

- **Sash**

The *obi* is one of the essential components of traditional Japanese dress for fixing the *kimono* to one's body. The *obi* for women was a simple waistband before the 17th century, but it has developed into the broad decorative sash of today, while those for men are still non-decorative and are dyed in a subdued color. The *obi* is usually tied at the back and serves as a decorative addition to the *kimono* with its beautiful designs. Heavy brocade and damask silk are sometimes used for *obi* today, and on which artistic patterns are displayed in the embroidery and gilding.

Some *obi* have a "clip on" bow in the back that just fits over the *obi*.

- **Japanese Wooden Clogs**

*Geta* are wooden clogs raised off the ground by two protruded parts under the sole called *ha* (teeth), with v-shaped thongs called *hanao* between the big toe and the second toe on the top. *Geta* for men are made of plain wood, of which Japanese cedar is thought to be the best, and they usually have black thongs, whereas those for women are sometimes plain and sometimes lacquered wood and have beautifully colored thongs of silk or velvet. When worn bare-footed, they are especially good in the hot and humid summers in Japan.

- **Japanese-style "socks"**

The proper foot wear for *kimono* is *tabi*. *Tabi* are short socks with the toes split into two parts, between the big toe and the second toe. Because of this split, they are suited for wearing Japanese sandals or Japanese wooden clogs. They are made of cotton or silk and fastened

at the ankles on their inner side by small metal clasps or hooks called *kohaze*. Men generally wear black or dark blue ones, whereas women wear white ones when they wear formal *kimono*, and with an informal *kimono*, they sometimes wear colored *tabi*.

- **Haori**

*Haori* is a short overgarment. It is worn over a *kimono* primarily in cold seasons, but it is sometimes worn on formal occasions in other seasons. Commonly it extends to the knee or a little above it, and is tied loosely in front with short braided cords. The formal *haori* is black with three or five family crests of the wearer on the back and on the sleeves.

- **Yukata**

*Yukata* is an informal *kimono* for summer. Originally it was a *kimono* worn while one was taking a bath. Later it became a kind of cotton bathrobe worn after a bath. In the 19th century, people started to wear *yukata* in the hot season both at home and in the streets. It is usually starched and has floral or geometric patterns dyed or printed on a white or deep blue background. Most Japanese-style hotels have *yukata* available for the guests.

- **Folding Fan**

*Sensu* is a typical Japanese folding fan, made of paper on a bamboo frame, commonly with an artistic picture or calligraphy. It is used for fanning oneself in hot summer weather, but at the same time, it is a symbol of friendship, respect or good wishes. It is exchanged as an engagement gift. It is also an important stage prop for a Japanese

dance or *Noh* dance performer. One is also expected to carry a small folding fan when invited to a tea ceremony.

- **Kimono**

*Kimono* is a general term referring to Japan's native costume which has centuries of tradition. It is also called *wafuku* (Japanese clothes) as opposed to *yoofuku* (Western clothes). The *kimono* style is identical for all wearers regardless of age or sex. In distinction between men and women, however, the *kimono* for women has longer sleeves, and is of extra length so as to be tucked in at the waist.

The method of putting on *kimono* is the same for both men and women. The front part of *kimono* is completely open; the left side is put over the right side, thus wrapping the legs together. It has neither buttons nor snaps. Instead, several cords and a sash are wound around the body and tied to secure the garment. Nowadays, *kimono* is worn by women primarily on formal, ceremonial and social occasions, and Western clothes have become everyday clothing for practical purposes.

Of all *kimono*, the most beautiful and luxurious is the *furisode* with long sleeves worn by a bride as the wedding costume or by unmarried young women on ceremonial occasions like the Adult's Day ceremony.

- **Chopsticks**

*Ohashi*, chopsticks, are still the major eating utensil used in Japan. Originally adopted from China, Japan's chopsticks have been adapted to suit Japanese cuisine. Compared to Chinese chopsticks, Japanese *ohashi* are shorter, thinner, and usually made of plain, painted or lacquered wood. Even though Japanese use knives and forks when they eat Western food (such as steak or lasagna) when they eat Japanese foods, *ohashi* are more convenient to use. When eating Japanese food,

it is polite to lift your bowl up to chest level, and then use your *ohashi* to lift the food to your mouth. Never pass food from your chopsticks to someone else's, and never stick your chopsticks vertically into a bowl of rice, because both of these gestures are associated with funeral rites, and are therefore considered very poor manners.

- **Bowls & Dishes**

When Japanese food is served, it is not piled onto one or two plates the way American food tends to be. Instead, many different types of food are set out on or in a variety of vessels. Each food has its own bowl or plate. Usually the bowls and plates are chosen to make a pleasing contrast between the food and the bowl, and between the bowl and the tray on which it is set.

