

# Japan

## Business Guide

Compiled by:

Swiss Business Hub Japan

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## JAPAN IN NUMBERS

### Area

377'887 km<sup>2</sup> (Switzerland: 41'290 km<sup>2</sup>)

### Capital city

Tōkyō (ca. 9.5 Mio. inhabitants, 23 central districts)

### Inhabitants

126.79 Mio. (2017)

### Nominal head of state ("Symbol of the State")

Tennō (to be determined)

### Prime Minister

ABE Shinzō (since 26. Dezember 2012)

#### Minister of Finance

ASŌ Tarō (seit 26. Dezember 2012)

#### Minister of Foreign Affairs

KŌNO Tarō (seit 3. August 2017)

#### Minister of Economics, Trade and Industry

SEKŌ Hiroshige (seit 3. August 2016)

#### Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery

YOSHIKAWA Takamori (seit 2. Oktober 2018)

#### State Secretary of Economic Policy

MOTEGI Toshimitsu (seit 3. August 2017)

#### Governor of the Central Bank

KURODA Haruhiko (seit 20. März 2013)



Caption 1. Japanese Islands. Source: Wikipedia

### Economic Indicators

	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>GDP, current prices (USD bn.)</b>	4'873.2	5'070.6	5'220.6	5'371.7
<b>GDP per capita, current prices (USD)</b>	38'449	40'106	41'418	42'764
<b>GDP, annual change (%)</b>	1.7	1.1	0.9	0.3
<b>Inflation, average prices, annual change (%)</b>	0.5	1.2	1.3	1.7
<b>Unemployment rate (%)</b>	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9

### Treaties and Memberships

Important international memberships:	FAO, G7, G10, G20, IADB, IBRD, ILO, IMF, OECD, UNO, UNCTAD, UNIDO, WTO
Important regional organizations:	ADB, APEC, ASEAN+3, ASEM, EAS
FTA active:	Singapore, Mexico, Malaysia, Philippines, Chile, Thailand, Indonesia, Brunei, ASEAN (Waren), <b>Schweiz</b> , Vietnam, Indien, Peru, Australia, Mongolia, CPTPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership TPP excl. USA, also TPP-11), EU
FTA being negotiated:	ASEAN (Services, Investment), Colombia, trilateral China-Südkorea-Japan, RCEP (ASEAN+6), Turkey,
FTA negotiations on hold:	South Korea, GCC, Canada

Information taken from the [SECO Factsheet Japan](#)

Country information concerning Imports and Exports: <https://www.s-ge.com/en/country/japan-country-information>

## **BUSINESS TRAVEL**

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

To enter Japan, a visa is not required for those who hold a Swiss or Liechtenstein passport and who will stay in Japan for no longer than 90 days for short-term business such as market surveys, business liaison, business talks, signing contracts and after-sale service for investment goods imported into Japan or other similar activities.

When entering Japan you should possess a fixed-date, confirmed return or onward journey ticket and necessary supporting documents which provide evidence justifying the purpose of the trip. Furthermore, a traveler may be asked to show evidence of sufficient funds for the proposed period of stay in the country.

A visa is required if the purpose of your stay is long-term residency or employment of other business activities. Please note that there is no visa agreement regarding working holidays between Japan and Switzerland.

All information concerning visas for Japan are to the best of our knowledge. Please be aware that the only authority that can make official statements on visa proceedings is the Japanese authority in Bern or the Immigration Office in Japan. We do not take responsibility for any outdated information.

#### **Young Professional Programme**

The Government of Japan and the Swiss Federal Council established a programme concerning the exchange of young professionals who go to the other country for a limited period of time to take employment within the field of their previously acquired professional technology or knowledge, in the hope of familiarizing themselves with business, professional and technical practices in the country and improving their linguistic knowledge. The young professionals will be granted a permit for a temporary stay to take employment within their respective field, notwithstanding the situation in the labor markets. For further information:

#### **Embassy of Japan in Switzerland**

<http://www.ch.emb-japan.go.jp/> (General)

<http://www.ch.emb-japan.go.jp/de/visareise.html> (Visa and Young Professional Programme)

#### **Embassy of Switzerland in Japan**

<http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/rebs/asia/vjpn/embjpn.html> (General)

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/japan/en/home/travel-advice/current-situation.html> (Travel Advice)

