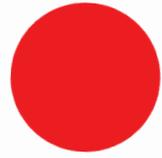




# CultureNotes: Japan

The Japanese value harmony and saving face.

Because of this, your student's instinct will likely be to answer your questions in whatever way will mean the least work for you. For example, if you ask your student if he/she is hungry, the response will generally be no. Ask questions up to three times so your student feels comfortable responding.



Another difference between Japanese and American cultures is that the Japanese do not use head nods as frequently as Americans. Your student might use a short, single nod to signify "yes" and will likely avoid saying "no" altogether. You will want to pay close attention to body language if you are looking for a visual signal of your student's response to a question.



Your student will not be used to open criticism of others or being put on the spot, as this is generally not done in Japan. The Japanese avoid causing embarrassment for others.

Your student may also need some time adjusting to American meals. In Japan, many homes do not have an oven, but almost everyone owns a rice cooker. Rice is eaten at almost every meal in Japan, including breakfast.

Do not be offended if your student slurps when eating noodles. In Japan, noodles are typically slurped both to show appreciation for the taste of the noodles and to cool them down when they are too hot.

- \* Capital: Tokyo
- \* Population: 127.08 million
- \* Area: About 145,902 sq.mi.
- \* Nationality: Japanese
- \* Language: Japanese
- \* Climate: Varies from subtropical to temperate
- \* Fun Fact: Some men in Japan shave their heads to apologize.