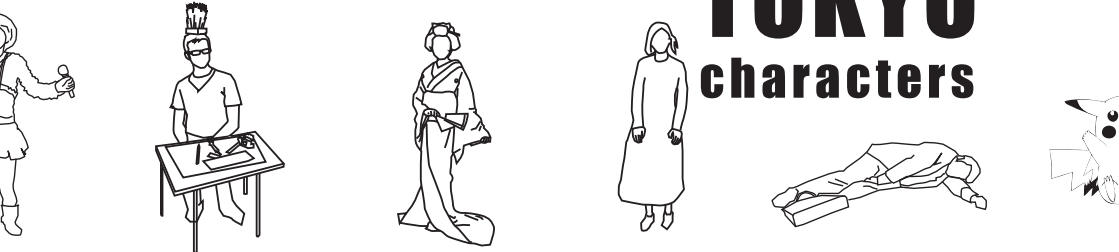


東京
キャラクタ
TOKYO
characters



TOKYO CHARACTERS

This booklet introduces some of the inhabitants of Tokyo, in order to give the reader a broader understanding of Tokyo's diversity. It is based on my personal observations and conversations during my stay in Japan, and it is not a scientific survey.

In every character's description there is a small portion of information about the Japanese society in terms of social, economic, demographic and cultural aspects. When planning for the future, our visions ultimately affect the whole society and the behaviorology of people. You can basically trace important values of the community if you observe the people who inhabit the city.



Amateur Photographer

DESCRIPTION

The retired salaryman has often a great interest in photography. He spends much time walking around taking pictures of nature, people dressed in kimono and attends special events such as firework festivals. He has lots of long desired sparetime to use on hobbies.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Water plants, cleaning house.
Weekend	Taking pictures, tea ceremony
Seasonal/yearly	Attends festivals and blossom viewing (hanami/momiji)



Architect Ninja

DESCRIPTION

A young guy who works at an architecture studio in downtown Tokyo. Spends up to 18 hours a day working, and sleeps either at the office or at a manga cafe to save valuable time. Dilligent user of the local convenience stores. He still lives with his parents.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Working
Weekend	Working and goes to izakaya
Seasonal/yearly	Goes to Europe for inspiration



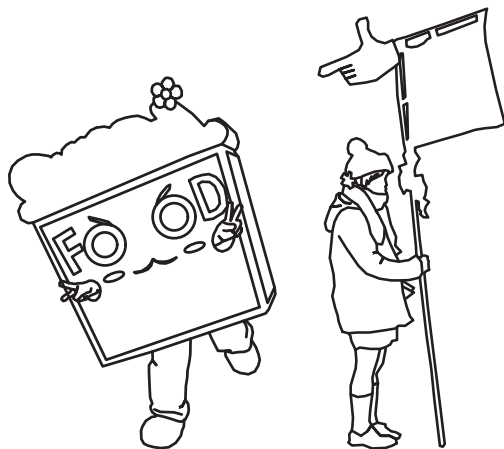
Biker Woman

DESCRIPTION

A “Mamachari” bike is said to be a cultural icon of Japan, the station wagon of the urban nuclear family. Mothers use this bike to get around and do their daily chores. Often seen carrying up to three children on the bike, taking them to the kindergarden or school.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Biking, shopping, doing chores
Weekend	Takes children for a picnic
Seasonal/yearly	Visit a new places by bike



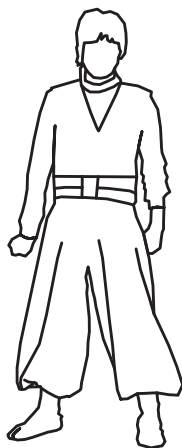
Commercial Guy + Signholder Girl

DESCRIPTION

You can find all kinds of employment in Tokyo. People dressed up with commercial costumes and signs are a common sight in entertainment districts such as Shibuya and Shinjuku. They spend much time in the streets, distributing napkins and fans to customers.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Promoting products in the streets
Weekend	Promoting izakayas (eat & drink)
Seasonal/yearly	Unknown



