

20 Leisure and Sports

Leisure Activities

Hobbies, 2005

	Million persons	Share of population (%)	Average frequency (times per year)
Watching videos	44.7	40.5	26.8
Playing computer games, using the Internet	42.5	38.5	86.4
Going to movies	41.0	37.2	6.6
Listening to music	40.4	36.6	72.1
Gardening	32.4	29.4	37.5
Going to concerts	24.6	22.3	4.6
Watching sports events	16.2	14.7	8.2
Viewing art	13.7	12.4	5.9
Handknitting, weaving	11.8	10.7	26.3
Do-it-yourself	10.7	9.7	10.7

Source: Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development, *Reja hakusho* (White Paper on Leisure), 2006.

Note: Survey excludes athletic activities, reading, and watching television.

Athletic Activities, 2005

	Million persons	Share of population (%)	Average frequency (times per year)
Bowling	27.6	25.0	5.0
Calisthenics	23.0	20.9	58.9
Jogging, marathon	21.2	19.2	48.7
Swimming (at a swimming pool)	16.4	14.9	21.3
Baseball	12.5	11.3	20.7
Fishing	10.7	9.7	11.0
Golf (at a driving range)	10.4	9.4	17.6
Cycling	9.3	8.4	34.4
Table tennis	8.6	7.8	12.7
Badminton	8.4	7.6	13.5

Source: Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development, *Reja hakusho* (White Paper on Leisure), 2006.

Amusements, 2005

	Million persons	Share of population (%)	Average frequency (times per year)
Dining out	71.5	64.8	20.0
Karaoke	45.4	41.2	10.2
Lotteries	43.8	39.7	9.9
Frequenting bars	36.0	32.6	15.6
Computer games	27.6	25.0	46.4
Card games ^a	26.4	23.9	13.7
Playing at penny arcades	22.7	20.6	14.3
Pachinko ^b	17.1	15.5	23.6
Sauna	9.7	8.8	14.1
Mah-jong	7.6	6.9	13.4

Source: Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development, *Reja hakusho* (White Paper on Leisure), 2006.

a. Includes Othello, a Japanese board game.

b. A Japanese pinball game.

Travel

Japan's domestic tourism comes in three major waves: the winter holidays around New Year, the so-called Golden Week of consecutive holidays in late April and early May, and the summer holidays in July and August. In order to promote long-week-end travel and other leisure activities among the Japanese people, the Revised National Holidays Law, popularly known as the Happy Monday Law, came into effect in 2000.

In Fiscal 2005 people in Japan made an average of 3.08 domestic overnight trips and spent ¥58,697 on average each time. Of these figures, 1.77 trips, costing ¥59,639, were for tourism.

The number of Japanese who traveled abroad in 2006 increased 0.8% over the previous year to 17.54 million. In the opposite direction, 8.11 million foreigners, an 8.8% increase over 2005 and a record high, visited Japan.

In 2005, in the international tourism market, Japan paid ¥4.1 trillion and received ¥1.4 trillion, excluding passenger transportation, resulting in a ¥2.8 trillion travel deficit. It was to correct such an imbalance that the government in December 2002 announced the Global Tourism Strategy and in April 2003 inaugurated the Visit Japan Campaign, setting a target of 10 million foreign visitors to be realized by 2010. Although the number of foreign visitors to Japan has been increasing, Japan was ranked 25th among 124 countries and regions in the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2007 conducted by the World Economic Forum. Japan scored high in ground transport infrastructure, human resources, and health and hygiene; it was low, however, in price competitiveness, airport congestion, and other factors.

Popular Amusement Facilities in Japan, FY 2005

Facility	Number of visitors (1,000 persons)
Tokyo Disneyland / Tokyo DisneySea	24,766
Hawks Town (Fukuoka)	10,430
Universal Studios Japan (Osaka)	8,314
Tokyo Dome City Attractions (Tokyo)	7,205
Yokohama Hakkeijima Sea Paradise	5,257
Aso Farm Land (Kumamoto)	4,403
Nagashima Resort (Mie)	3,957
Ueno Zoo (Tokyo)	3,385
Yokohama Cosmo World	3,100
Showa Kinen Park (Tokyo)	2,852
Festival Walk Soga (Chiba)	2,845
Okinawa Commemorative National Government Park (Ocean Expo Park)	2,828
Tokyo Tower	2,720
Suzuka Circuit (Mie)	2,487
Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium	2,425

Source: Sogo Unicom Co., Ltd., *Reja rando & reku park soran* (Leisureland and Recreation Park Almanac), 2007.