#### **Arrival and departure procedures at airports**

Tokyo Narita: <https://www.narita-airport.jp/en/step>

Tokyo Haneda: <http://www.haneda-airport.jp/inter/en/dept/>

Kansai (Osaka) <http://www.kansai-airport.or.jp/en/route/index.html>

#### **Transfer to city centres**

Access to/from International Airports (Source: Japan National Tourist Organization)

Tokyo Narita: <http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/arrange/transportation/airport/naritaMap.html>

Tokyo Haneda: <http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/arrange/transportation/airport/hanedaAirport.html>

Kansai (Osaka): <http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/arrange/transportation/airport/kansaiAirport.html>

Chubu Centrair (Nagoya): [http://www.centrair.jp/en/passenger\\_guide/](http://www.centrair.jp/en/passenger_guide/)

Further information in Swiss national languages and in English on essential travel information such as domestic transportation, accommodations, currency, map, weather, travel tips, etc.

<http://www.jnto.de> (German)

[www.tourisme-japon.fr](http://www.tourisme-japon.fr) (French)

<http://www.turismo-giappone.it> (Italian)

<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/index.html> (English)

(Source: Japan National Tourist Organization)

## **LANGUAGES USED FOR BUSINESS**

Generally, the language for international business activities in Japan is English. Unfortunately, it is sometimes still the case that the language is a large hurdle for Japanese people in business matters. More often than that, Swiss business people encounter communication difficulties on account of not only language but also cultural and social barriers. For some cases, it is recommendable to hire an interpreter who also reads facial expressions, gestures and “real meanings” of yes and no. The [Swiss Business Hub Japan](#) will gladly advise and support your business endeavors and overcome intercultural barriers.

## **PUBLIC HOLIDAYS**

December 27 – January 5, and August 10 – 15 are Japanese holiday periods. Those periods and a couple of days before and after each period should be avoided when travelling to Japan for business.

### **National Holidays in 2019 - 2020**

Marine Day	July 15
Mountain Day	August 11
Mountain Day (observed)	August 12
Respect for the Aged Day	September 16
Autumnal Equinox Day	September 23
Health and Sports Day	October 14
Enthronement ceremony	October 22
Culture Day	November 3
Culture Day (observed)	November 4
Labor Thanksgiving Day	November 23
Bank Holiday	December 31

### **2020**

New Year's Day	January 1
Bank Holiday	January 2&3
Coming of Age Day	January 13

National Foundation Day	February 11
Emperor's birthday	February 24
Spring Equinox Day	March 20
Shōwa Day	April 29
Constitution Memorial Day	May 3
Greenery Day	May 4
Children's Day	May 5
Constitution Memorial Day (observed)	May 6

Further information for business hours and holidays in Japan:

<https://www.japan.travel/en/plan/business-hours-and-holidays/>

(Source: Japan National Tourist Organization)

## HEALTH AND INOCULATIONS

### Drinking water

Tap water is safe to drink anywhere in Japan. Mineral water and other kind of soft drinks can be easily obtained from vending machines, convenience stores and other retail shops. Vending machines mostly only accept cash or major e-money cards issued by railway companies. See [Methods of payment](#), below

### Hospitals

Medical systems and facilities in Japan have high standards, although the language could be a problem.

The staff at Tokyo Medical & Surgical Clinic, <http://tmsc.jp/emergencies> is fluent in English and can be reached for emergencies at Tel: 03-3436-3028.

Further medical facilities with English and other foreign language-speaking staff:

[http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/policy/health-medical/medical-care/info\\_hospitals.html](http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/policy/health-medical/medical-care/info_hospitals.html) (Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare)

Emergency services: <http://japanhealthinfo.com/emergency-services/> (Source: Japan Healthcare Info)

### Inoculations

There are no inoculations required for entering Japan from anywhere around the world.

**MEDICAL EMERGENCY NUMBER IN JAPAN: 119**

**POLICE EMERGENCY NUMBER IN JAPAN: 110**

### TIME ZONE

The whole area of Japan operates in a single time zone, which is GMT + 9 hours. Japan does not have summer time, therefore, the time difference with Switzerland is +7 hours in summer and +8 hours in winter.

### WEATHER

Japan has distinct seasonal differences with various characteristics that will need to be calculated for. The following is information concerning the Tokyo area.