Construction Worker in Big Pants

DESCRIPTION

Tokyo has one of the world's highest construction/ demolition rate per sq.m per year. Dwellings in Tokyo only has an average life span of 25 years. On the construction sites you can see workers wearing traditional outfits, designed for a high flexibility that makes climbing scaffoldings more easy.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Builds or demolish, climbs scaffoldings
Weekend	Goes for izakaya with co-workers
Seasonal/yearly	Unknown



Costume Karaoke Singer

DESCRIPTION

Karaoke is a popular “sport” in Tokyo’s urban jungle. Friends and co-workers go together to escape the daily chase and sing ‘till it hurts’ in small booths at a karaoke hotel. The more dedicated singers arrange karaoke parties with their own costume wardrobe.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Works/studies
Weekend	Sings karaoke
Seasonal/yearly	Arranges karaoke dress-up party



Hiking Girl

DESCRIPTION

Mountain hiking is becoming more popular among young people, especially young, independent women. The hiking fashion is almost as important as hiking itself, and the newest fashion can be found in popular hiking magazines in the convenience stores.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Reads hiking magazines
Weekend	Goes on hiking trips to nearby mountains like Takao-san
Seasonal/yearly	Trip to Mt. Fuji



Juggler

DESCRIPTION

In parks such as Yoyogi Koen you can find people doing all kinds of activities. One type is the Juggler. He practices his skills and meet other fellow jugglers who share their experience and perform together.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Works/studies
Weekend	Practices juggling in a large park
Seasonal/yearly	Attends juggling events



Harajuku Fashion Guy

DESCRIPTION

Guys who are extremely interested in fashion and trends usually hang out in Harajuku to show their latest catch and look for the latest news. They are urban creatures that enjoy to hang out at cafés and crowded spots. They love to hike to the top of Shibuya109 Dep. Store.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Reads fashion magazines
Weekend	Strolls around Harajuku main street
Seasonal/yearly	Travels to Europe for shopping



Harajuku Fashion Doll

DESCRIPTION

A fashion girl who loves to dress up like a doll. She travels to Harajuku every weekend with her new outfit in a cute, pink suitcase. Then she gets dressed in a cafe or a dressing booth, ready to stroll around for several hours. Usually high school or college students.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Studies, buys make-up
Weekend	Dresses up in Harajuku
Seasonal/yearly	Unknown



Geisha

DESCRIPTION

A geisha is a traditional female entertainer who acts as hostess and whose skills include performing various Japanese arts such as classical music, dance and games. Mostly found in Kyoto today, but there are rumours of geisha living in Tokyo's Kagurazaka district.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Unknown
Weekend	Entertains at closed events
Seasonal/yearly	Unknown



Karate Performer

DESCRIPTION

Karate is a traditional Japanese martial art, although baseball and soccer are far popular amongst kids in Japan today. Still some of the oldest dojo's in Tokyo are open and practicing today. There you can find old and young, fighting together to keep a good health.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Exercises
Weekend	Exercises
Seasonal/yearly	Attends tournaments



Koban Police officer

DESCRIPTION

A koban (policebox) is usually found in every neighbourhood within a certain distance. The policeman keeps the community safe and provides many services for the local community. Crime is basically non-existent in Tokyo, a rare phenomenon for such a megacity.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Safeguards the neighbourhoods
Weekend	Helps tourists to find their hotels
Seasonal/yearly	Guides the crowds at large festivals and events



Maid

DESCRIPTION

A maid cafe is a phenomenon originating from Akihabara, the “electric town”, where female waiters dress up as maids to entertain their male clients. They play cute games and serve cute cakes. It mostly attracts otaku (anime nerds) and lonely salarymen.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Works at a maid café
Weekend	Works at a maid café
Seasonal/yearly	Unknown



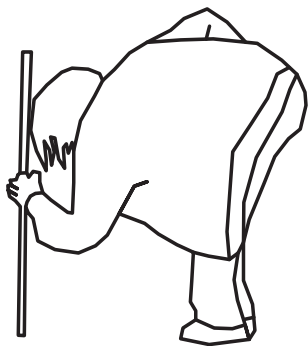
Mr. & Mrs Watanabe

DESCRIPTION

Mr. and Mrs. Watanabe represent the nuclear family in Japan. Mr. Watanabe spends much time working, while Mrs. Watanabe takes care of the kids and the daily chores. This pattern is now changing, as the women are getting more independent from their families (and becomes “Hiking Girl”)

