

English Speaking Handout: Traveling in Japan

Student version | Useful English for airports, hotels, trains, restaurants, shopping, and travel problems

Speaking Goals

By the end of this lesson, students can ask for help, handle basic travel situations, and keep a short conversation going politely.

Skill	Useful pattern	Example
Ask politely	Could I ...? / Could you ...?	Could I have a window seat?
Explain a need	I need ... / I am looking for ...	I am looking for the JR ticket office.
Check information	Is this ...? / Does this go to ...?	Does this train go to Kyoto?
Fix a problem	I'm sorry, but ... / There is ...	I'm sorry, but my room key doesn't work.
Confirm	So, I should ...?	So, I should transfer at Tokyo Station?

Warm-Up: 30-Second Travel Talk

Pair Work

- Student A asks: Where in Japan do you want to go, and why?
- Student B answers with this pattern: I want to go to ___ because I want to ___.
- Switch roles. Add one travel concern: I am worried about ___.

Model Mini Talk

A	Where do you want to go in Japan?
B	I want to go to Osaka because I want to try takoyaki and visit Universal Studios Japan.
A	What are you worried about?
B	I am worried about taking the train, so I want to practice asking for directions.

Page 2 | Airport and Arrival

Use simple English when you arrive, pass immigration, and find airport services.

At Immigration and Customs

Situation	Student says	Chinese support
Purpose	I'm here for sightseeing.	我是來觀光的。
Length	I will stay for five days.	我會待五天。
Hotel	I will stay at Sakura Hotel in Shinjuku.	我會住在新宿的 Sakura Hotel。
Return	Here is my return ticket.	這是我的回程機票。
Customs	I have nothing to declare.	我沒有東西要申報。

Airport Help

Need	Question	Tip
SIM card	Where can I buy a SIM card?	Point to your phone if needed.
Train ticket	Where is the train ticket counter?	Use counter for a service desk.
Baggage	My bag has not arrived. Could you help me?	Keep your baggage tag.
Currency	Where can I exchange money?	Say exchange, not change money.

Model Dialog: Lost Baggage

Staff	How can I help you?
Student	My bag has not arrived. Could you help me?
Staff	May I see your baggage tag?
Student	Sure. Here it is. My hotel address is on this paper.

Extra Dialog: Buying a SIM Card

Student	Excuse me. Where can I buy a SIM card?
Staff	There is a counter on the second floor.
Student	Thank you. Does it work for seven days?
Staff	Yes. Please show your passport.

Speaking Drill

- Change the number of days: three days, five days, one week.
- Change the city: Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, Sapporo, Fukuoka.
- Ask one airport question without looking at the table.

Page 3 | Hotel, Directions, and Trains

Practice checking in, asking where things are, and confirming transportation.

Hotel Check-In

Goal	Useful English	Chinese support
Reservation	I have a reservation under Chen.	我有訂房，名字是 Chen。
Early check-in	Could I check in early?	我可以提早入住嗎？
Luggage	Could you keep my luggage until check-in?	可以幫我保管行李到入住時間嗎？
Problem	The Wi-Fi doesn't work in my room.	我房間的 Wi-Fi 不能用。
Request	Could I have one more towel, please?	可以再給我一條毛巾嗎？

Directions and Train English

Travel task	Question	Follow-up
Find a place	Excuse me, where is the nearest station?	Is it far from here?
Train line	Does this train go to Kyoto?	Which platform should I use?
Transfer	Where should I transfer?	How many stops is it?
Ticket	Could you help me buy a ticket to Nara?	One adult ticket, please.
Wrong way	I think I took the wrong train.	What should I do?

Model Dialog: Station Help

Student	Excuse me, does this train go to Kyoto?
Staff	No. Please take the train on platform three.
Student	Thank you. How many stops is it?
Staff	It is two stops. Please transfer at Osaka Station.

Extra Dialog: Hotel Request

Student	Excuse me. Could you keep my luggage until check-in?
Staff	Of course. May I have your name, please?
Student	My name is Lin. I have a reservation tonight.
Staff	No problem. Please come back after 3 p.m.

Map-Free Role Play

- Student A is a traveler. Ask how to get to a station, hotel, or temple.
- Student B is a staff member. Answer with: Go straight, turn left/right, take platform ____.
- Traveler must repeat the answer: So, I should ____?

Page 4 | Food, Restaurants, and Shopping

Learn to order clearly, explain needs, and ask about prices or payment.