**Spring** – Generally cool/cold during March and gradually warmer in April/May. June is the rainy season, where it can rain for 3 weeks on end. The temperatures fluctuate around 18-25 degrees, meaning it is very warm and humid, despite the downpour. In this season it is recommended to wear lighter clothing that can be taken off and dried if needed.

**Summer** – Japan's summer can reach very hot temperatures of well over 30° degrees Celsius and high humidity. Water and shade should be sought during these hot periods. Should you find yourself in trouble, do not hesitate to ask for help (especially “Koban” police boxes in Japan are happy to help).

**Autumn** – During October and November, Japan cools down and the temperatures become more pleasant. An important information for visitors during the time from September to October is that this

falls into Japan's **Typhoon season**. Heavy lightning storms and gale-force winds may suddenly arise for visitors who have not checked the weather forecast. Flights are frequently cancelled, so make sure to keep up to date with the airport's information. Generally, Japan informs its residents via television or the meteorological service online (<https://www.jma.go.jp/jma/indexe.html>)

**Winter** – Winter in the Tokyo area records low temperatures, often around 0-5 degrees Celsius, with the possibility of snow. Tokyo has many sunny days in winter, making it a dry and windy season. Should there be snow forecast, please calculate plenty of extra time for business meetings/airport transit, as metro and train services tend to have heavy delays.

Alternate weather in Japan information site: <https://www.accuweather.com/en/jp/japan-weather>

## **EARTHQUAKES / TSUNAMI**

As Japan is situated on the Pacific Ring of Fire where the tectonic plates are in constant shift, Tokyo (and Japan for that matter) is subject to dozens of earthquakes each year. Most of which are minor (Richter scale 1-4), but the chances of a large earthquake are constant. The prognosis of a large earthquake in the Tokyo (Kanto) area has been looming for the past decade and early warning systems as well as structural advances are being put into practice to minimize the damage in such a case.

Earthquake Information Page: <https://www.bousai.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/index.html>

Tokyo, protected by its bay, is generally not in a dangerous area for tsunami occurring after an earthquake, but depending on the area, floods or tidal waves may still occur. In case of a warning, please make sure to follow any signs with the following image:



Earthquake warning applications have been developed for smartphones to enable quick information (smart phones may also give off automatic warning signals before heavy earthquakes through Japan's cell phone network):

- 1) Yureka Call ゆれくるコール (iOS) | [Google App](#)
- 2) Erdbeben + Benachrichtigung (iOS) | [Google App](#)

## **ELECTRICITY SUPPLY**

The voltage throughout Japan is 100 V which is different from North America (110 V) and Central Europe (220 V). (Note: Swiss appliances that charge a battery may still work, but will charge slower.) Japanese electrical plugs have two pins and fit into North American outlets. Plug adapters may be bought at airports, in convenience stores, home centers and one-stop-shops like "Don Quixote".

<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/arrange/essential/electricity.html>

## **METHODS OF PAYMENT**

The currency in Japan is the Yen, designated as ¥

The exchange rate with Swiss Francs on March 15, 2019 was

100 Japanese Yen = 0.90 Swiss Francs (CHF 0.50)

100 Swiss Franc = 11'116.0 Japanese Yen (JPY 11,116)

In Japan, small shops and neighborhood restaurants still rely on cash payment.

For information on cash withdrawals at ATMs: and on using credit cards [https://japan-magazine.jnto.go.jp/en/special\\_credit.html](https://japan-magazine.jnto.go.jp/en/special_credit.html)

(Source: Japan National Tourist Organization)

Besides Bank counters, ATMs are also available in convenience stores 24h/7. "Maestro" cards are further accepted at AEON Bank ATMs <https://www.aeonbank.co.jp/atm/en/>

For business travelers, a useful non-cash payment method will be the pre-paid smart cards issued by railway companies such as Suica, Pasma, etc. The cards can be used for riding trains, subways, buses, taxis, paying at shops, especially convenience stores and kiosks. The cards can be bought at station ticket machines for a deposit of JPY 500 that is refunded when the card is returned. For more information.

<https://travel.navitime.com/en/area/jp/guide/NTJhowto0013-en/>

[http://www.jr-plus.ch/japan-rail-pass-infos/wichtige-informationen/suica-card\\_351-de.html](http://www.jr-plus.ch/japan-rail-pass-infos/wichtige-informationen/suica-card_351-de.html)

With Tokyo 2020 Olympics on the horizon, various cashless payment services are being launched.

