



2 Rules/behavior for daily life/Customs

2-9 Ceremonial occasions

People in Japan hold ceremonies known as *kei-cho* (*kei* stands for congratulation, *cho* for condolence) for special occasions which are collectively called *kan-kon-so-sai*: *kan* stands for turning points of life such as birth and coming of age, *kon* stands for marriage and wedding, *so* stands for funeral and memorial ceremony, and *sai* stands for annual celebrations such as New Year's Day, mid-summer Bon Festival, July 7 Tanabata Festival and Shichigosan (literally meaning "seven-five-three," for celebrating children's growth). Among these, *kon* and *so* ceremonies in particular have many rules and practices to be observed. You may feel more comfortable about these by asking for a brief explanation from older Japanese acquaintances.

When a close friend is having a celebratory event such as marriage, birth, employment or entrance to school, there is a custom for you to present goods or money. For giving money, you put it inside a special envelope called *shugi-fukuro*.

When attending funerals, men wear black suits, white shirts and black ties. Women also usually wear black. For sending money, you put it inside a special envelope called *fushugi-fukuro* and hand to the receptionist. Details for funerals and weddings can vary depending on the religion, so it is best to seek advice from people familiar with the ceremonials.

Kinds of ceremony	Meaning and content	Rules and practices
Kan	Turning points of life such as birth and coming of age	There is a custom to present goods or money to a close friend having a celebratory event. Gift money is put inside a special envelope called <i>shugi-fukuro</i> .
Kon	Marriage and wedding	There is a custom to present goods or money to a close friend at marriage. Gift money is put inside a special envelope called <i>shugi-fukuro</i> .
So	Funeral and memorial ceremony	When attending funerals, men wear black suits, white shirts and black ties. Women also usually wear black. For sending money, put it inside a special envelope called <i>fushugi-fukuro</i> and hand to the receptionist.
Sai	Annual celebrations such as New Year's Day, Bon Festival, Tanabata Festival and Shichigosan	

* Details can vary depending on the religion and the region