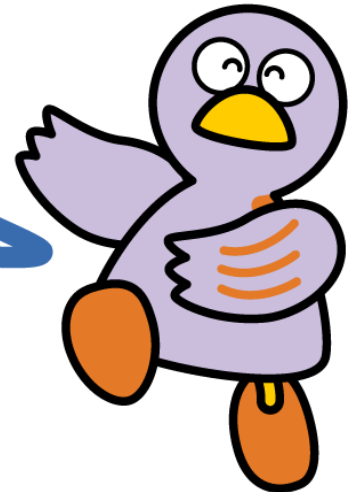


Chapter 11

Information for Everyday Life



Saitama's Prefectural Mascot
Kobaton

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With the data broadcast program on TV Saitama (Channel 3 on digital terrestrial broadcasting), you can view information provided by the Saitama Consultation Center in six languages (Japanese, English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, and Spanish).

1 Trash Disposal

Each respective municipality manages the collection of household trash. The day of collection depends on what type of trash is being disposed of – burnable, non-burnable, cans and bottles, recyclable items, etc. Some items that are considered to be **oversized garbage or difficult to dispose of*** may require a fee, or may not be able to be collected with household trash. Each municipality has its own rules regarding days of collection, how to sort the garbage, garbage bags, the method of disposal, and collection points. For details, please contact the Sanitation Department (*seiso tantoka*) at your local municipal or ward office.

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Refrigerators, air conditioners, televisions and washing machines cannot be disposed of in the same way as 'oversized garbage.' You will need to contact a retail store which sells such appliances or the manufacturer, and pay them to collect the appliance.

***Oversized garbage and Items that are difficult to dispose of** include: furniture, bedding, electrical appliances, kitchen items, and household items over a specified size (e.g. chest of drawers, tables, chairs, futons, carpets, rugs, bicycles, video cassette recorders, heaters, gas stoves, golf equipment). For details on how to dispose of such items, please contact the Sanitation Department (*seiso tantoka*) at your local municipal or ward office.

2 Neighborhood Associations and Children's Clubs

Each area has its own Neighborhood Association that coordinates assistance programs and activities to create and deepen friendships throughout the community. Membership is voluntary, but it is recommended that you join your Neighborhood Association to gain a better understanding of your community. Neighborhood Association events and activities are usually advertised by a circular bulletin that is handed from door to door (*kairanban*). If you receive such a bulletin, read it and pass it on to your neighbor as soon as possible.

Many Neighborhood Associations run children's clubs for elementary school students. These clubs cater to children in the local area by organizing and partaking in events such as festivals, sports days, radio calisthenics and excursions.

Monthly membership fees differ according to the association.

For information, ask your neighbors or contact your local municipal or ward office.

3 Japanese Customs and Etiquette

(1) Household Customs

Genkan: The entry foyer, known as the *genkan*, is usually one step lower than the other rooms in the house in order to prevent dirt on your shoes from outside being brought into the house. When entering the house, be sure to remove your shoes before you step up into the house. If your host provides indoor slippers, please put them on when ascending into the house.

Tatami: Straw mats laid on the floors of Japanese style rooms are called *tatami*. Take your slippers off before entering a tatami room.

Futon: Japanese bedding, known as a futon, is spread out on the tatami flooring every night and put away every morning. Since Japan is very humid, it is

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best to store your futon off the ground to reduce the amount of moisture absorbed. For hygienic purposes and to extend their life, it is a good idea to air your futon and blankets out under the sun when the weather is good.

Furo: You should wash yourself before getting into a Japanese bathtub, known as a *furo*. After washing, Japanese usually sit in the bath to relax. The water is not changed after each person. Be sure to not to let the water out after you have finished, because the next person to take a bath will use the same water.

Toilets: For most toilets, there are slippers used exclusively within that room. Change into and out of them when entering and exiting the toilet. There are two types of toilets in Japan: western style toilets (seated-use toilets) and Japanese style toilets (squat-use toilets).

(2) Gift Giving

It is customary to present small gifts in situations such as the following:

- When moving into a new apartment or house, it is customary to introduce yourself to your new neighbors and offer them a small gift (e.g. hand towels).
- When visiting the home of an acquaintance, one often takes a small gift (e.g. fruit, biscuits, cake).
- When traveling for business or for pleasure, it is customary to buy a box of biscuits or candy at your destination to share with your colleagues upon your return.

