



3 Basic services in daily life

3-4 Postal services

In Japan post offices and mailboxes are identified by a "〒" mark. The post office does not only handle mail services such as letter, parcel and express mail delivery, it also handles savings services (Japan Post Bank) and insurance services (JP Insurance).

Mail services are available from 9:00 to 17:00 on weekdays (except holidays). Some post offices are open for counter services at nights and on weekends.

Deposit and insurance services are available from 9:00 to 16:00 on weekdays (except holidays).

Post office website <http://www.post.japanpost.jp/> (Japanese site)
 <http://www.post.japanpost.jp/english/> (English site)

(1) Domestic mail

Domestic mail includes a postcard, letter, parcel post and booklet parcel post. Post office-printed postcards and postal stamps are sold in post offices. Privately issued postcards require a 50 yen stamp. Express mails, which are delivered in preference to other mails, require extra fees.

Parcel post (nicknamed "You-Pack") is a parcel delivery service done in the same way as a home delivery service collectively called *takuhaibin*.* The parcel will arrive at destination within the day following reception (except in some regions).

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Address in Japan starts with a postal code, followed by prefecture (*to, do, fu or ken*), city or county (*shi or gun*) and town or village (*machi or mura*), then by street (*tori*), district (*chiku*) or subdivision (*machi or cho*), and then by smaller divisions like (*chome*). Ward (*ku* as in *Chuo-ku*) comes after city (*shi*) like "Sapporo-shi Chuo-ku" or after to (meaning "metropolis") as in the case of the 23 Special Wards, such as "Tokyo-to Chiyoda-ku." Addresses end with a bloc number in the case of a house, or apartment numbers (*banchi, or ban and go* such as "X ban Y go").

Example:

〒100-0013

Tokyo-to Chiyoda-ku Kasumigaseki 3 chome 3 ban 2

If you send a moving-out notification to the post office, mails sent to the old address will be transferred to the new address for a year after moving out.

* Home delivery service (*takuhaibin*)

Parcel delivery service provided by a private carriage company. Orders are handled at various outlets such as convenience stores and retail stores. Depending on the company, you can call them to have the parcels



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collected at your door. There are various kinds of services including delivery on designated date, delivery at night, and delivery of chilled or frozen items. When traveling abroad, you can use the service to have the luggage delivered to the airport counter. For details, please contact the carriage company.

(2) International mail

When sending a letter or parcel (including luggage) abroad, you have three options: airmail, sea mail or SAL mail. Each charges different fees depending on the weight and destination. SAL mail is an international economy mail which is treated as sea mail inside Japan and a country of destination but uses an air carrier in between the countries. Delivery days are as follows, in order of speed: airmail 3-9 days, SAL mail 2-4 weeks, sea mail about 10-80 days. For details, please contact a nearby post office.