

How much money you need to take to Japan?

We recommend it is best to have about \$3000 when you arrive and exchange it all to Japanese yen either prior to your departure or at the airport (This was very important!!! If you only exchange half of your money for instance, the banks aren't open on the weekend to exchange money. It is necessary to have cash for when you go shopping for stuff that move-in weekend, credit cards are accepted almost everywhere too but Japan is a very much cash-using country.) Also, the yen has been very weak and doesn't seem like it is fluctuating so they get more for their money when they exchange their US dollars!

There will be fees you have to pay for upon arrival when you move-in that weekend like gas company deposit, possibly apartment deposit, furniture, necessities, bicycle etc. You might be really lucky and get an apartment that is fully furnished from the previous AET but if not, you should take that into consideration before arriving here.

Your biggest purchases/priorities during the first two weeks might be a bigger/full size refrigerator, bicycle, internet/wifi router and/or cellphone. Some AETs have to buy beds and washing machines so they used more money than intended (you won't know who gets assigned what apartment and has what kind of things in them until the old AETs leave so its hard to tell the new AETs ahead of time.)

Your cellphone is about \$90-\$100/month to pay for the bill/iphone. This is where it might be tricky and we would suggest bringing more money for this reason. A lot of AETs were having trouble getting phone contracts with monthly payments because our visa is only valid for 1 year and phone companies require a 2 year contract so some people had to purchase their phones up front for \$500-\$1000 whatever phone they choose (almost everyone gets an iphone though).

Some AETs get away with payments, some have to purchase their phones full price--it really depended on luck! We have heard that if you choose to pay with credit card you can do payments. When you talk to the salesperson they might allow you to do it through automatic bank transfers (which is how most of Japan pays their bills--cash or bank transfers)

You get paid on the **21st** of every month.. so for instance last year AETs arrived on the April 10th, started work on April 14th so they got a 1/4th pay check on April 21st + the move-in bonus. So your first pay check was 111,385 yen (~\$946). The month of May you get two paychecks which is your usual 216,630 yen every month and 145,497 yen (move in bonus/plane ticket reimbursement - We can't guarantee the bonuses will be the same.

Also a holiday comes soon after your arrive which is the Golden Week and on May 2nd-May 6th you might want some extra money to travel and explore.