Foreign Destinations of Japanese Travelers

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
ASIA					
China	2,385,700	2,925,553	2,254,800	3,334,255	3,389,976
Korea (ROK)	2,377,321	2,320,837	1,802,542	2,443,070	2,439,809
Hong Kong	1,336,538	1,395,020	867,160	1,126,250	1,210,848
Taiwan	971,190	998,497	657,053	887,311	1,124,334
Thailand	1,177,599	1,239,421	1,042,349	1,212,213	1,196,654
Indonesia	611,314	620,722	463,088	575,218	622,315
Singapore	755,766	723,431	434,087	598,840	588,535
EUROPE					
France	728,000	723,000	601,000	642,000	659,000
Germany	779,150	762,471	646,778	715,209	n/a
Italy	738,024	849,967	611,536	308,901	n/a
Switzerland	522,674	416,306	320,593	n/a	333,202
UK	366,000	368,000	314,000	347,000	332,000
NORTH AMERICA					
USA	4,082,661	3,627,264	3,169,682	3,747,620	3,883,906
Canada	449,047	452,546	273,886	437,160	441,783
OCEANIA					
Australia	673,577	715,458	627,737	710,351	685,500

Source: Japan National Tourist Organization.

Foreign Travelers Visiting Japan

	2003	2004	2005
NORTH AMERICA	798,358 (15.3)	923,836 (15.1)	997,809 (14.8)
USA	655,821 (12.6)	759,753 (12.4)	822,033 (12.2)
Canada	126,065 (2.4)	142,091 (2.3)	150,012 (2.2)
SOUTH AMERICA	25,987 (0.5)	27,238 (0.4)	34,331 (0.5)
EUROPE	648,495 (12.4)	726,525 (11.8)	798,791 (11.9)
UK	200,543 (3.8)	215,704 (3.5)	221,535 (3.3)
Germany	93,571 (1.8)	106,297 (1.7)	118,429 (1.8)
France	85,179 (1.6)	95,894 (1.6)	110,822 (1.6)
Russia	44,512 (0.9)	56,554 (0.9)	63,609 (0.9)
Italy	35,826 (0.7)	38,923 (0.6)	44,691 (0.7)
AFRICA	19,015 (0.4)	19,520 (0.3)	23,655 (0.4)
ASIA	3,511,513 (67.4)	4,208,095 (68.6)	4,627,478 (68.8)
Korea (ROK)	1,459,333 (28.0)	1,588,472 (25.9)	1,747,171 (26.0)
Taiwan	785,379 (15.1)	1,080,590 (17.6)	1,274,612 (18.9)
China	448,782 (8.6)	616,009 (10.0)	652,820 (9.7)
Hong Kong	260,214 (5.0)	300,246 (4.9)	298,810 (4.4)
Philippines	137,584 (2.6)	154,588 (2.5)	139,572 (2.1)
OCEANIA	206,994 (4.0)	231,877 (3.8)	244,894 (3.6)
Australia	172,134 (3.3)	194,276 (3.2)	206,179 (3.1)
Total	5,211,725 (100.0)	6,137,905 (100.0)	6,727,926 (100.0)

Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, *Kanko hakusho* (White Paper on Tourism), 2006.

Note: Composition rates in parentheses (%).

Japanese Exiting and Foreigners Entering Japan

Number (1,000 persons)
Index (1980=100)

	Japanese exiting		Foreigners entering	
	Number	Index	Number	Index
1980	3,909	100	1,296	100
1985	4,948	127	2,260	174
1990	10,997	281	3,504	270
1995	15,298	391	3,732	288
2000	17,819	456	5,390	416
2001	16,216	415	5,400	417
2002	16,523	423	5,904	456
2003	13,296	340	5,857	452
2004	16,831	431	6,892	532
2005	17,404	445	7,581	585

Source: Ministry of Justice, *Shutsunyukoku kanri tokei* (Annual Report of Statistics on Legal Migrants), 2006.

Number of Hotels and Inns

	Hotels		Japanese inns (<i>ryokan</i>)	
	Facilities	Rooms	Facilities	Rooms
1994	6,923	515,207	72,325	1,004,790
1995	7,174	537,401	71,556	1,002,652
1996	7,412	556,748	70,393	1,002,024
1998	7,769	582,564	68,982	982,228
1999	7,944	595,839	67,891	974,036
2000	8,110	612,587	66,766	967,645
2001	8,220	622,175	64,831	951,957
2002	8,363	637,850	63,388	934,377
2003	8,518	649,225	61,583	915,464
2004	8,686	664,460	59,754	898,407
2005	8,811	681,025	58,003	870,851

Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, *Kanko hakusho* (White Paper on Tourism), 2006.

Note: Figures for 1994 through 1996 are as of end of year, and those from 1998 are as of end of March.

Major Professional Sports

Baseball

Japan has two professional baseball leagues, the Central League and the Pacific League, each with six teams. Each team plays 144 games in the 2007 season, which runs from March to October, including 24 interleague games. At the end of the season, the top three teams of each league separately compete to win a place in the national championship games called the Japan Series.

