

Global Education Center

# RENTING A ROOM FOR THE FIRST TIME

How to find an apartment or mansion in Japan



## GREETING

We have some dormitories near three campuses.

(<http://www.global.hosei.ac.jp/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/fda0d985383a06f693fd630b4c3aa18a.pdf>)

Even though generally we only use a simple word “house”, there are various types such as dorms and shared houses for multiple tenants, apartments for one person. It is sometimes hard for foreigners to understand about methods and procedures to find apartments here; so we would like to explain about that.

When looking for apartments in Japan, most of the cases you will not negotiate with the owner, but will apply to rent houses through real estate agencies. Companies dealing with house leasing range from large corporations with chain shops to small-scale local companies, and each company has their own color. Because our university cooperate with lots of real estate companies near the campus, so you may feel more at ease when making contract with those companies.

There are thousands and millions of different apartments; therefore finding an apartments suitable with your condition is quite a time-consuming process. Moreover, there are also very many Japanese unique customs which are hard for foreigners to understand.

In order to help you not to get confused with overloaded information and procedures, in this pamphlet, we would like to explain and introduce to you effective ways to find houses in Japan as well as Japanese unique customs.





Finding and renting methods are different depending on lifestyle or room type. Below is a summary of the features and differences.

Style	Communal living		Single living	
Target	People who feel lonely living alone; people who want to live with friends; people who do not want to spend much on house rent		People who want to live alone; people who want to live independently	
Type	Dormitory	Shared house	Apartment	Mansion
Rent	15,000JPY~30,000JPY	20,000JPY~65,000JPY	25,000JPY~70,000JPY	45,000JPY~100,000JPY
Width	15㎡~20㎡	15㎡~25㎡	12㎡~20㎡	18㎡~30㎡
Utility costs	Included with the rent; excluded cases are also possible		Excluded	Excluded
Equipment	Almost all have a common-use toilet, bathroom		Almost all have only a shower room	Unit-bathroom or bathroom and toilet
	Furnished (Desk, bed, refrigerator, etc.)		Unfurnished	
Building structure	Various types	Various types	Mostly wooden	Steel frame(R), Steel reinforced concrete (RC), Steel framed reinforced concrete(SRC)
Regular finding methods	Search on the Internet (with keywords such as overseas students shared house, guest house) and consult with real estate companies running the share houses or dormitories		Search on the real estate portal websites with personal requirements for the room.	
Attention	There are not many dormitories, shared houses, or guest houses provided on the real estate portal websites. Real estate companies usually do not run these services. However, shared houses, guest houses, or dormitories are created for overseas students and foreigners, so almost all of the companies that are running these services have their websites in other languages or staff who can speak multiple languages. It is easier and better to contact them directly.		Unfortunately, there are management companies or owners that refuse to sign a contract with foreigners. The reasons are usually about the unsafe feeling of different lifestyles, difficulties in communicating in Japanese, and the possibility of more trouble. Even if you find the room that fits all of your requirements, they might refuse to let you move in.	
Contact	Dormitories, Shared houses, Guest houses operators		Real estate intermediary agency	
Featured notices	Hosei University does not provide the services.	There are many types of shared houses these days, such as only for foreigners, or half foreigners and half Japanese.		

Because it is not too difficult to find and move into a guest house or dormitory, from the next page we will explain about apartments and mansions.