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Mr. Watanabe works, Mrs. Watanabe does daily chores.
Weekend	Go for a picnic
Seasonal/yearly	Visit relatives in their hometown outside Tokyo



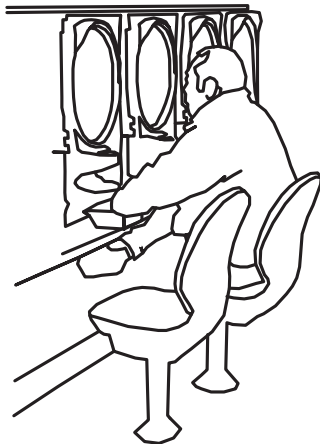
Old Lady

DESCRIPTION

Japanese women have the worlds highest expected life rate of 86.1 years, and the elderly population is becoming an increasing issue for the society in Japan. Many old women take part of the daily life in the city, tending plants and keeping the community tidy.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Waters plants, helps out in the family cafe
Weekend	Speakss with neighbours
Seasonal/yearly	Attends festivals and hanami



Pachinco Player

DESCRIPTION

Pachinco (pinball) is a popular activity after work for many office workers. The game halls are often very noisy, full of smoke and has basically no windows, creating a very enclosed atmosphere. Pachinco players usually plays alone.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Works in a corporate office, plays pachinco
Weekend	Plays pachinco
Seasonal/yearly	Unknown



Parasite single

DESCRIPTION

This is a single person who lives with his/her parents beyond the late twenties in order to enjoy a carefree and comfortable life. Housing costs in Japanese cities are extremely high, therefore moving out as a single would certainly cause a drop in living standard.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Either works as a salaryman or as a “freeter” (freelancer)
Weekend	Plays pachinco
Seasonal/yearly	Unknown



Ramen Chef

DESCRIPTION

Ramen noodle is one of the most common fastfood types in Japan, popular among busy salaraymen whose time is a scarcity. People generally spend little time to cook themselves, therefore the food industry has specialized to reduce the time people spend on eating.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Cooks ramen
Weekend	Cooks ramen
Seasonal/yearly	Has his own ramen stand at street festivals



Rockabilly Performer

DESCRIPTION

Tokyo Rockabilly Club is a club for people obsessed with the 50's lifestyle. They reflect their fascination to the extreme with their clothes, hairstyle and dancemoves at their weekly performances at Yoyogi park. People with a special interest often takes it to the extreme.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Unknown
Weekend	50's dance performance in Yoyogi park.
Seasonal/yearly	Performs at retro rock festivals



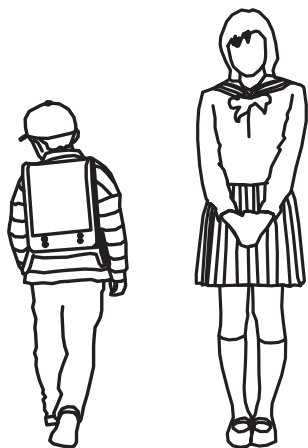
Salaryman

DESCRIPTION

The salaryman lives in the suburbs and spends 1-2 hours every day commuting to his workplace in Tokyo's business districts. He works at a corporate office and spends much time working. After work he often goes with his boss or co-workers for izakaya or karaoke.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Commutes, works
Weekend	Drinks with co-workers, sleeps at capsule hotel
Seasonal/yearly	One week vacation to all over Europe



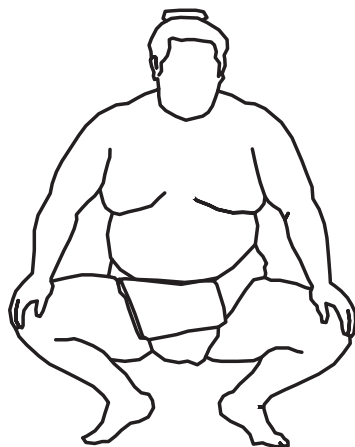
School Boy & Girl

DESCRIPTION

Japanese pupils have to wear a school uniform. Due to the high grade of security in Japanese cities, young children can travel safely alone on the metro network to their school. The playgrounds of elementary schools are used as evacuation zones in case of emergency.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Studies
Weekend	Reads comics and plays
Seasonal/yearly	Vacation with family



