

Learning Japanese is an investment in your future

Learning the language is the best introduction to another culture. It is a particularly powerful tool in the modern world where traditional boundaries, both cultural and geographic, are being diminished by new modes of communication.

Knowledge of Japanese may lead to greater employment opportunities in the areas of banking, business, education, finance, hospitality, retail and tourism.

Teaching of Japanese in Victoria

Learning another language fosters students' ability to think and reflect about the workings of language, and to develop mental flexibility and problem solving-strategies. Language and intercultural skills allow ready global communication.

In Victoria many students study Japanese. Many primary and secondary schools provide strong, innovative Japanese programs. Nearly one in three Victorian government secondary colleges and one in four primary schools teach Japanese, including several Japanese-English bilingual programs. It is a very popular language at Year 12 level with approximately 1200 students studying the language annually.

Japanese is also taught by the Victorian School of Languages (VSL) at eight centres and through distance education. Details are available at <http://www.vsl.vic.edu.au/>

Information

For assistance in establishing and developing a Japanese language program, contact:

LOTE Unit
Student Learning Programs Division
Department of Education
Telephone: 9637 2041
Fax: 9637 2040
Website: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/lote/default.htm>

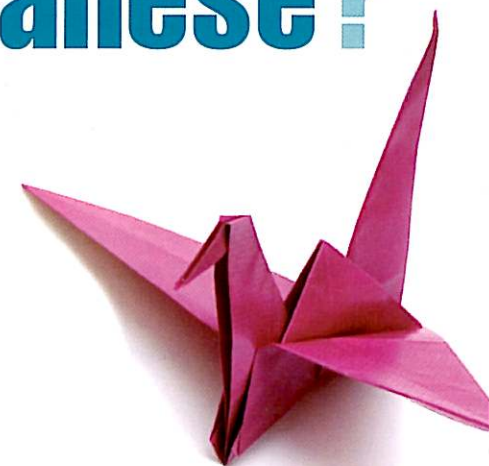
Further

Languages other than English (LOTE) project officers are located in each region to assist schools. To find contact details for your region please go to:
Website: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/>

Japanese Language Teachers' Association of Victoria Inc. (JLTAV)
Telephone: 9905 8791
Fax: 9905 8792
Website: <http://www.jltav.org.au/>



Why learn Japanese?



Japan

Japan is an island nation, located to the north of Australia; ten hours away by plane. Since the fifties Japan has developed into a high technology economic power.

The successful leap from being a feudal society to a world economic power has given rise to considerable interest in the study of Japanese language, culture and society.

Learning the Japanese language gives people access to the unique history, religions and cultural traditions of Japan.

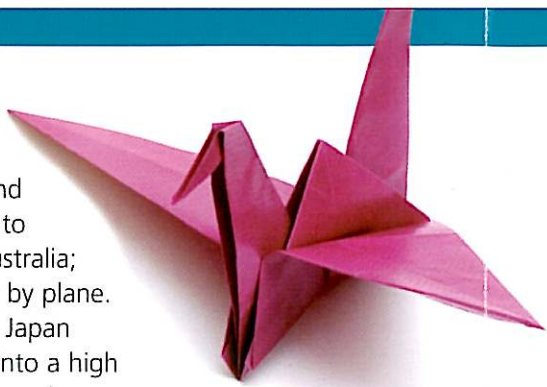
While it has retained numerous aspects of its traditional heritage, Japan is a truly modern culture. Popular Japanese music, culture, clothing design, and the lifestyle of the younger generation are all indicative of a modern, highly technological and affluent society. Japanese art, architecture and literature also reveal a society that has moved fully into the twenty-first century while retaining the flavour of its rich cultural heritage.

The Japanese Language

Pronunciation of Japanese is easy because it is a phonetic language.

All of the sounds in the language can be written with forty-six symbols called hiragana ひらがな.

Katakana カタカナ is used for writing foreign loan-words such as Melbourne メルボルン or koala コアラ.



Kanji characters borrowed from Chinese are easy to remember because of their pictographic origin, for example:

tree 木 woods 林 forest 森

Japanese writing is usually a combination of these three alphabets.

Learn it and use it

Victoria has strong business and trade links with Japan, a growing Japanese speaking community, and a considerable number of Japanese visitors to the State each year. This provides students with real life opportunities to use the language beyond the classroom.

In addition, many schools have language assistants and student exchange programs enabling students to interact in Japanese with native speakers.



Japan and Australia

Australia and Japan share many 'sister' relationships; these include sister schools, sister radio stations, sister cultural centres and special university relationships. Australia and Japan also share as many as 99 sister city relationships. Melbourne has a longstanding strong sister city relationship with Osaka.

The Japanese snowfields are becoming a very popular tourist and work destination for young Australians.

Many Japanese cultural traditions such as *sumo*, *sushi*, *origami* and *bonsai* have become household words in Australia. Thousands of Australians also practise or take an interest in Japanese sports such as *karate*, *kendo*, *aikido* and *judo* which have helped to bring about an understanding of Japanese words such as *sensei*, and customs such as bowing.

Japan is Australia's main trading partner. Each year many people from Japan come to Australia to study, travel and do business. More and more Australians go to Japan to undertake similar pursuits.

