

Tokyo Review Style Guide v.0.2

Under revision November 2025. Currently based on Chicago Manual of Style 18th Edition.

Basics

- We advise authors to keep their pieces to around 1000 words (consider 1200 a general maximum).
- The style of the site is somewhere between a generalist magazine and an academic publication—assume that your readers have a strong interest in Japan, but likely won't be familiar with jargon or terminology specific to your field. Either avoid field-specific jargon entirely, or explain it when you first introduce it.
- Tokyo Review uses American spellings and, in general, American grammar conventions.
- Oxford commas are acceptable and indeed encouraged.
- Em-dashes (—) do not need spaces before and after (i.e. It was a revival of the most potent image in modern democracy—the revolutionary idea.). En-dashes (–) are used for spans of time, dates, ranges of numbers, etc (i.e. 2015–2020).

Citations

- Academic citations should be limited but are allowed. You are free to use whatever citation style that you are comfortable with as long as it is applied consistently. Non-English titles should be accompanied by translations.
- Provide a link (either in the form of a URL link or a footnote for physical sources) to materials or assertions that readers are unlikely to be familiar with.
- Try to ensure that any resource you link to is going to be available long-term—for example, many Japanese news websites remove their articles from public view after a few weeks, so the links in your piece may break quickly. In this case consider providing a footnote-style citation instead

Countries and Territories

- The United States is abbreviated as U.S. (note the punctuation).
- Other countries and international organisations are abbreviated without punctuation (e.g. UK, EU, UN, DPRK, ASEAN etc.).
- Countries are referred to in neutral gender (“it”, not “she”) and as singular entities (“it”, not “they”).
- Where a territory is disputed, give the names used by both sides in the dispute, with the current de facto owner of the territory named first—i.e. “Senkaku / Diaoyu Islands”, “Dokdo / Takeshima”.
- Where the *name* of a territory (but not its ownership) is disputed, use the generally accepted name—i.e. “Sea of Japan”, not “East Sea”.

Numbers

- Numbers up to ten are written out long-form; numbers above ten are written in numerals.
- “Percent”, not “per cent”. “%” is also acceptable.
- All units should be in metric standards (kilometers, not miles; grams, not ounces).
- Times should be in the 12-hour format with a.m. or p.m. specified.
- Dates should be formatted with the month written out—“25 October 2018” if the year is included, or “October 25th” if the year is not specified.

Titles

- Book, movie, game, and other standalone titles are rendered in italics without quotation marks (i.e. *Oppenheimer*, *Japan Decides 2021*). Article titles, book chapters, and other texts that are a part of a larger collection of texts are rendered in double quotation marks and not italicized.
- Use official English translations where possible and add the original Japanese afterwards in parentheses. Otherwise use the romaji transliteration of the title alongside the original in parentheses. In romanized titles, only capitalize the first word and any proper nouns.
 - *The Summer When Hikaru Died* (光が死んだ夏)
 - *Kokuho* (国宝)
 - *Nihon kenkyū to bunka kenkyū* (日本研究と文化研究) or *Japan Studies and Cultural Studies* (日本研究と文化研究)
- Author translations of titles without official translations are allowed but should be used judiciously.

Names (People)

- Refer to people by their full name on the first mention, then by their surname. In general, do not use honorifics (i.e. say “Trump”, not “Mr. Trump”; “Abe”, not “Abe-san”) and do not use titles after the first mention (i.e. “Yamaguchi”, not “Professor Yamaguchi”).
- Japanese names are written in Japanese name-order—i.e. “Abe Shinzō”, not “Shinzō Abe”. (*This policy was updated and changed in November 2019, so some older articles may still use Western name-order.*)
- Names of people from other countries should be written in the form most readers will find most recognisable. In some cases this will be a surname-first order, e.g. “Xi Jinping”, “Kim Jong Un”.
- Official titles should not be capitalized unless they are part of the name: The prime minister of Japan; former prime minister of Japan; Takaichi Sanae, the Japanese prime minister **but** Prime Minister Takaichi Sanae

Using Japanese Text

- Japanese terms other than proper names and common loanwords (tsunami, sushi etc.) should be written in *romaji* and italicized.
- When writing a piece that refers to a term in Japanese, the first usage of the phrase should include a parenthesis with the term in its original Japanese form and a direct English translation—e.g. “*karōshi* (過労死, ‘death by overwork’)”.
- Avoid adding *romaji* for words that have a standard English translation already.
- In general, long vowels in romanised Japanese should be indicated by a macron diacritic (āīūēō) rather than by vowel repetition or hyphenation.

Images

- Images should be 1000x600 pixels.
- Do not use any AI generated content.
- Make sure the author or anyone else on the editorial team has a license for the image.
- Closely follow the licensing conditions.
 - E.g: Title © Author (Licensing agreement)
- Websites
 - <https://stock.adobe.com> (contact Romeo for licenses)
 - https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page