In autumn 2004 the Pacific League saw a series of shake-ups. In September the merger between Orix BlueWave and Osaka Kintetsu Buffaloes was approved, and players who were against the idea of reducing the number of teams went on a first-ever strike for two weekend games. The Nippon Professional Baseball organization decided in November to admit a team owned by Rakuten Inc. (Tohoku Rakuten Golden Eagles), a major online shopping mall operator, from the 2005 season to fill the open space in the league. This marked the first new entry into Japan's professional baseball in about half a century. Fukuoka Daiei Hawks, owned by a troubled supermarket giant, was sold to the Internet firm SoftBank and became Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks.

After the success of Hideo Nomo, who joined the US Major Leagues in 1995, one Japanese player after another has tried his skills in the world's best leagues. Seattle Mariners' Ichiro Suzuki, the first Japanese position player (non-pitcher) in the Major Leagues, was honored as the American League's most valuable player in his debut season in 2001 and broke an 84-year-old record of 258 for the most hits in a single season with 262 hits in 2004. Hideki Matsui, another Japanese superstar, nicknamed "Godzilla," signed with the New York Yankees in 2003 and has been a regular

starter. Daisuke Matsuzaka joined the Boston Red Sox in 2007 with a \$52 million contract, after enhancing his reputation when Japan won the inaugural World Baseball Classic tournament held in the United States in March 2006.

Soccer

Inaugurated in 1992 with 10 teams, the Japanese professional soccer league (J. League) currently has 18 J1 top division teams and 13 J2 lower division teams. The league season starts in March and usually ends in November or December. The bottom two teams in J1 are automatically replaced by the top two J2 teams, and the third-bottom team in J1 and the third J2 team face each other in a play-off. In the 2006 season J1 games attracted an average of 18,292 spectators per game, up 10.5% over 2001 but down 2.5% from 2005.

Following the example of Hidetoshi Nakata, who joined the Italian club Perugia in 1998, some prominent Japanese players have moved to the top leagues in Europe, including England, Germany, the Netherlands, Scotland, and Spain. Particularly notable is Shunsuke Nakamura, who has played for Celtic since the 2005–2006 season and greatly contributed to the team's winning the Scottish Premier League for two seasons in a row. He also became the first Japanese player on a team that advanced to the knockout tournament of the UEFA Champions League in the 2006–07 season.

Sumo

The history of sumo as a professional sport goes back to the early Edo period (1603–1867). For the past few years sumo saw a relative slump, with empty seats visible in the cheaper range in all the six-times-a-year regular tournaments. In recent months, however, an upturn has been in evidence, fueled by strong performances by a new group of foreign wrestlers. The first foreign wrestler, apart from some Japanese Americans before World War II, was Takamiyama from Hawaii, who debuted in 1964, and the first foreign yokozuna (grand champion) was another Hawaiian, Akebono, who climbed up to the top rank in 1993. In the 2003 March tournament, for the first time in sumo history, the only two yokozuna were foreign-born, a Hawaiian and a Mongolian. The November 2005 tournament ended with three records marked by Mongolian yokozuna Asashoryu, who won seven straight tournaments, 83 regular bouts out of 90 in one year, and all six tournaments in 2005. Asashoryu also won four of the six tournaments in 2006. As of March 2007, there were 61 foreign wrestlers from 12 countries, including 34 Mongolians, 6 Chinese, 6 Russians, 3 Georgians, and 3 Brazilians.

Since staging their first overseas exhibition tournament in the Soviet Union in 1965, sumo wrestlers have performed in various parts of the world; for example, exhibition tournaments were held in Vancouver in June 1998, Seoul and Pusan in February 2004, Beijing and Shanghai in June 2004, and Las Vegas in October 2005. They also plan to go to Hawaii in June 2007.

Professional Baseball Teams, 2007

Central League		Pacific League	
Team	Home city	Team	Home city
1. Chunichi Dragons	Nagoya	1. Hokkaido Nippon Ham Fighters	Sapporo
2. Hanshin Tigers	Nishinomiya	2. Seibu Lions	Tokorozawa
3. Tokyo Yakult Swallows	Tokyo	3. Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks	Fukuoka
4. Yomiuri Giants	Tokyo	4. Chiba Lotte Marines	Chiba
5. Hiroshima Toyo Carp	Hiroshima	5. Orix Buffaloes	Osaka/Kobe
6. Yokohama BayStars	Yokohama	6. Tohoku Rakuten Golden Eagles	Sendai

Source: Nippon Professional Baseball.

Note: Ranked according to final positions in the 2006 season.