(3) Ceremonies

Celebrations: In Japan, if someone close to you is celebrating an event such as a wedding, birth, or entry into school or university, it is customary to send a gift or money. When giving or sending money, please be sure to use a special envelope (*shugibukuro*). It is also customary to give crisp new bills, which are available from banks.

Weddings: Japanese weddings are held at churches, hotels, and shrines. Recently, most weddings are a combination of both Japanese and Western style ceremonies. Male guests typically wear black suits, white shirts and white ties, while female guests wear either kimono or formal dresses.

Funerals: If someone close to you dies, you should attend either the wake or the funeral. In Japan, the wake is usually held the night before the funeral. When attending a wake or funeral, you should present a monetary offering for the departed soul in a special envelope called a *koden bukuro* (do not use new bills for this offering) and write your name in the registration book. Men attending a funeral normally wear black

suits, white shirts, and black ties; women wear black formal wear.

Note: Accessories, with the exception of pearl necklaces, should not be worn.

(4) Tipping

In general, it is not customary to tip in Japan. High-class restaurants, hotels, and banquet halls include service fees in their bills.

4 Transportation

(1) Trains

There are several methods for paying train fares.

Adult's and children's fares differ. Generally, adults are those who are 12 years and older, and children are those who are 6 to 11 years old. Elementary school students are considered children even if they are 12 years old. Children under 6 years old are free per fare-paying accompanying adult or accompanying child, up to a limit of two children. From the third child onwards, however, the children's fare will be charged. All infants under the age of 1 year old are free.

Standard fare: Regular ticket. You can buy this ticket at the station's ticketing machine.

Commuter Passes This can be used to ride a train as many times as you wish within
(*teiki-ken*): a zone. Passes are available in 1, 3, and 6 month time frames. The user's name is printed on the pass. It can only be used by the registered person. Proof of school enrollment is required when purchasing for a student. Please ask a station employee how to purchase this type of pass.

Multiple Trip You can buy 11 to 14 of the same tickets for the price of 10 for
Tickets: travel within a particular zone. These tickets may be shared. Please note that these tickets have an expiry date. These can be purchased at the station's ticketing machine or ticket selling window.

Suica and PASMO:

Suica and PASMO are two popular types of a range of IC cards that can be used to board JR (Japan Railway) lines and most privately-owned railways, underground railways, and buses simply by tapping the card on the automated ticket gate or bus fare box.

Suica are sold by JR East, and PASMO cards are sold by private railway, subway or bus

companies. Suica and PASMO cards can both be used for JR lines, subways, privately owned railways, and buses.

A single card can be reused by re-charging it when the remaining balance becomes low. The initial purchase of either card requires a 500 yen deposit, which will be refunded when the card is returned.

There are three types of Suica and PASMO:

- Commuter Pass: an IC card which functions both as a commuter pass and a prepaid card. Your name is printed on it. Personal information is recorded and if lost, it can be re-issued (there will be a fee). Children's fare passes are also available.
- Registered prepaid card: an IC card with your name printed on it that functions as a prepaid card. With your personal information registered, this card can be reissued for a fee if you lose it. Children's fare passes are also available.
- Blank prepaid card: an IC card that functions as a prepaid card. There is no need to register your personal information, but if the card is lost, it cannot be reissued.

* These fares may differ from paper tickets. For details, please ask a station employee.

(2) Buses

Adult's and children's bus fares differ. Generally, adults are classified as people who are 12 years and older, and children are classified as people who are 6 to 11 years old. However, elementary school students who are 12 years old will pay the children's fare. Bus fares for children under 6 years old differs depending on the bus company, but usually one child under the age of 6 years per accompanying adult or child is free, up to a limit of two children. A third child under 6 years old, however, must pay the child's fare. All infants under 1 year old are free.

The method of payment depends on the type of bus. Generally, for buses with the entrance at the front, you must pay first. For buses with the entrance at the middle or back, you do not need to pay immediately. Instead, take a boarding ticket from the ticket machine at the entrance. It will have a number on it. There will be a fare board at the front of the bus that displays numbers and corresponding fares. When you get off the bus, put the amount corresponding to the number on your ticket in the fare box, along with your ticket. If you get on a bus at the first stop of the day, a ticket may not be issued. In this case, you will pay the most expensive fare displayed on the board. You can use Suica, PASMO, or a similar IC card for payment in most cases.