# FINDING AN APARTMENT • MANSION

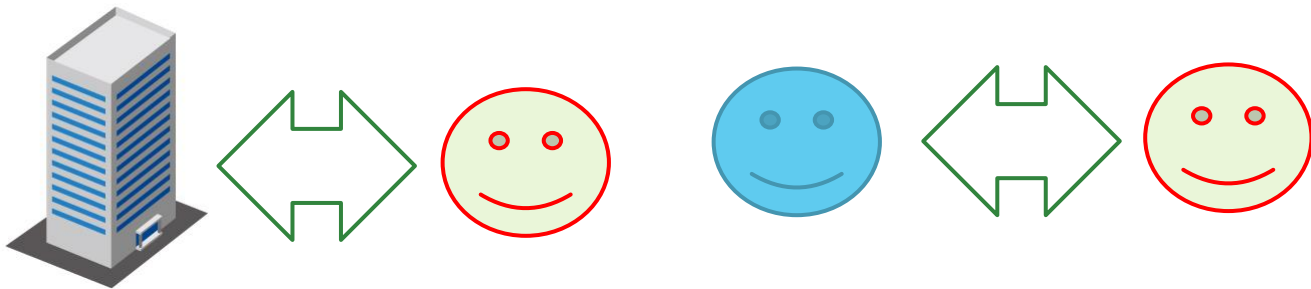
Hosei University does not provide student dormitories, so we will explain more about how to rent a room in Tokyo. Contract negotiation is mostly held between the real estate management company, as a representative of the owner, and the real estate intermediary agency, who is your representative.



There are also a few cases of other negotiation like below.

Real estate management company and tenant (you)

The owner and the tenant (you)



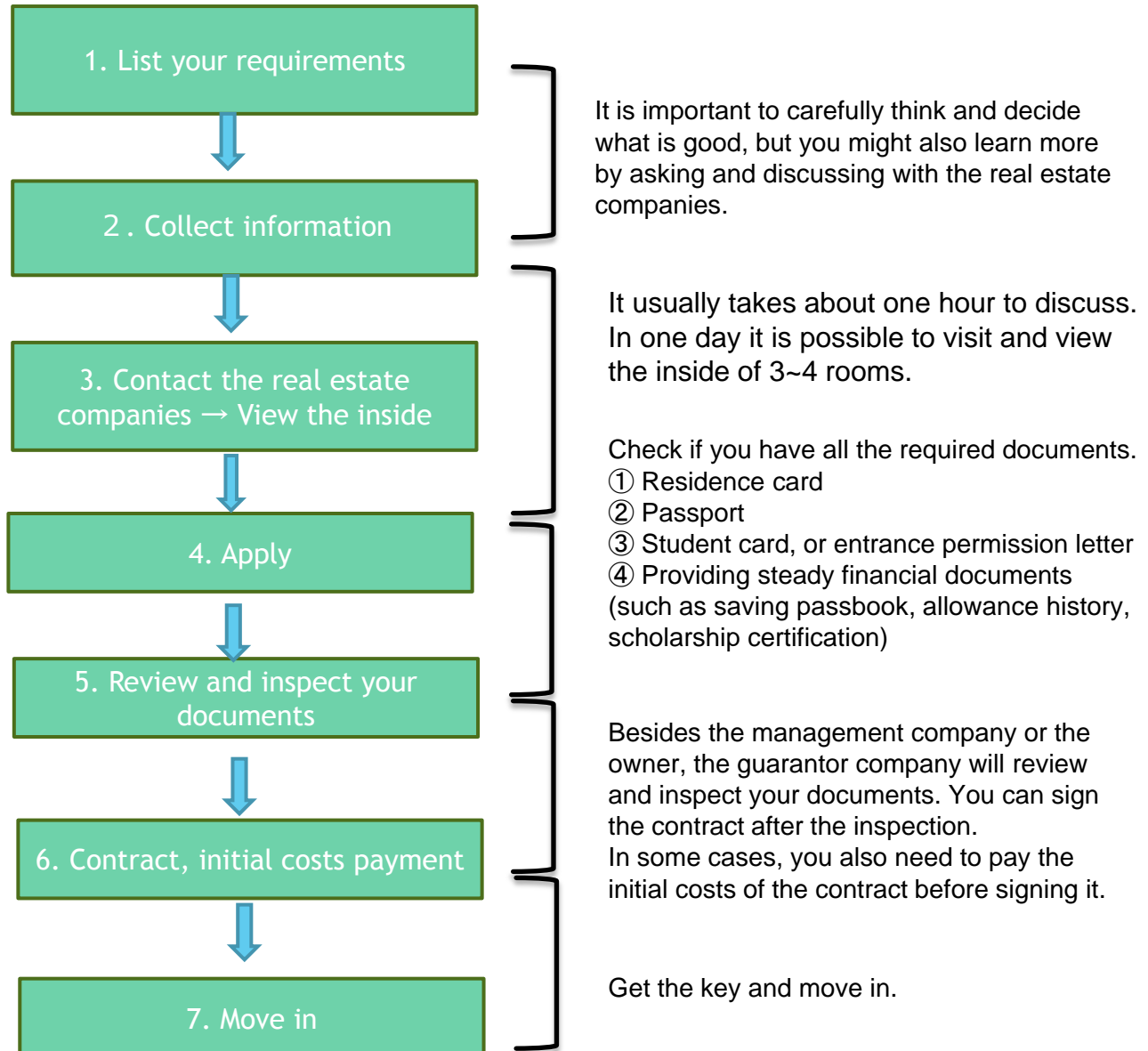
However, after the negotiation step, or after your agency has helped you to find a room to move in, the next step, explaining and signing the contract, is only between you and the owner/management company. This action can be held at your agency, but the contract contents are between you and the owner/management company.

