

# Japan

## Postcode

### Postcode type and position

7 digits below the locality name, with a hyphen between the 3rd and 4th digits.

## Coding method

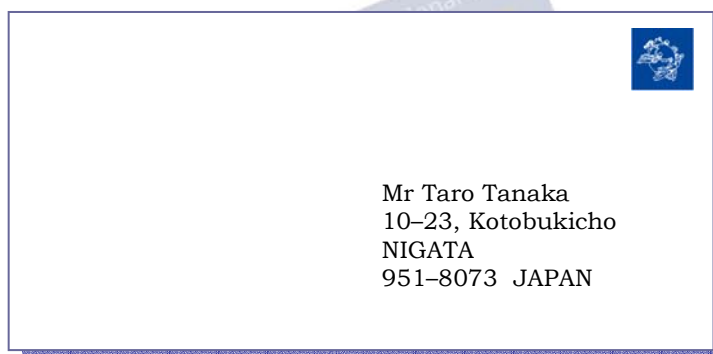
1 5 4 - 0 0 2 3

area district  
post office

or

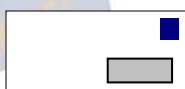
3 5 0 - 1 1 0 6

area district  
post office



## Position of the address on the envelope

Bottom  
right-hand  
corner



## Alignment of address lines

Left-  
aligned



## Address format

In Japan, the address is generally written on a single line, beginning with the largest geographical area and ending with the smallest one. In the Roman alphabet, this would be transcribed as follows:

JAPAN 112-0001 TOKYO Bunkyo-Ku Hakusan 4-Chome 3-2

However, according to the latest information, automatic sorting equipment used by the Japanese Post is only able to sort items on which the address is in kanji, hiragana or katakana characters. Items whose address is in Roman script are sorted manually. Addresses may therefore also be laid out as they are in the West, from the smallest geographical area at the top to the largest at the bottom:

3-2, Hakusan 4-chome  
Bunkyo-ku, TOKYO  
112-0001 JAPAN\*

*\*NOTE from the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union: reserving the last line of the address for the country name ensures greater automated processing accuracy at origin and in transit.*

In recent years, the following is the increasing trend:

4-3-2, Hakusan  
Bunkyo-ku, TOKYO  
112-0001  
JAPAN

The largest geographical subdivision is the prefecture: there are 47 in Japan. Prefecture names end in -ken, except for Tokyo-to, Kyoto-fu, Osaka-fu and Hokkaido.

Prefectures are divided into large towns (-shi) and rural areas (-gun). These large towns and rural areas are themselves divided into -machi, -cho or -son (villages, only in rural areas). In very large cities there may be an additional subdivision (-ku) between -shi and -machi/-cho.

-machi and -cho are divided into zones (-chome), which are themselves divided into blocks (-ban), which are in turn divided into houses (-go). Houses are therefore not numbered sequentially along a street, but rather within a block. There may be several houses with the same number within a block, in which case an apartment number should be added to identify the correct building.

## Japan (cont.)

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### Address format (cont.)

Most businesses operating internationally are called corporations or Kaisha in Japanese, and most often Kabushiki Kaisha, shortened to K.K. The name of a company will often be translated partially or fully. So, for example, Aoba Trading Co. Ltd is the same company as Aoba Boeki K.K. and Electric Power Development Co. Ltd will certainly be a translation rather than the legal name of the company in question.

Large buildings generally have names ending in the suffix -biru, but Building or Bldg is frequently used.

### Examples

Rural zone:

Mr Taro Tanaka  
2338 Shiokawa  
Maruko-machi  
Chisagata-gun, NAGANO  
386-401 JAPAN

(2338 is the building number)

In towns:

The address generally contains all the successive subdivisions of a zone, including the prefecture:

Mr Taro Tanaka  
10-23, Mitsugi 1-chome  
Musashi-Murayama-shi, TOKYO  
208-0032 JAPAN

The prefecture may be omitted in the following two cases: when it is one of the 12 principal cities of the country (Fukuoka, Hiroshima, Kawasaki, Kitakyushu, Kobe, Kyoto, Nagoya, Osaka, Sapporo, Sendai, Tokyo, Yokohama):

Mr Taro Tanaka  
2-17-10, Aicicho  
Naka-ku, YOKOHAMA  
231-0012 JAPAN

(2-17-10 means 2-chome 17-ban 10-go; the order is important; this could also be written 17-10 2-chome; in some cases, an apartment number needs to be added, which would give us 2-17-10-153 or 17-10-153 2-chome);

and when the name of the prefecture and that of the city are the same:

Mr Taro Tanaka  
10-23, Kotobukicho  
NIIGATA  
951-8073 JAPAN

(10-23 means 10-ban 23-go; the order is important)

### List of prefectures

Aichi-ken	Kagawa-ken	Osaka-fu
Akita-ken	Kagoshima-ken	Saga-ken
Aomori-ken	Kanagawa-ken	Saitama-ken
Chiba-ken	Kochi-ken	Shiga-ken
Ehime-ken	Kumamoto-ken	Shimane-ken
Fukui-ken	Kyoto-fu	Shizuoka-ken
Fukuoka-ken	Mie-ken	Tochigi-ken
Fukushima-ken	Miyagi-ken	Tokushima-ken
Gifu-ken	Miyazaki-ken	Tokyo-to
Gunma-ken	Nagano-ken	Tottori-ken
Hiroshima-ken	Nagasaki-ken	Toyama-ken
Hokkaido	Nara-ken	Wakayama-ken
Hyogo-ken	Niigata-ken	Yamagata-ken
Ibaragi-ken	Oita-ken	Yamaguchi-ken
Ishikawa-ken	Okayama-ken	Yamanashi-ken
Iwate-ken	Okinawa-ken	

## Japan (cont.)

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### Glossary

-Ken	=	suffix indicating a prefecture (except prefectures of Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto and Hokkaido)
-To	=	suffix used for Tokyo prefecture
-Fu	=	suffix used for Osaka and Kyoto prefectures
-Shi	=	suffix indicating a large town
-Gun	=	suffix indicating the rural part of a prefecture
-Ku	=	suffix indicating a district of a large town
-Machi	=	suffix indicating a small town
-Cho	=	suffix indicating a neighbourhood
-Chome	=	suffix indicating an area of a neighbourhood
-Ban	=	suffix indicating a block
-Go	=	suffix indicating a building number
-Kita	=	north
-Minami	=	south
-Nishi	=	west
-Higashi	=	east
-Chuo	=	centre

### Contact

International Affairs Office  
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Postal Services Policy Planning Bureau  
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### Website

[www.post.japanpost.jp](http://www.post.japanpost.jp)

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