If you take a bus using Suica or PASMO, tap the card reader installed near the door with your IC card to record the location where you board; tap the card reader of the fare box with your IC card when you get off to pay the fare.

Announcements are made for every stop; however, the bus only stops if passengers indicate that they want to get off. Press the buzzer located near the window or hand rail when your stop is announced to let the driver know you want to get off.

(3) Taxis

When a taxi is available, a “空車” (*kusha*, empty) sign will be displayed in red letters in the windscreen. You can hail a taxi by raising your arm. The taxi fare is shown on the meter next to the driver. There is a surcharge between 10 pm (11 pm in some places) and 5 am. When getting into or out of a taxi, there is no need to open or close the left rear door as it is automatic.

5 Banking

In many cases, you will need a bank account in Japan to receive your salary or pay your rent. To open a bank account, you will need personal identification (e.g. your Residence Card, passport, etc.) and a personal seal (*inkan*). Each bank will have different procedures for opening an account, so please ask for more details from the bank where you would like to open an account. It is very convenient to have a cash card made when you open an account so that you can use ATMs.

6 International Exchange and Cooperation

The Saitama International Association (SIA) works to advance international exchange and cooperation on a regional level by supporting international exchange and cooperation activities involving prefectural citizens. It also operates a counseling office for foreign nationals residing in Saitama. Furthermore, the Association established the “International Exchange Plaza” in order to support numerous groups promoting international exchange and cooperation within Saitama and to serve as a place for obtaining information on activities sponsored by these groups.



Consultation and Inquiries

Name	Telephone	Address	Hours
Saitama International Association http://www.sia1.jp/	048-833-2992	Urawa Godo Chosha 3F 5-6-5 Kitaurawa, Urawa-ku, Saitama-shi,	Mon - Fri (Except National Holidays and during the New Year's Holiday Period) 8:30 - 17:15

7 Tourism

Saitama Prefecture has many wonderful aspects to offer. There are numerous sightseeing spots to experience the beauty of nature and learn about history and culture, as well as a number of facilities to enjoy sports activities.

Saitama Prefecture Official Tourism Website “Chokotabi Saitama”

English	URL: https://en.chocotabi-saitama.jp/
Simplified Chinese	URL: https://ch-kan.chocotabi-saitama.jp/
Traditional Chinese	URL: https://ch-han.chocotabi-saitama.jp/
Korean	URL: https://kr.chocotabi-saitama.jp/
Thai	URL: https://th.chocotabi-saitama.jp/

“Chokotabi Saitama Tourism Information Bureau”

Facebook (English):	URL: https://www.facebook.com/saitama.japan.en
Facebook (Traditional Chinese):	URL: https://www.facebook.com/saitamajapan.zhtw
Facebook (Thai):	URL: https://m.facebook.com/saitamajapan.th/
Instagram (English):	URL: https://www.instagram.com/saitama.japan.official

Saitama Prefecture International Tourism PR Anime (Available on “Animedo Saitama” Website)

URL: <http://www.skipcity.jp/channel/ani/>

Welcome to Sai-no-Kuni - Tourism Website

URL : <https://www.pref.saitama.lg.jp/theme/kankou/>

Saitama Cultural Event Information Website

Lists information about music, theatre, art and other cultural events held in Saitama Prefecture.

URL: <http://event-saitama.jp/> (official site)

8 Libraries

In Japan, public libraries are available for anyone to use, free of charge. People who live, work or attend school in Saitama Prefecture can borrow books, magazines, CDs,

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videos, and DVDs from Saitama Prefectural libraries. It is possible to request an item at the library in your municipality of residence and have it sent from another library in the prefecture. For more information, please inquire at your local library.

The Saitama Prefectural Kumagaya Library has a Foreign Language Materials section containing many foreign-language materials. There are also search and consultation services available if you require assistance locating materials.