When you move in, if someone complains about you or vice versa or anything happens, everything will come back to the owner or the management company because they are the actual owners of the room, not the intermediary company. Please keep in mind this important difference.

# MOVING IN SCHEDULE

Let's see the schedule from finding a room until moving in.

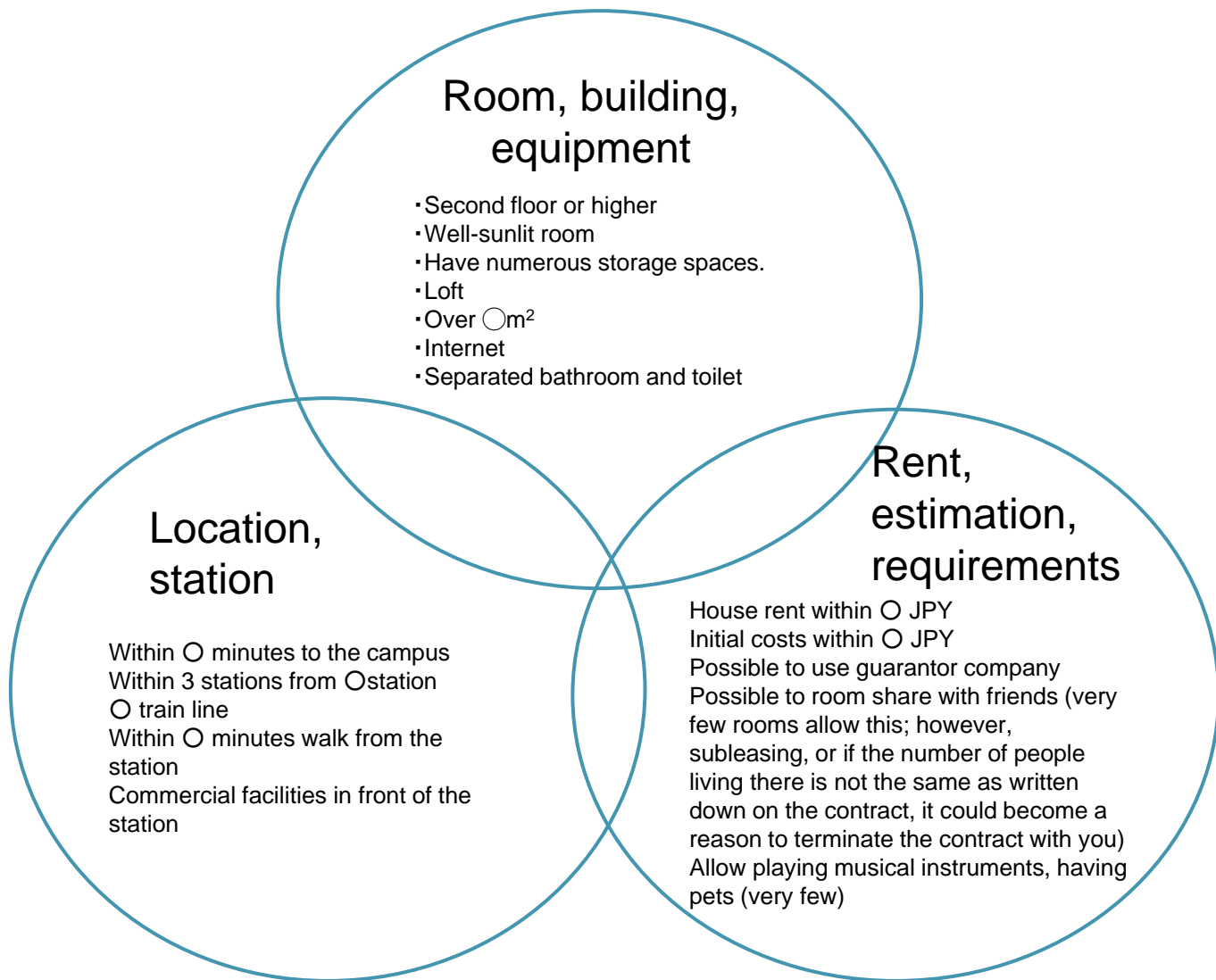
It is hard to move in right after finding a room. Let's make a plan about two weeks to two months before the date you wish to move in. In Japan, April is the month of starting something new, such as school entrance ceremonies, graduate students becoming new employees, and job transfers. Because of this, from February to March is the busiest season for finding and renting a room. Please carefully note that other people can rent a good room faster while you are still thinking about it.