[Japan Taxi Wallet](#)

[Rakuten Pay](#)

[Line Pay](#)

International services such as Apple Pay and Android Pay are available since 2016. Japanese businesses are increasingly adopting China-based WeChatPay and Alipay to attract Chinese consumers.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Japan Rail Pass is a good way for people entering with a tourist visa to get around at a cheaper price:

<https://www.jreast.co.jp/e/pass/>

For International airport access, domestic flights, railways, subways, busses, taxis and car rental please refer to <http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/arrange/transportation/index.html>

(Source: Japan National Tourist Organization).

A good site to check travel routes, train connections and departure times is Hyperdia:

<http://www.hyperdia.com/en/>

Depending on the season, a reservation of a Shinkansen (high-speed train) seat is advised. Tickets for the Eastern Region of Japan can be reserved online:

<https://www.jreast.co.jp/e/ticket/reservation.html>

Flights within the country are offered by multiple airlines, some of which are not on the common search engines. Making sure to check all options may be beneficial when travelling on a budget:

- [Peach](#)
- [JAL](#)
- [ANA](#)
- [Jetstar](#)
- [Skymark](#)

## **HOTELS**

According to JNTO, the number of international travelers to Japan in 2017 was 31.2 million (+8.7% from the previous year), the highest record ever. Due to the tourism boom, Swiss business people traveling to Japan find the hotel room rates increasing and rooms sometimes booked out. A reservation should therefore be made well in advance.

Information on hotels: <http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/arrange/accomodations/index.html>

Hotels where the airport limousine buses stop: <http://www.limousinebus.co.jp/en/hotelguide/index.html>

Japan specific Ryokan/Hotel search site: [Jalan](#)

## **INTERNET**

Tokyo is going to host the 2020 summer Olympics and is now busy expanding and improving the city's infrastructure. In this context, free Wi-Fi access for visitors has recently been greatly improved.

<https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2279.html>

Data SIM cards are a great alternative option, if you don't need your phone available for calls to your usual number and want to use VoIP services and internet (Apps). Here is a site explaining how and where to get these cards: <https://trulytokyo.com/how-to-buy-a-sim-card-in-tokyo/> (Found on: Truly Tokyo)

Free Wi-Fi Smartphone apps:

<https://japanfreewifi.com/>

<http://www.ntt-bp.net/jcfw/en.html>

Rental pocket Wifis and other Wifi services are available for visitors (just a few examples below):

<https://www.japan-rail-pass.com/services/pocket-wifi>

<https://visitor.docomowifi.com/en/details/>

## **BUSINESS HOURS**

Weekdays

Saturdays

Sundays and National  
Holidays

Offices	09:00 – 17:00	Closed	Closed
Banks	09:00 – 15:00	Closed	Closed
Post Offices	09:00 – 17:00	Closed	Closed
Department Stores	10:00 – 20:00	10:00 – 20:00	10:00 – 20:00/21:00
Shops	10:00 – 20:00	10:00 – 20:00	10:00 – 20:00
Convenience Stores	24h	24h	24h

### **USEFUL APPS FOR TRAVEL TO JAPAN**

<https://www.japan.travel/en/plan/useful-apps/>

### **ADDRESSES AND OPENING HOURS OF EMBASSY AND CONSULATE**

#### **Embassy of Switzerland**

5-9-12 Minami-Azabu

Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-8589, Japan

<http://www.eda.admin.ch/tokyo>

Tel.: (+81) 3 5449 8400

Fax: (+81) 3 3473 6090

#### **Office hours**

Monday-Friday 09:00-12:00

Saturday and Sunday closed

#### **Honorary Consulate General of Switzerland in Osaka**

River View Kitahama Bldg, Office 601

1-1-30, Kitahama, Chuo-ku, Osaka 541-0041

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/japan/en/home/representations/honorary-consulate-general-osaka.html>

Tel.: +81 (0)6 4708 3790

Fax: +81 (0)6 4708 3956

The Honorary Consulate General of Switzerland in Osaka neither has fixed operating hours, nor treats usual consulate matters such as passport and visa applications.

