=0000000370

4-2 Credit Card

There are many choices of credit cards, but those issued by banks are subject to strict screening. Consequently, it is considered difficult for foreigners who have been in Japan for less than one or two years to get approved by credit card companies.

The following credit cards are easy for international students in Japan to apply for and get approved for. Additionally, they have no annual fee.

Rakuten Card

EPOS Card

Life Card

Rakuten Card
https://www.rakuten-card.co.jp/
(Japanese language only)

https://grp01.id.rakuten.co.jp/rms/nid/registfwdi

Keio Card

Keio University also offers its own credit card services. You can find more information about these cards at the Keio Co-op store inside the Sigma Building at SFC.

Items required when applying for a credit card

- ☐ Bank account
- ☐ Address
- ☐ Mobile phone or fixed-line phone number
- ☐ Residence card
- ☐ Parents' consent for students under 18 years old

Please note that all the application needs to be done in Japanese language only.

Keio Card
(Japanese language only)

https://www.keiocard.com/

4-3 Smartphone Contract

What to Bring When Signing a Smartphone Contract

- ☐ Residence card
- ☐ Passport
- ☐ Bank card
- ☐ Personal Seal

Getting a smartphone contract is often one of the first challenges international students face when moving to Japan, for the following reasons.

- Inability to purchase phones in installments due to a period of stay under 24 months
- Requirement of a credit card in most cases
- Contract and customer support available only in Japanese

We recommend that newly arrived students initially use a foreigner-friendly mobile carrier like GTN, which does not require a bank account or a registered seal for setup. After settling in for a few months and obtaining the required documents, you can easily switch to a standard Japanese carrier.

GTN mobile

https://gtn-mobile.com/en/uni_plans/

mobal

https://www.mobal.com/japan-sim-card/?source=3289

Sakura Mobile

https://www.sakuramobile.jp/

Rakuten Mobile Shonandai Shop

https://network.mobile.rakuten.co.jp/shop-detail/7776/?wovn=en

Smartphone Service Companies

The Big 3

Softbank
AU
Docomo

The Budget SIMs

Rakuten Mobile!
Y!Mobile
UQ Mobile etc.

International students friendly

GTN
mobal
Sakura Mobile

Rakuten Mobile Shonandai Shop

There is a Rakuten Mobile shop located near Shonandai Station. As English assistance is available, you may consider visiting the store in person.