Consultation and Inquiries

Name	Telephone	Address	Hours
Saitama Prefectural Kumagaya Library	048-523-6291 FAX: 048-523-6468	5-6-1 Hakoda, Kumagaya-shi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General materials, Saitama-related materials, newspapers, magazines, CDs, videos, DVDs <li style="padding-left: 20px;">Tue - Fri <li style="padding-left: 20px;">9:00 - 20:00 (June - Sep) <li style="padding-left: 20px;">9:00 - 19:00 (Oct - May) <li style="padding-left: 20px;">Sat, Sun & Holidays <li style="padding-left: 20px;">9:00 - 17:00 • Children's materials <li style="padding-left: 20px;">Tue - Sun & Holidays <li style="padding-left: 20px;">9:00 - 17:00
Saitama Prefectural Kuki Library	0480-21-2659 FAX: 0480-21-2791	85-5 Shimohayami, Kuki-shi	
Urawa Branch*, Saitama Prefectural Kumagaya Library	048-844-6165 FAX: 048-844-6166	1 st Floor of Prefectural Archives, 4-3-18 Takasago, Urawa-ku, Saitama-shi	Tue - Sun 9:00 - 17:00 *You can borrow and return reserved materials, and use the photocopying service (no book collections stored)

Saitama Prefectural Library websites

<https://www.lib.pref.saitama.jp/> (Japanese)

<https://www.lib.pref.saitama.jp/foreign/index.html> (中文, 한국 • 조선어판, Tiếng Việt, English, Português, Español, Français, やさしい日本語)

Guides to Using Saitama Prefectural Libraries

<https://www.lib.pref.saitama.jp/collection/docs/chinese.pdf> (中文)

<https://www.lib.pref.saitama.jp/collection/docs/korean.pdf> (한국 • 조선어판)

<https://www.lib.pref.saitama.jp/collection/docs/vietnamese.pdf> (Tiếng Việt)

<https://www.lib.pref.saitama.jp/collection/docs/english.pdf> (English)

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<https://www.lib.pref.saitama.jp/collection/docs/portuguese.pdf> (Português)

<https://www.lib.pref.saitama.jp/collection/docs/french.pdf> (Français)

<https://www.lib.pref.saitama.jp/collection/docs/spanish.pdf> (Español)

<https://www.lib.pref.saitama.jp/collection/docs/japanese.pdf> (やさしい日本語)

List of public libraries in Saitama Prefecture

<https://www.lib.pref.saitama.jp/about/post-1.html> (Japanese)

9 Art Museums

The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama, is located in Kita-Urawa Park, a short walk from JR Kita-Urawa Station. The museum features exhibitions from a wide variety of art from foreign artists such as Monet, Chagall, and Picasso, to Japanese contemporary artists. There are also many stylishly designed chairs on display.



Consultation and Inquiries

Name	Telephone & URL	Address	Hours
The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama	048-824-0111 https://pref.spec.ed.jp/momas/	9-30-1 Tokiwa, Urawa-ku, Saitama-shi	10:00-17:30 *Last admission to the exhibition room: 17:00 *Closed Mondays (open when a National Holiday or Saitama Residents' Day falls on a Monday) *Closed for New Year's Holidays, and other temporary closure/maintenance days Admission fee: MOMAS collection General admission - 200 yen, university and senior high school students - 100yen, junior high school students and younger - free Admission fee to special exhibitions will differ.

10 Museums

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① The Saitama Prefectural Museum of History and Folklore is located in Omiya Park. As a general museum of humanities specializing in history, folklore, and traditional arts, the museum boasts a wide range of Saitama Prefecture-related information and items including national treasures such as swords, knives, and the Taihei-ki picture scroll, all of which have been designated as national or prefectural cultural assets.

② The Saitama Prefectural Museum of the Sakitama Ancient Burial Mounds is located within the Sakitama Kofun Cluster, a nationally designated historical site. The museum exhibition rooms display such wonders as the Inariyama Sword, a nationally designated treasure, as well as countless other priceless materials unearthed from the burial mounds.

③ The Saitama Prefectural Ranzan Historical Museum is located in the Sugaya Yakata (castle grounds), a nationally designated historical site. This historical site was home to many samurai residences in the Kamakura period (1185 -1333), followed by castles in the Sengoku (warring state) period (1467-1568). The museum provides a place for visitors to learn about Saitama Prefecture in the Middle Ages (approx. 12th to 16th century).

④ The Saitama Museum of Natural History is a comprehensive museum which introduces visitors to the nature and natural development of Saitama, as well as the relationship between nature and human life. Here, the actual *Paleoparadoxia* fossil (a nationally designated natural treasure) as well as a reconstructed model of the gigantic shark *Carcharodon Megalodon* and other fascinating wonders can be seen.

