

Japan's legal age for adulthood

日本の成人年齢を知っていますか？

Since April 2022, Japan's legal age of adulthood has been lowered from 20 to 18. Each country has their own legal age of adulthood, and it might be different from Japan; however, while you live in Japan, the laws of Japan apply and should be followed.

There are some age limits that you should be aware of. Here is a list of what you can do once you turn 18 and what you cannot do until you reach 20.

Things you can do once you turn 18

- Enter into a contract without parental permission and consent
 - Example of contracts:
 - Mobile phone contracts
 - Loan applications
 - Credit card applications
 - Apartment leases (subject to tenancy review by the real estate agent and landlord)
- Apply for a 10-year passport (for Japanese nationals)
- Take national examinations, such as exams for medical practitioners, certified accountants, pharmacists, and others
- Get married (under Japanese law)
- Request to legally change your recognized gender (for those with gender dysphoria)
- Apply for a driver's license (for standard motor vehicles) and/or convert your foreign license into a Japanese license
- Apply for naturalization
 - ▶ You must be a legal adult in your home country as well in order to apply.
- Choose your nationality (for those with dual nationalities between Japan and another country)
 - ▶ Those with a second nationality before the day when they reach 18 must choose one of their nationalities before they reach 20.
 - ▶ Those with a second nationality after the day when they reach 18 must choose one of their nationalities within two years after the day they acquired their second nationality.



Things you cannot do until you turn 20

- ❑ Buy or drink alcohol
- ❑ Purchase or use tobacco products
- ❑ Gamble and bet on events such as horse racing, bicycle racing, auto racing, and boat racing
- ❑ Apply for a driver's license (for mid-sized motor vehicles)
 - ▶ In order to apply for a driver's license for a large-sized motor vehicle, you must be 21 or older.
- ❑ Enter the National Pension System
 - ▶ As a general rule, everyone living in Japan aged 20 to 59 must enroll in the National Pension system.