Ordering Food

Purpose	Useful English	Teacher note / Chinese
Order	I'd like this, please.	指菜單或照片時很好用。
Recommend	What do you recommend?	請店員推薦。
No ingredient	No onions, please.	不要洋蔥。
Allergy	I am allergic to peanuts.	我對花生過敏。
Water	Could we have some water, please?	可以給我們水嗎？
Bill	Could we have the bill, please?	可以結帳嗎？

Shopping and Payment

Need	Question	Answer practice
Price	How much is this?	It's 1,500 yen.
Size	Do you have this in a smaller size?	Yes, we do. / Sorry, we don't.
Tax-free	Is this tax-free?	Please show your passport.
Card	Can I pay by credit card?	Cash only. / Card is OK.
Bag	Could I have a bag, please?	Small bag or large bag?

Model Dialog: Restaurant

Server	Are you ready to order?
Student	Yes. I'd like this ramen, please. No onions.
Server	Anything to drink?
Student	Water, please. Also, could we have one extra bowl?

Extra Dialog: Shopping

Student	How much is this T-shirt?
Staff	It is 2,800 yen.
Student	Do you have this in a smaller size?
Staff	Yes. I will check for you.

Menu Challenge

- Choose one food, one drink, and one special request.
- Order without saying Chinese. Use pointing plus English if needed.
- Your partner asks one follow-up question: For here or to go? Cash or card?

Page 5 | Problems, Health, and Emergencies

Stay calm, explain the problem, and ask for the next step.

Problem-Solving Pattern

Use this four-step pattern: 1. Excuse me. 2. Explain the problem. 3. Ask for help. 4. Confirm the next step.

Problem	English you can say	Next-step question
Lost item	I lost my wallet on the train.	Where is the lost and found?
Sick	I don't feel well. I have a stomachache.	Is there a clinic nearby?
Medicine	I need medicine for a headache.	How many times a day should I take it?
Room issue	The air conditioner is not working.	Could someone check it?
Ticket issue	I bought the wrong ticket.	Can I change it?
Emergency	Please call an ambulance.	Where should I wait?

Polite Repair Strategies

When you don't understand	Say this	Use with
Repeat	Sorry, could you say that again?	fast speech
Slow down	Could you speak more slowly, please?	phone calls
Write it	Could you write it down?	addresses, prices, times
Confirm	Do you mean platform two?	directions

Model Dialog: Lost Wallet

Student	Excuse me. I lost my wallet on the train. Could you help me?
Staff	Do you remember the train line?
Student	I took the Yamanote Line around 3 p.m.
Staff	Please go to the lost and found office.
Student	Thank you. Could you write the office name down?

Extra Dialog: Pharmacy

Student	Excuse me. I need medicine for a headache.
Staff	How long have you had the headache?
Student	Since this morning. How many times a day should I take it?
Staff	Please take it twice a day after meals.

Page 6 | Final Speaking Tasks

Use the phrases from pages 1-5 to complete realistic travel conversations.

Task A: Build a One-Day Japan Plan

Work in pairs. Make a simple travel plan and present it in English for 45-60 seconds. Use the sentence frames below.

Part	Sentence frame	Your answer
City	We want to go to ___.	
Food	We want to try ___ because ___.	
Transportation	We will take ___ from ___ to ___.	
Question	At the station, we will ask: ___.	
Problem	If we have a problem, we will say: ___.	

Task B: Role-Play Cards

Card	Traveler goal	Staff / partner role
1	You arrive at the hotel early. Ask to keep your luggage.	Hotel staff: explain check-in time and help.
2	You are at a restaurant. Order food and explain one allergy.	Server: ask one follow-up question.
3	You are lost in a station. Ask how to get to Kyoto.	Station staff: give platform and transfer information.
4	You lost your wallet. Ask for the lost and found.	Staff: ask when and where it happened.

Task C: Quick Dialog Rotation

No.	Traveler	Staff / Partner
1	Could I check in early?	I'm sorry, check-in starts at 3 p.m.
2	Does this train go to Nara?	No. Please transfer at Kyoto Station.
3	I'd like this set meal, please.	Sure. Any drinks?
4	Can I pay by credit card?	Yes, please insert your card.
5	I lost my phone. Could you help me?	Please tell me where you last used it.

Exit Ticket

Before You Leave

- Say one airport sentence from memory.
- Ask one train or direction question.
- Say one problem-solving sentence.
- Tell your partner: The most useful phrase today is ___ because ___.