



JAPAN

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Overview

- Japan is an island country in located off the eastern coast of Asia.
- It is bordered by the Sea of Japan to west and the Pacific Ocean to the east.
- Japan is an archipelago of 6,852 islands, although 5 large islands make up 96% of the land area.
- The five main islands are Hokkaido, Honshu, Kyushu, Shikoku, and Okinawa.
- With an area of 377,975km², Japan is the 18th largest country in Asia by total area.
- About 126 million people live in Japan. It is the 7th most populated country in the world.



Human Geography

Japan was ruled for several hundred years by powerful dynasties. In its more-modern history it formed a powerful empire. Throughout the 20th Century, its economy grew to be one of the most powerful in the world.

Population		-With around 126 million people, Japan is the 11 th most populated country in the world. Most of the population is clustered in urban areas on the coast, the plains and the valleys. The population density of Japan is 336 people per square kilometre – it is very densely populated.
Settlements		-The capital city of Japan is Tokyo. Including its metropolitan area, it has a population of around 38.14 million people. By many measures, Tokyo is considered the most populous city in the whole world! Other large cities include Yokohama (3.7 million) and Osaka (2.6 million).
Economic Activity		-The Japanese Yen is the national currency of Japan. Throughout the late 20 th and early 21 st Century, the Japanese economy grew rapidly, and it is now one of the largest economies in the world.
Resources/Trade		-Japan is a world-leading producer of a wide range of products, including motor vehicles, iron and steel products, auto parts, machinery, and plastic materials. Its main trading partners are (in order) the United States, China, the European Union and South Korea.

Key Vocabulary

- Japan
- Archipelago
- Asia
- Pacific Ocean
- Hokkaido
- Honshu
- Kyushu
- Shikoku
- Okinawa
- Tokyo
- Yokohama
- Mount Fuji

Physical Geography

- Japan is an archipelago that spreads over 3,000km along the east Asian coast.
- Honshu is by far the largest of the islands, with an area of 227,960 km².
- The terrain of Japan is mostly mountainous, with around 66% forests.
- East of Japan, there are three deep trenches in the Pacific Ocean, caused by tectonic plates overlapping. This causes frequent earthquakes, tsunamis and the creation of large volcanoes on Japan.
- The highest mountain is Mount Fuji, at 3,776m, which is also a volcano.
- The climate of Japan ranges from humid continental in the north, to humid subtropical and tropical rainforest in the south.
- The Japanese land area is slowly growing, due to volcanic eruptions, land reclamation and the natural expansion of islands.



Comparison with the UK

- The UK is in Europe, whilst Japan is in Asia. The UK and Japan are both in the northern hemisphere.
- The UK has a temperate climate, whilst Japan's climate is mostly humid continental, with tropical areas in the south.
- Japan is larger than the UK – 377,975sq km compared to 243,610sq km.
- More people live in Japan than the UK –126 million people compared to 66 million in the UK.
- Tokyo is far more populous than the largest city in the UK: London.
- The UK and Japan are both island countries. Japan has far more islands than the UK!



Japan Timeline

2500-300 BCE Jomon Period when first settlements appeared in Japan.	300 BCE Start of Yayoi period, when bronze and iron tools begin to be used.	500 CE Japanese culture influenced by Chinese writing and letters, which are introduced to Japan.	593 CE Prince Shotoku spreads Buddhism across Japan.	1274 CE The Mongols attempt to invade Japan, but a typhoon stops them.	1590 CE Japan is unified under the leadership of Toyotomi Hideyoshi.	1635-1850CE Period of isolation from the world.	1868-1945 CE Empire of Japan takes over lands such as Taiwan & Korea.	1945 CE End of WWII as USA drops atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
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