## DOING BUSINESS

### JAPAN AS A TARGET MARKET: WHERE TO START?

If you consider Japan as your next target export market some market research is essential before trying to get hold of a list of potential distributors. It is only possible to create the right requirement profile of your partner if you understand your customers, competitors and the nature of distribution channels in Japan: Your success depends upon the capabilities of your partner and it is highly unlikely that you find a qualified business partner based on some contact lists for cold calls. It will also hardly be possible for you based in Switzerland to check out the up-to-date needs and wants of your potential customers, whether your potential partners have the necessary expertise, a network of relationships in the industry and are capable of providing after-sale services. It is essential to look at the Japanese market very carefully and understand how business is done in Japan. Even if something is completely logically understandable for Switzerland, or in any other country, it does not necessarily mean that the same is true for Japan.

Further, personal contacts are very important for the Japanese. The Japanese people prefer to do business with someone they are properly introduced to by a trusted person/organization and have met face-to-face with. They are willing to enter into a business relationship only when they are sure they are dealing with a reliable person representing a reliable company (it is not only the quality of your product that convinces your customer, but also who you are).

Once you have got a chance to meet your potential partner/customer, patience is required: The group decision-making process in Japanese companies where members of the middle management play great roles takes a lot more time than in Switzerland. Recently, however, Japanese internationally active companies have been becoming aware of the importance of making rapid and high-quality decisions to improve business operation. They thus expect to be provided with relevant and accurate information based upon which they can make decisions in a timely manner. It is beyond a product overview. It has to demonstrate how the Japanese client company can benefit from your product/proposal.

When doing business with Japanese companies, thorough research and solid preparation are key elements for success.

#### Terminating your existing distributor

Some Swiss companies terminate their Japanese distributors simply believing that sales performance will automatically improve by replacing the distributor and that they will immediately find a better one without losing customers. This is unfortunately not always the case.

Sometimes, poor distributor performance is due to lack of understanding and poor communication also on the part of the Swiss manufacturer. Working closely with your distributor, clearly identifying what they expect from you as well as you from them and providing necessary support are indispensable. Changes in the business landscape can play a role too. Before looking for a new distributor, talk to your existing partner first. Open, honest and sincere communication can avoid problems and conflicts. If you do not identify reasons for failure, you can make the same mistakes with the new distributor. It is also essential to end a business relationship with an extraordinary degree of caution and care. In every industry, the

Japanese business communities are sometimes surprisingly close-knit. If not handled delicately, replacing a distributor could damage Swiss company's reputation and business.

**Swiss Business Hub Japan will gladly help you: We can collect and analyze market information on regulations, customers and competitors both by desk and field research, identify your qualified potential business partners, actively promote your company as well as your product, escort you to the first business meetings and assist you in verbal and non-verbal communication. We can help facilitate discussions with your existing partners.**

Our services:

<https://www.s-ge.com/de/japan> (D)

<https://www.s-ge.com/fr/japon> (F)

<https://www.s-ge.com/it/giappone> (I)

## **BUSINESS PRACTICES**

### **Dos and Don'ts**

#### **Meeting and greeting**

Although between Japanese bowing is a usual way of salutation, a bow is not expected from a Swiss business person. Japanese with international experience will initiate a handshake.

#### **Business cards**

The first thing after the initial greeting is to exchange business cards (called "meishi" in Japanese. The word belongs to the most important business Japanese vocabulary list).

First introductions are made while exchanging business cards. Bilingual business cards, with one side printed in Japanese and the other in English, are standards in Japan. They must absolutely be clean and unused. Always take a substantial quantity of them with you.

Cards should be presented individually with both hands with a slight bow. Individuals who are of lower rank or younger, or who are seeking something from the other party, offer their cards first.

Your business cards should clearly state your position. An academic title or degree is not included on your business card unless it is relevant to your job function. Having "Dipl.-Ing.", for example, put on your business card may cause confusion as the title on your card is supposed to help your Japanese business counterpart classify your position within your company.

Present your card with your name facing the recipient. When you give your card, never distribute it onto the meeting desk, hand it individually to each person with both hands. When you receive a card, study it carefully. Do not fold, write on it or immediately put it into your pocket, as this is considered a sign of disrespect.