# LET'S START FINDING AN APARTMENT

To find an apartment, the most effective and regular method is to use a real estate website and search with your requirements. It would be easier if you contact the real estate companies that are affiliated with Hosei University and directly tell them your requirements. They can help you find a room that suits you. Real estate companies that are affiliated with Hosei University are also helping other overseas students to find a room. You can feel free to discuss with them.

Realize that it is not easy to find a room that has 100% what you want. Please check and list your requirements again. Decide what is the most important to you.



When you finally find a room you like on the Internet, but cannot contact them in Japanese, or the real estate company does not have staff who can speak foreign languages, they cannot help you to move on the next step. It is better if you ask your friends or someone you know to help you ask them in Japanese, or find other real estate companies that can support foreigners.

## HOUSE RENT (LOCATION, STATION)

For students in Ichigaya Campus, this campus is located in the middle of the city, one of the most expensive areas. It is very difficult to find a room near the school with acceptable rent.

In Japan, people usually take public transportation such as the train or metro to go to school or work. Not many students live near enough to walk to school. Students who take 30 minutes or even more than an hour to commute to school are not uncommon.

House rent around 60,000 JPY ~ 70,000 JPY or cheaper can be found in the East, such as Saitama, Chiba

Yamanote line runs in the middle of Tokyo. Rent around here is the most expensive in Japan. Ichigaya, where Housei University is located, is also near the line. For a apartment 1R type, house rent can be around 120,000JPY

Let's go to the North to find a room with house rent 60,000JPY ~ 70,000JPY. Saitama also has rooms from 30,000 JPY

Suginami ward, Adachi ward, and Katsushika ward are very popular among students who live alone because of their acceptable fees and convenient transportation.

Koganei and Tama, which are nearer to the campus, also have houses with lower rent.



Average house rent for 1R type is 85,000JPY for places in the South.

# KEY POINTS OF CHOOSING A ROOM (INSIDE THE ROOM, THE APARTMENT, EQUIPMENT)

## TRANSPORTATION AND OTHERS

How far is it from the apartment to the closest station?  
Do I need to change lines? How many times?  
When is the last train of this line?

How crowded is it during rush hour?  
Do the express trains stop at this station?  
Does this station have a parking space?

## SUNSHINE AND VENTILATION

Does this room get a lot of sunshine?  
Is it a well-ventilated room?

## ROOM POSITION (FLOOR NUMBER - **CORNER ROOM**)

Is it a sunny room?  
Do you mind noise from outside?  
Does it have a good view from the balcony or the window?

How about the security?  
Are you interested in the first floor room with a garden?

## HANDINESS

Are there any commercial facilities near the apartment? (such as supermarkets, convenience stores)  
In case you want to use them, are there any parks, sports facilities, or libraries around?