⑤ The Saitama Prefectural Museum of Rivers focuses on the prefecture's main river, the Arakawa River. It introduces the nature of the Arakawa River, the history of its flood and river management, as well as the history of its usage, mainly as a form of transportation. Additionally, the museum also outlines the relationship between the river, its waters and human life.



Consultation and Inquiries

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Name	Telephone & URL	Address	Hours
<p>①Saitama Prefectural Museum of History and Folklore</p>	<p>048-641-0890</p> <p>https://saitama-rekimin.spec.ed.jp/</p>	<p>4-219 Takahana-cho, Omiya-ku, Saitama-shi</p>	<p>9:00-16:30</p> <p>*Last admission is 30 minutes before closing.</p> <p>*Closed Mondays (except for national holidays, substitute holidays, Golden Week period and Saitama Residents' Day).</p> <p>*Closed between Dec 29 - Jan 1</p> <p>*There may be other temporary closure and open days.</p> <p>*Closed until autumn 2023 (TBC) due to major renovations.</p> <p>Admission fees: (Permanent exhibitions) General admission 300 yen, university and senior high school students 150 yen (Temporary exhibitions) General admission 400 yen, university and senior high school students 200 yen (Special Exhibitions) General admission 600 yen, university and senior high school students 300 yen *Free admission for middle school students and younger</p>
<p>②The Saitama Prefectural Museum of the Sakitama Ancient Burial Mounds</p>	<p>048-559-1111</p> <p>https://sakitama-muse.spec.ed.jp/</p>	<p>4834 Gyoda-shi, Saitama</p>	<p>9:00-16:30 (9:00-17:00 in July and August)</p> <p>*Last admission is at 16:00</p> <p>*Closed Mondays (except for national holidays, substitute holidays, Golden Week period and Saitama Residents' Day).</p> <p>*Closed during the New Year's period</p> <p>*There may be other temporary closure and open days.</p> <p>*General admission: 200 Yen, university and senior high school students 100yen. Free admission for junior high school students and younger.</p> <p>*Explanations of the Sakitama Kofun Cluster and other artefacts in the nationally designated treasure exhibitions (such as the Inariyama Sword) are available in multiple languages. *Information pamphlets on nationally designated treasures (such as the Inariyama Sword) are available in multiple languages. (Languages available: Japanese, English, Traditional and Simplified Chinese, Korean)</p>

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<p>③ Saitama Prefectural Ranzan Historical Museum</p>	<p>0493-62-5896 https://ranzan-shiseki.spec.ed.jp/</p>	<p>757 Sugaya, Ranzan-cho</p>	<p>9:00-16:30 (9:00-17:00 in July & August) *Last admission is 30 minutes before closing. *Closed Mondays (except for national holidays, substitute holidays, Golden Week period and Saitama Residents' Day). *Closed during the New Year's period *There may be other temporary closure and open days. *General admission 100 yen, University and senior high school students 50 yen, free for junior high school students and younger.</p>
<p>④ Saitama Museum of Natural History</p>	<p>0494-66-0404 https://www.shizen.spec.ed.jp/</p>	<p>1417-1 Nagatoro, Nagatoro-machi</p>	<p>9:00-16:30 (9:00-17:00 in July & August) *Last admission is 30 minutes before closing. *Closed Mondays (except for national holidays, substitute holidays, Golden Week period, Saitama Residents' Day, and between July 1 - 31 August). *Closed during the New Year's period and temporary closure days. Admission fees: General admission 200 yen, university and senior high school students 100 yen. Free admission for junior high school students and younger.</p>
<p>⑤ Saitama Museum of Rivers</p>	<p>048-581-7333 https://www.river-museum.jp/</p>	<p>39 Kozono, Yoriimachi</p>	<p>9:00-17:00 (extended during summer holidays) *Last admission is 30 minutes before closing. *Closed Mondays (except for national holidays, substitute holidays, Golden Week period, Saitama Residents' Day, and during the summer holidays). *Closed during the New Year's period and temporary closure days. Admission fees: General admission 410 yen, university and senior high school students 200 yen. Free admission for junior high school students and younger. Parking: 300 yen for regular cars</p>