#### **Names and forms of address**

In Japanese, you can refer to both men and women by their family names, followed by "san" – an example is "Toyota-san". There is no distinction between gender and marital status with the "san" suffix. Do not address a person you first met by his or her first name, unless specifically invited to do so. Never

use “san” with your own name. Only use it when referring to someone else. You can, of course, address Japanese people in English using Mr., Mrs., and Miss or Ms. plus the family name.

When responding to an e-mail written in English (or D/F/I) by a Japanese business contact you have never met before and you are not sure if the person is a man or woman and/or which part is the first or the last name, it would be reasonable to assume:

- The given name is written first, followed by the family name: e.g. Shinzo (given name) Abe (family name)
  - Recent controversy concerning the name order means in future, Japanese names may be written in the Japanese order in international media as well as in business (last name, first name). ([see BBC news article about name order in Japan](#))
- If the (possible) first name has many vowels/polysyllabic, it is very likely that it is a man: e.g. Toshihiro, Uichiro, Shonosuke: **Men**  
Naoko, Yatomi, Yumiko: **Women**
- When in doubt, you can use the full name followed by "san" as an honorific suffix: e.g. Dear Shinzo Abe-san. Never address someone without a honorific title: e.g. Dear Shinzo Abe. Swiss people often do this; it is, however, a no-go.

Japanese traditionally say and write their family name first, followed by their first name. However, many Japanese who deal with Western business professionals use the Western name order. When introducing yourself, make clear which is your family or your given name. When introduced and in doubt, it is no problem to ask.

Persons with titles are addressed only by their title, such as buchô (department manager) or shachô (president) without using a “san”. For instance, the manager, whose last name is Honda, should be addressed as “Honda buchô”. Especially for senior executives, titles are used instead of the family name.

## Languages

Few Japanese people are sufficiently fluent in English in business communication. When never educated/employed outside of Japan, even those who are capable of speaking/writing in English, very often communicate in the Japanese way of thinking which can lead to incomprehension or misunderstanding. Directness in communication on the Swiss side, such as saying right out “No” to suggestions and ideas brought up by the Japanese counterpart is considered impolite. The Japanese would say that something would “be difficult”, actually meaning “No”. In some cases, hiring an interpreter is therefore a good idea not only to avoid misunderstandings, but also to understand gestures and facial expressions or even silence. It may also demonstrate your commitment to the Japanese market. The same applies to having your documents translated into Japanese.

While on one hand it is true that business communication in the English language is still an issue in Japan, the Japanese are on average well educated. It sometimes happens that your Japanese counterpart picks up some words in German, French or Italian and is even able to say a few sentences in one of the Swiss national languages.

## Documents

Do not machine translate documents that your Japanese partner/counterpart will read. The machine translations are not on the level yet, where the translation can be understood. Should you require a translation of business documents/brochures/etc., [please contact the Swiss Business Hub Japan for more information.](#)

## Dress and shoes

The Japanese dress well and rather conservative. Men should not wear bright colors; dark suits and subtly colored shirts as well as ties are appropriate in most business situations. Women should wear conservatively styled dresses or suits, with heels. Too much jewelry, low-cut dresses, heavy make-up or wearing too much perfume is not encouraged.

In Japan, it happens that you suddenly find yourself in the situation where you have to remove your shoes (when invited to private homes, many Japanese-style restaurants, and even going into some offices and meeting halls). Think of wearing shoes that can be easily slipped on and off with no laces. Do not wear old, worn-out socks.

## Gifts

The visitor is the one who offers gifts at the first meeting. The Japanese do business in groups and more people may attend meetings than you have expected. Therefore, bring a few extra gifts. Individual gifts should be given to people who made extra efforts in dealing with your project, taking care of your travel arrangements, etc.

Have a gift professionally wrapped where you purchased it. Pastel-colored wrapping paper is preferred. Never use black paper. Do not expect a gift to be opened in front of you. Tell the recipient "Please open it" if you would like it to be opened. Do not open your gift unless asked by the giver to do so, as this is considered greedy. You may ask the giver: "May I open it?" When opening a gift, never tear the wrapping paper. Wrapping paper is selected for its design, elegance and significance. It is considered good form to undo a package with care. You will not only preserve the paper but also show proper respect for the effort that went into making the paper, selecting it and wrapping your gift.

Luxury chocolate truffles are popular gifts from Switzerland.