- **Maneki Neko                      "Greeting Cat"**

A *maneki-neko* is a cat figurine with one paw held in the air next to its ear. Most *maneki-neko* are white with red details, but some are black. The "beckoning cat" is a symbol of good luck. It is frequently seen in store windows or at the entrance to a shop, and it is thought to bring good fortune to the shop.

- **Daruma**

A *daruma*, from the Sanskrit word *dharma*, is a roundish red or white doll with a painted face. The eyes are white circles. *Dharma* was a Buddhist priest of high virtue and it has been said that he sat against a wall in religious contemplation for nine years. The posture of *Dharuma* dolls symbolizes the priest's contemplation. *Dharma* is known for his teaching: *one should never mind failures since one can start things again*. A *Dharuma* doll whose bottom is round and weighted, is designed to regain an upright position even when pushed over. This falling and arising movement symbolizes his teachings. As they arise again and again, *Dharuma* dolls are considered to bring luck, happiness, health and goodness. The red *Dharuma* doll demonstrates good luck and the white ones represent pureness.

When a person makes a wish, he paints in one of the eyes. If his wish comes true, he then paints in the other eye as a symbol of gratitude. Most politicians have a *daruma* doll at their campaign offices, and they paint the second eye if they get elected.

- **Koi-nobori**

Based on the myth of a carp which once swam up to the heavens and subsequently transformed into a dragon, *koi-nobori* are colorful and often times elaborate streamers in the shape of the carp. Traditionally associated with the Japanese holiday of Boys' Day, the carp streamers can be seen flapping and "swimming" in the wind, tethered to poles outside homes with sons. The origins of the use of the carp streamer date back to 17th century military conduct, but symbolizes courage and valor more than anything else. The myth of the carp is representative of the importance and rewards of ambition.

Regarding the hanging of *koi-nobori*, the presence of each son in the household is signified by a streamer. Flying alongside the sons' streamers are ribbons of various bright colors, as well as two larger streamers, one for each parent.

- **Uchiwa**

*Uchiwa* are Japanese non-folding fans. They are usually made of a thin wood or plastic frame and handle with a paper covering. During the summer, they can be seen everywhere, and many companies give them away free to their employees, with the name and information about the company written on them. Organizers of special summer events usually have some made to pass out to participants and spectators as well. Since only about 40% of Japanese homes have air conditioning units, many people use them in the home as well to cool off.

- **Furoshiki**

A *furoshiki* is a square of silk, cotton or rayon cloth traditionally used to wrap things in Japan. Some are as small as a child's handkerchief and others are as large as a tablecloth. Originally, it was used to wrap up one's bath items when going to the public bath. Later, it became an all-purpose piece of "instant luggage" that could be folded and placed in a pocket or tucked in an *obi* (kimono belt) when the user was done using it. These days, Japanese people use shopping bags, gift bags and wrapping paper, the same as we do in America. However, many people frequently still use *furoshiki*. They can be used to wrap things bought in a store, to wrap gifts, or to carry things around. To wrap something, place it in the center of the cloth and tie two diagonal corners together tightly around the object. Then take the other two corners and tie them; if you tie them tightly, you have "wrapping paper," if you tie them somewhat loosely, you can put your hand under the tie to carry, and if you tie them very loosely, you can put the package over your shoulder like a purse.

- **Noren**

Often referred to as "door curtains" or "half curtains," and originally serving in the capacity as sunshades, *noren* are not difficult to come by when walking the streets of Japan. A typical decoration at restaurants, watering holes, or inns, *noren* can also be found hanging in the doorways of stores and sometimes homes.

As for the design of *noren*, white stenciling or calligraphy against a navy blue backdrop is the traditional pattern, and usually included are crests or logos representative of the establishment at which the *noren* are displayed.

- **Calligraphy Brushes**

Calligraphy brushes, *fude*, come in an incredible range of sizes and are used by students to professional calligraphers when practicing the art of calligraphy. Although students may study calligraphy in school, they use pens and pencils just like American students when completing their day to day homework assignments.

- **Money Envelopes**

Compared to American weddings, Japanese weddings are extremely expensive. Therefore, instead of giving gifts to the bride and groom, the guests present them with money (usually a couple of hundred dollars) to help offset the expense of the ceremony, reception food, clothing and the honeymoon. Japanese funerals, too, are very expensive, so friends of the family give money to help with the costs. Another money-giving occasion is New Year's Day, when children receive money from their parents, grandparents, and other family members. It is a Japanese custom that money does not change hands as a gift without being enclosed in something. Therefore, when Japanese give money to someone, it is always enclosed in an envelope. There are special envelopes for each occasion. For a wedding, one uses a *goshugibukuro*, which is a white envelope (usually made of handmade paper) with gold and silver wire ribbon. For a funeral, one uses a *goreizenbukuro*, which is black and white. For New Year's money, various types of envelopes are used, often having pictures of popular cartoon characters.

