

Dress Code

- Suits are not required everyday. However, every school is different. Jr high faculties tend to adhere to slightly stricter dress codes than those at elementary schools.
- For the most part, especially from October through May, during what is called the "warm-biz" season, professional attire is required. For men, this means dress pants, a long-sleeve dress shirt and a necktie. A nice sweater or blazer is typically worn as well during these colder months. For women, nice dress pants/skirt and a nice blouse is just fine. Again sweaters and blazers are common too.
- All AETs must wear suits at least twice a month for our bi-monthly meetings held at Souken the Mito Board of Education. As the meeting takes place in the afternoon, this means coming to school suited up.
- At the twice a month for your bi-monthly meetings at the Mito Board of Education no polo shirts are allowed. Also no facial hair for men at all, and never any shorts or open toed shoes of any kind. People have been sent home in the past, walking or riding a bike for kilometers at a time just to change into professional attire.
- In addition to these meetings, there are other school ceremonies at which suits are appropriate.
- A heads-up is usually given to AETs from the end of May through October, Japan enters "cool-biz" season, a time when lighter attire is appropriate and acceptable. Men can skip the necktie and long-sleeves. Short-sleeve polo shirts/dress shirts are worn. This goes for women too. Basically, men and women dress lighter, and often in sporting apparel (the likes of track-outfits, running gear).
- A couple things to note~ jeans are never allowed at school. I believe shorts are frowned upon too (even during the summer). Of course, tank-tops and other revealing clothing is not acceptable either.
- For women no colorful very high spiky heels. A good way to think about it is what would a conservative executive wear. Mid sized black pumps are a winner. It what is considered work uniform here, so long as it's closed toe. We recommend to especially the men that they buy their dress shoes in the states, the average US men's sizes aren't available in Japan over a size 9.
- In regard to shirts, everything should be tucked in at all times. That is the professional standard for schools in Japan.
- As a guest to a school one would change into the slippers upon entering. What all teachers wear here wear are a pair of Nike trainers or some kind of sneaker as their indoor shoes. Most wear Nike's. That's the best way to go, bring a pair of sneakers to wear at school. Slippers get old fast and are dangerous on the stairs.

Dress Code (Continued)

In regards to jewelry worn at the schools, the simple answer is no. No one else does and there have been instances in the past where AETs have been asked to take off earrings and jewelry. At most you'll see wedding rings but that's it. Also along these lines, no fake nails or colorful nail polish for the ladies.

If a female AET wants to change her hair color, is that OK? We would not recommend it. It causes what we call "trouble" which means someone wanting to do something that no one else is allowed to do. If it's a subtle change its fine, but nothing drastic, such as from black to blonde, that would end up in a reprimand and most likely the AET having to cut their hair off before being allowed back at school. It's strict because the kids aren't allowed to do these things either.