## Developing relationships and trust

As mentioned before, it is important to win support and trust not only of the CEO, but also of the middle management. Swiss companies need to visit their Japanese counterparts once or twice a year. In addition, meet and greet them at tradeshows when- and wherever possible, and invite them to visit your company in Switzerland too.

## Opportunities for Swiss SMEs

<https://www.s-ge.com/en/japan>

### INDUSTRY REPORTS

- **AI in Japan**, <https://www.s-ge.com/en/publication/industry-report/20191-c6-artificial-intelligence-japan>

- **Medtech in Japan**, <https://www.s-ge.com/en/publication/industry-report/20184-c6-japan-medtech>
- **Opportunities for Swiss companies in the Japanese Gerontech Market**, <https://www.s-ge.com/en/publication/industry-report/20191-c6-japan-gerontech>

### INFOGRAPHICS AND ONLINE PRESENTATIONS

- **AgriTech in Japan**, <https://swissbiz.jp/agritech-in-japan/>
- **RegTech in Japan**, <https://swissbiz.jp/regtech-in-japan/>
- **HealthcareTech in Japan**, <https://swissbiz.jp/healthcare-tech-in-japan/>
- **Fintech in Japan**, <https://swissbiz.jp/swiss-fintech/>

A market report on the following industries can be sent upon request to Swiss Business Hub Japan

- Automotive Industry 2014
- Health and Functional Food 2014
- Wine 2013

Free Trade Agreements EU/Japan and Switzerland/Japan:

- Fact Sheet (2018) <https://www.s-ge.com/en/publication/fact-sheet/20181-japan-free-trade-agreement-eu-what-it-means-swiss-exporters> (Free download after registration of e-mail)

General Market information and updated reports:

- Inquire: Swiss Business Hub Japan: [tok.sbhjapan@eda.admin.ch](mailto:tok.sbhjapan@eda.admin.ch)

### SWISS PAVILIONS AT TRADE SHOWS IN JAPAN

- **CEATEC Japan 2019**. CPS/IoT technology fair  
(Opening days: 15<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> of October at Makuhari Messe, Chiba, Japan)  
**Organizer page:** <https://www.ceatec.com/ja/application/>  
**S-GE page:** <https://www.s-ge.com/en/event/swiss-pavilion/swiss-pavilion-ceatec-japan-2019>
- **MASS-TRANS Innovation Japan 2019**, train and rail technology fair  
(Opening days: 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> of November at Makuhari Messe, Chiba, Japan)  
**Organizer page:** <http://www.mtij.jp/english/>  
**S-GE page:** <https://www.s-ge.com/en/event/swiss-pavilion/swiss-pavilion-mass-trans-innovation-japan>

### CUSTOMIZED SOLUTIONS

Switzerland Global Enterprise (S-GE)/Swiss Business Hub Japan offer customized solutions to support Swiss companies, especially small and medium-sized businesses with intention to expand their exports to Japan. We work in cooperation with external industry specialists, when necessary, to help Swiss exporters step-by-step throughout the entire exporting process.

Services include:

- Gaining initial assessment from local opinion leaders of a product's chances in Japan
- Gaining regulatory, legal and cultural knowledge about the product's market requirements

- Gaining knowledge of potential customer groups, their purchasing behavior, purchasing channels and expectations
- Gaining knowledge of national and international competitors and their market activities for the successful positioning of the product in Japan
- Supporting your specific sales activities
- Searching for possible distribution partners
- Setting up meetings with potential distribution partners as well as providing logistical support for traveling in Japan
- Assisting in the search for qualified staff
- Assisting in setting up business in Japan
- Assisting in business meetings and communication
- Assisting in follow-up, keeping in touch
- Assisting in managing the relationship with your distributor

To discuss your needs and identify the service(s) you will need to succeed in the complex Japanese market, please contact your nearest S-GE Office.

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**Swiss Business Hub Japan in Tokyo**, see our address below.

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## **DISCLAIMER**

This Business Guide is intended to provide only basic information and addresses that may be useful for Swiss companies traveling to Japan for business.

Readers should note that S-GE and Swiss Business Hub Japan do not guarantee the accuracy of any of the information contained in this paper, nor does it necessarily endorse the organizations, associations, companies, websites and individuals listed herein. Readers should verify the accuracy of the information contained herein before making a business decision.