Professional Baseball Champions

	Central League	Pacific League		Central League	Pacific League
1993	Swallows	Lions	2000	Giants	Hawks
1994	Giants	Lions	2001	Swallows	Buffaloes
1995	Swallows	BlueWave	2002	Giants	Lions
1996	Giants	BlueWave	2003	Tigers	Hawks
1997	Swallows	Lions	2004	Dragons	Lions
1998	BayStars	Lions	2005	Tigers	Marines
1999	Dragons	Hawks	2006	Dragons	Fighters

Source: Nippon Professional Baseball.

Note: Team in boldface also won the Japan Series.

Professional Soccer Teams (J1), 2007

Team	Home city	Team	Home city
1. Urawa Red Diamonds (Reds)	Saitama	10. Sanfrecce Hiroshima	Hiroshima
2. Kawasaki Frontale	Kawasaki	11. JEF United Chiba	Ichihara/Chiba
3. Gamba Osaka	Osaka	12. Omiya Ardija	Saitama
4. Shimizu S-Pulse	Shizuoka	13. F.C. Tokyo	Tokyo
5. Jubilo Iwata	Iwata	14. Albirex Niigata	Niigata
6. Kashima Antlers	Kashima	15. Ventforet Kofu	Kofu
7. Nagoya Grampus Eight	Nagoya	16. Yokohama FC	Yokohama
8. Oita Trinita	Oita	17. Kashiwa Reysol	Kashiwa
9. Yokohama F. Marinos	Yokohama	18. Vissel Kobe	Kobe

Source: Japan Professional Football League.

Note: Ranked according to final positions in the 2006 season. Teams 16–18 were ranked in the top three in J2.

Professional Soccer Champions

	First stage	Second stage	Champion
1995	Marinos	Verdy	Marinos
1996	–	–	Antlers
1997	Antlers	Jubilo	Jubilo
1998	Jubilo	Antlers	Antlers
1999	Jubilo	S-Pulse	Jubilo
2000	F. Marinos	Antlers	Antlers
2001	Jubilo	Antlers	Antlers
2002	Jubilo	Jubilo	Jubilo
2003	F. Marinos	F. Marinos	F. Marinos
2004	F. Marinos	Red Diamonds	F. Marinos
2005	–	–	Gamba
2006	–	–	Red Diamonds

Source: Japan Professional Football League.

Note: Until 2004, with the exception of 1996, the J1 season was played in two stages.

Sumo Champions, 2006

Tournament	Winner
January	Tochiazuma (3)
March	Asashoryu (16)
May	Hakuho (1)
July	Asashoryu (17)
September	Asashoryu (18)
November	Asashoryu (19)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate total number of tournaments won.

Foreign Sumo Wrestlers

Country	Number
Mongolia	34
China	6
Russia	6
Georgia	3
Brazil	3
Korea (ROK)	2
Tonga	2
Bulgaria	1
Czech Republic	1
Estonia	1
Hungary	1
Kazakhstan	1

Source: Nihon Sumo Kyokai (Japan Sumo Association).

Note: Figures are as of the end of March 2007.

Total Number of Spectators, 2005

(1,000 persons)

Baseball	19,925
Soccer	7,718
Sumo	535
Women's golf	522
Men's golf	484
Boxing	389
Formula car racing	295

Source: Japan Professional Sports Association, *Professional Sports Almanac*, 2006.

Note: Excludes gambling, such as horse racing and motorboat racing.

Number of Olympic Medals Won by Japanese Athletes

SUMMER GAMES

No.	Year	City	Gold	S	B
7	1920	Antwerp	0	2	0
8	1924	Paris	0	0	1
9	1928	Amsterdam	2	2	1
10	1932	Los Angeles	7	7	4
11	1936	Berlin	6	4	10
15	1952	Helsinki	1	6	2
16	1956	Melbourne	4	10	5
17	1960	Rome	4	7	7
18	1964	Tokyo	16	5	8
19	1968	Mexico	11	7	7
20	1972	Munich	13	8	8
21	1976	Montreal	9	6	10
23	1984	Los Angeles	10	8	14
24	1988	Seoul	4	3	7
25	1992	Barcelona	3	8	11
26	1996	Atlanta	3	6	5
27	2000	Sydney	5	8	5
28	2004	Athens	16	9	12
Total			114	106	117

WINTER GAMES

No.	Year	City	Gold	S	B
7	1956	Coritna d' Ampezzo	0	1	0
8	1960	Squaw Valley	0	0	0
9	1964	Innsbruck	0	0	0
10	1968	Grenoble	0	0	0
11	1972	Sapporo	1	1	1
12	1976	Innsbruck	0	0	0
13	1980	Lake Placid	0	1	0
14	1984	Sarajevo	0	1	0
15	1988	Calgary	0	0	1
16	1992	Albertville	1	2	4
17	1994	Lillehammer	1	2	2
18	1998	Nagano	5	1	4
19	2002	Salt Lake City	0	1	1
20	2006	Torino	1	0	0
Total			9	10	13

Source: Japan Olympic Committee.