## BUILDING AGES AND STRUCTURE

Due to earthquake disasters, earthquake resistance standards were improved in 1971 and 1981.  
In order: reinforced-concrete > light gauge steel > wooden construction. However, it does not mean that wooden construction is weak in earthquake resistance.

## EQUIPMENT CHECKING

Management conditions of the building (are the common areas clean?)  
Kitchen's handiness (how big is the sink; gas stove or electric stove; gas stove has higher thermal efficiency; how convenient is it to place the refrigerator)  
Equipment of bathroom (width; is it easy to reheat; unit bathroom or not)  
Where and how many outlets, also the LAN ports and the phone  
With or without elevator  
Internet equipment  
How many of the common-used equipment (such as if the building has coin laundry, it would be better to check how many rooms one machine is set up for)

## MONTHLY CHARGED FEES (HOUSE RENT, ESTIMATE AND CONDITIONS)

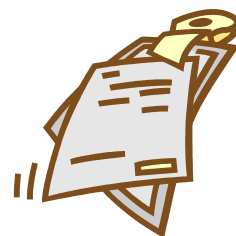
It is a must to apply for gas, electricity, water, and Internet. Let's not forget to register the address.

To start using water and electricity, tenants need to apply beforehand; it is possible to apply via phone or Internet. For gas and the Internet, each utility's staff needs to visit and finish the other steps with the applicant. There are cases in which it has taken around one month to finish setting up the Internet.

Moreover, after deciding where to move, tenants need to go to the municipal office to register the new address. Please finish this procedure within two weeks after moving in.

The other fees (besides house rent) depend on how much each utility is used. Below is an estimated sum. There are also food expenses.

		Estimated Sum
Utility charges	Electricity	3,000JPY~4,000JPY
	Gas	3,000JPY~5,000JPY
	Water	3,000JPY~5,000JPY
Communication costs	Internet	5,000JPY~10,000JPY
	Telephone	
Parking space	In case rented	300JPY~500JPY



## PREPARING FURNITURE

In Japan, usually, there is no furniture prepared inside the room.

Apartments in Japan are narrow, so before buying any big items, it is better to check how wide the paths, stairs, main doors, passages, and corridors are to see if the items can go through or not.

Furniture	Home electric appliances	Daily necessities
Curtains • Window blinds	Lighting equipment	Gas range (in case set up allowed)
Futon • Bed	Washing machine	Cookware
Desk • Table • Chair	Refrigerator	
Bookshelf	Vacuum cleaner	
	Television	
	Microwave, oven	

# 「JOINT GUARANTOR」 AND 「GUARANTEE COMPANY」

"Joint Guarantor" is a general requirement when people want to rent a room in Japan. If the tenant does not honor the contract (such as late rent payment or damaging things inside the room but has no intention to pay the repair fees), the "Joint Guarantor" has a duty to make the payment as substitute for the tenant.

Generally, a "Joint Guarantor" must be the person who knows you well, such as your relatives living in Japan or your personal guarantor. However, a lot of overseas students find it difficult or impossible to have one. In that case, let's consider a "Guarantee Company".

## SIGNING CONTRACT AND MOVING IN

Making a contract means deciding what the rights and obligations of the landlord and the tenant are clearly. Signing the contract means an agreement and a promise to follow all the terms and conditions. Read the contents carefully, and if you are unsure about anything, feel free to ask the person in charge to explain it.

Besides the contract, there are also Explanatory of Important Notes, the Insurance Contract, or other related documents that need your signatures.

Contract period	Usual contract period is two years, but there is also one-year contract.
Rent, management fee	Total amount, due date, payment methods, etc.
Prohibited matters	Below are commonly prohibited items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No pets</li><li>• No playing musical instruments</li><li>• No interior redecoration(such as repapering, painting the room, making holes in the walls)</li><li>• Other people moving in without permission, subleasing the room to other people is prohibited.</li><li>• No leaving personal belongings in common-used places (such as parking the bicycle at the entrance)</li></ul>
About contract renewal	Possible to renew the contract or not. If yes, what kind and how much will the expenses cost (the renewal fee is usually one month of the rent)?
About contract termination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To cancel the contract within the contract period, when does the tenant need to notify the landlord?</li><li>• About the fees and returning the deposit money (Generally, in case there are any damages caused by the tenant, the owner has the right to withdraw the repair fees from the deposit)</li></ul>

# LIVING MANNERS AND RULES

## Trash separating

In Japan, the rules of disposing garbage are very detailed. Depending on the area, the rules are different, so be careful and pay attention to them. Each municipality may have different rules, so confirm them before disposing.