- **Japanese Money**

The currency of Japan is the "yen." The daily exchange rate can be found in the newspaper each day.

The exchange rate is roughly 110 yen = \$1.00.

- **Japanese Lunch Boxes**

*Obento* are Japanese style lunch boxes. They come in a variety of styles, sizes and decorative patterns. Children as well as adults use *obento* boxes. For lunch they may pack, rice, vegetables, Japanese style pickles, and some meat possibly left over from them the previous night's dinner.

- **Paper Folkcrafts**

Handmade paper and craft objects made out of paper are commonly found in Japan. The items shown in the picture include decorative plates and boxes made out of special paper, a chopstick holder and chopstick rest and a balloon also made of paper.

# Japan Artifact Box #1

## Inventory List

"Tune in Japan" Video & Lesson Plan Booklet	1 decorative picture (Japanese court woman)
<i>Ukiyo-e</i> Prints	1 small Japanese paper doll
1 set Kamishibai Storyboards	Map of Japan
<i>Origami for Parties</i> Book	Map of Tokyo
<i>Pictorial Encyclopedia of Japanese Life and Events</i> Book	Map of Osaka & Kobe area
<i>Green Yukata</i>	1 picture of Mt. Fuji
Red <i>Obi</i> sash and bow	1 picture of a noodle shop
1 pair of white <i>tabi</i> socks	7 postcards
2 pairs of chopsticks and chopstick rests	1 Japan travel brochure
1 red <i>daruma</i> doll	1 <i>hagoita</i> (decorative paddle)
1 <i>maneki neko</i> cat	1 paper chopstick holder and paper rest
1 blue carp streamer	2 laminated example of kanji
1 money envelope	Assortment of stamps
1 bag of Japanese money (yen)	
1 <i>noren</i> (half curtain)	
1 tea cup (brown)	
1 <i>obento</i> (Japanese lunch box)	
1 bowl with lid	
1 set of paper boxes	
1 paper balloon	
2 decorative paper plates	
1 calligraphy brush	
1 Japanese and 1 U.S. flag with stand	
1 Japanese children's book	
1 furoshiki	
1 Japanese music CD	
1 <i>Uchiwa</i> (non-folding fan)	
1 folded fan	
1 pair of geta (wooden clogs)	

## Japan Artifact Box #2

### Inventory List

"Tune in Japan" Video & Lesson Plan  
Booklet

*Ukiyo-e* Prints

1 set Kamishibai Storyboards

*Origami* Book

*Introducing Japan* Book

Blue Yukata

Yellow *Obi* sash and bow

1 pair of white *tabi* socks

1 pair of chopsticks

1 red *daruma* doll

1 *maneki neko* cat

1 money envelope

1 bag of Japanese money (yen)

1 *noren* (half curtain)

1 tea cup (green & white)

1 *obento* (Japanese lunch box)

1 bowl

1 paper box

1 paper balloon

2 decorative paper plates

1 calligraphy brush

1 Japanese and 1 U.S. Flag with stand

1 Japanese children's book

2 furoshiki

1 Japanese music CD

1 *Uchiwa* (non-folding fan)

1 folded fan

1 pair of geta

1 decorative picture made of cloth (girl)

1 example of origami

Map of Japan

Map of Tokyo

Map of Osaka & Kobe area

1 picture of musical instruments

1 picture of Shinto costume

6 postcards

1 Japan travel brochure

1 paper chopstick holder and paper rest

2 laminated example of kanji

1 *go* game (board and markers)

assorted stamps

1 carp streamer

# Japan Artifact Box #3

## Inventory List

"Tune in Japan" Video & Lesson Plan  
Booklet

*Ukiyo-e* Prints

1 set Kamishibai Storyboards

*Origami* Book

*Beauty of Japan* Book

Blue Yukata

2 Japanese anime (comic books)

1 pair of white *tabi* socks

1 pair of chopsticks

1 white *daruma* doll

1 *maneki neko* cat

1 money envelope

1 bag of Japanese money (yen)

1 *noren* (half curtain)

1 tea cup (blue & white)

1 *obento* (Japanese lunch box)

2 bowls

1 large paper doll

1 paper balloon

2 decorative paper plates

1 calligraphy brush

1 Japanese and 1 U.S. Flag with stand

1 Japanese children's book

2 furoshiki

1 Japanese music CD

1 decorative picture with origami fish

1 folded fan

1 pair of geta

1 picture of cherry blossoms

1 picture of a Japanese shrine

1 example of origami (blue crane)

Map of Japan

Map of Tokyo

Map of Osaka & Kobe area

7 postcards

1 Japan travel brochure

1 paper chopstick holder and paper rest

1 laminated example of kanji

assorted stamps

1 carp streamer