



English Exchange



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📍 Japan - Nagano

Help locals gaining more confidence and practice in speaking English to foreigners. While Japanese study English in high school and become profound in reading and writing, little focus is put on conversation and pronunciation. Knowledge is not the issue, practice is.

Host conversation afternoons where locals can join on their own terms. More than just using the language, it helps them to get used to interacting with foreigners. And for you it's a chance to learn about their life and culture.



Program Description

In a recently published English version of the Otaki tourist map, some shops and hotels are marked with a star, to indicate that the owners speak some English. Still it is a challenge to get around without speaking Japanese.

Pride plays a role in this as well. A hotel would rather refuse a booking of a foreigner, than losing face by not providing perfect service due to the language barrier. Which is not helping the village's initiatives to attract more foreign travelers into its picturesque surroundings.

To help the village develop, two measures need to happen at the same time:

- Villagers and local business owners need to get used to interacting with foreigners
- Locals need to gain more confidence and practice in speaking English

Japanese students study English in high school but the current education method rather focuses on reading and writing than on conversation. So don't mistake them not talking to you for them not knowing English or even a lack of education. What is lacking the most is the practice in speaking. Without that practice, Japanese people usually don't feel comfortable speaking.

This program aims to offer locals a platform to practice their English on their own terms. Participants are available at the community house in the afternoons and early evenings. Local students often stop by to study or work there for a few hours or to just hang out. That's your chance to ask them everything you'd like to know about life in Japan and answer their questions about your home country as well. Be patient and understanding if it takes them a while to make up a complete sentence. The longer you talk, the better they will understand you. And the more locals enjoy talking to you, the more people feel animated to join.

Keep in mind that for people who hardly ever meet foreigners, you are more than just a chance to practice their English. You are an ambassador of your home country and culture. The impression you leave will shape their view on people of your country or foreigners in general.

Depending on the season and weather, expect to spend about 1-4 hours of conversation per day. This could be at the community house or other places in/around Otaki. Occasionally the local kindergarten may invite you as well to practice some English pronunciation by e.g. singing songs together. Besides practicing English, you will join other participants in Otaki to learn about local culture and explore the surroundings.

Program Duration & Availability

Min duration (weeks): 1

Aims & Objectives

- Give locals a chance to meet foreigners. If you leave a good impression, this will help them being more self-confident and open-minded when interacting with foreigners.
- Give them a chance to practice their conversational English by talking to you.

Schedule

Monday to Friday

- Breakfast
- You may occasionally be asked to join the local kindergarten group
- Lunch
- Cultural or outdoor activities together will all participants in Otaki
- Be available for locals to come by for conversation
- Dinner
- Be available for locals to come by for conversation
- Cultural or outdoor activities together will all participants in Otaki

This schedule can be changed and/or amended depending on weather conditions, local conditions and unforeseen circumstances.

Starting Dates

During 2019

Jan 7th	Jan 14th	Jan 21st	Jan 28th	Feb 4th	Feb 11th	Feb 18th
Feb 25th	Mar 4th	Mar 11th	Mar 18th	Mar 25th	Apr 1st	Apr 8th
Apr 15th	Apr 22nd	Apr 29th	May 6th	May 13th	May 20th	May 27th
Jun 3rd	Jun 10th	Jun 17th	Jun 24th	Jul 1st	Jul 8th	Jul 15th
Jul 22nd	Jul 29th	Aug 5th	Aug 12th	Aug 19th	Aug 26th	Sep 2nd
Sep 9th	Sep 16th	Sep 23rd	Sep 30th	Oct 7th	Oct 14th	Oct 21st
Oct 28th	Nov 4th	Nov 11th	Nov 18th	Nov 25th	Dec 2nd	Dec 9th
Dec 16th	Dec 23rd					

During 2020

Jan 13th	Jan 20th	Jan 27th	Feb 3rd	Feb 10th	Feb 17th	Feb 24th
Mar 2nd	Mar 9th	Mar 16th	Mar 23rd	Mar 30th	Apr 6th	Apr 13th
Apr 20th	Apr 27th	May 11th	May 18th	May 25th	Jun 1st	Jun 8th
Jun 15th	Jun 22nd	Jun 29th	Jul 6th	Jul 13th	Jul 20th	Jul 27th
Aug 3rd	Aug 17th	Aug 24th	Aug 31st	Sep 7th	Sep 14th	Sep 21st
Sep 28th	Oct 5th	Oct 12th	Oct 19th	Oct 26th	Nov 2nd	Nov 9th
Nov 16th	Nov 23rd	Nov 30th	Dec 7th	Dec 14th	Dec 21st	Dec 28th

Participant Criteria & Requirements

Minimum age:	-
Maximum age:	-
Minimum English level:	Intermediate
CRB required:	On Signup
Passport copy required:	No
Resume copy required:	No
Required qualification:	None

Additional Requirements

There are no further requirements for this program.

Additional Equipment

There are no further requirements for this program.