In almost all places, garbage is only collected on the decided days and times. The garbage will not be collected if it is not separated correctly or not disposed on time. Leaving garbage there might make the places dirty or dangerous. Japanese people, who love cleanliness, can complain about this, and because it is against the rules, violators might be asked to move out.

## Making noise

Everyone has a different lifestyle. If there is a family that has children or the elderly living around, the sounds of using a vacuum cleaner or washing machine at night would become very loud and cause inconvenience to neighbors.

Moreover, when friends come over, be careful not to talk or turn on loud music.

## Greeting

Japanese lower their heads to greet people or to express their gratitude, and lower their heads the most when apologizing for something. Let's lower our heads lightly to greet neighbors when passing by with "Ohayou gozaimasu", "Kon-nichiwa", "Konbanwa".

## Taking part in events

Let's enjoy other events, such as security training of the apartment, the surrounding area, or the city association. This is a chance to experience Japanese culture, like Mochitsuki, Mikoshikatsugi, Bon-doori, and more.

To find a room in Japan, you might find a lot of unique customs in each step. It might take a long time and a lot of effort. However, these experiences can help you to know more about Japanese culture. We hope this guidebook could help you to find a suitable room and to prepare to start the study-abroad life!

# Introduction of GTN Guarantor Service



## About GTN

GTN is a guarantor company for foreigners who plan to sign an apartment lease contract in Japan. GTN provides support in Japanese, Korean, Chinese, English, Vietnamese and Nepali. So please feel free to contact us.



## ※What is a Guarantor?

A guarantor is required when you apply for a rental house. The guarantor has responsibility to pay unpaid rent. Generally the guarantor should be someone close to you such as your family member. Since there are difficulties to find a guarantor person for foreigners, many of them use a guarantor company.

■ **Initial Guarantor service Fee** (This fee is for GTN to become your guarantor company)  
**30% of total monthly rental fee, including maintenance fee and parking fee.**  
(Special price for students of Hosei University.)  
※Minimum guarantor service fee is 20,000 Yen.  
e.g. If your monthly rent is 38,000 Yen, your guarantor service fee will be 20,000 Yen instead of 19,000 Yen.

■ **Annual Guarantor service fee**  
**10,000 Yen/year**  
You will be required to pay annual guarantor fee yearly. The bill will be sent to your apartment. Please make payment at convenience stores.

## GTN Inspection Process

- **Required documents for examination** ※Please submit to your real estate agency.
  - ① Resident Card - Copy of front and back (Alien Registration Card is also available.)
  - ② Student Card - Copy of front and back  
(Admission letter or letter of acceptance is also available in case you haven't entered school yet)
  - ③ Passport - Copy of the page with your photo
- **Emergency contact information** ※Please submit this information to your real estate agency.
  - ① One of your parents
  - ② One of acquaintances who live in Japan (Friends are also acceptable, regardless of nationality)
- **From finding a rental apartment to GTN examination**
  - ① Apply for a rental apartment.
  - ② Please fill out GTN's application form when you fill out the tenant application.
  - ③ Please submit the copy of your resident card, student card and passport.
  - ④ GTN will contact you for inspection.
  - ⑤ GTN will also contact your parent and acquaintance for inspection.  
※ Please notify your emergency contacts that we GTN will contact them for examination.
  - ⑥ After the inspection is fully finished,  
please fill out GTN's contract form and put your seal (or signature) on it.

**GTN supports all foreigners for their pleasant life in Japan!**

If you have any problem while living in your apartment, please contact our Trust Call Center.  
We provide multilingual support (Japanese, Korean, Chinese, English, Vietnamese and Nepali)

**03-5155-4674 (10:00~18:30)**



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Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions about apartment.

<http://www.gtn.co.jp/en/contact/>