Sumo Wrestler

DESCRIPTION

It is not a common sight, but you will recognise a sumo wrestler when you see one. Most wrestlers are required to live in communal “sumo training stables” where all aspects of their daily lives, from meals to their manner of dress, are dictated by strict tradition.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Trains
Weekend	Trains, prepares for tournaments
Seasonal/yearly	Major tournament in Ryogoku, lasting for 15 days



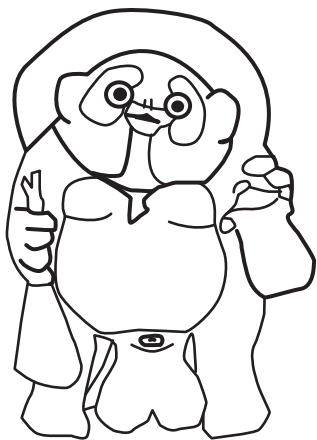
Too Tall Foreigner

DESCRIPTION

Loads of westerners are attracted to visit and live in Japan, but still they constitute a very small percentage of the overall population (0,6%) in a very homogenous country. But they usually stand out as taller than the average Japanese, and are easy to spot in the crowd.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Works as English teacher
Weekend	Makes trips to Tokyo's surrounds
Seasonal/yearly	Travels to Kyoto or Hokkaido



Tanuki

DESCRIPTION

A tanuki is a mythical creature that brings good luck to whoever touches it. Statues of tanuki are often found in private gardens and in front of residential houses and are therefore a common sight in the daily life.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Unknown
Weekend	Unknown
Seasonal/yearly	Unknown



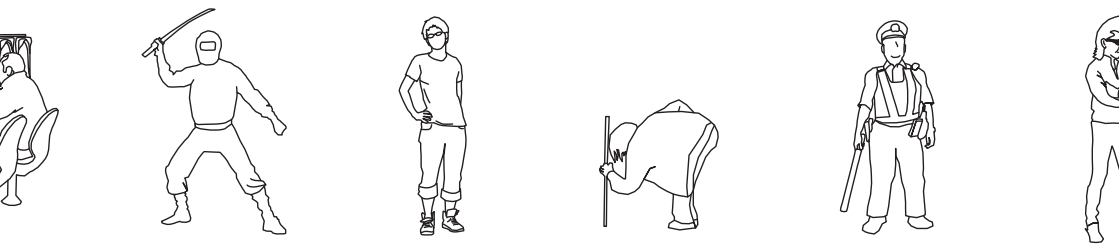
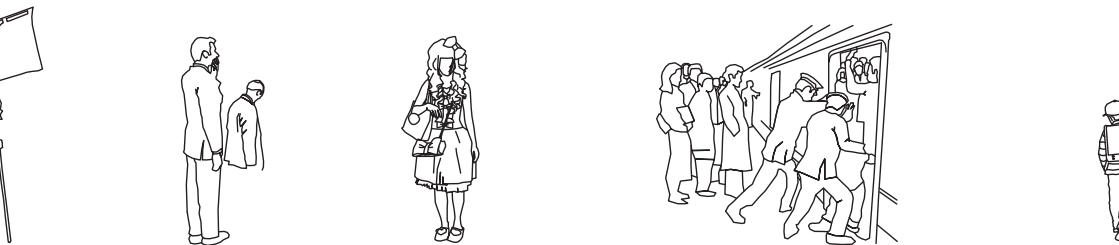
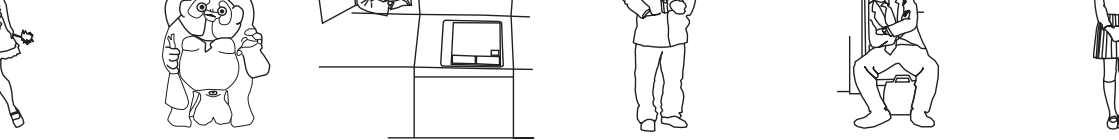
Train Crowd Pusher

DESCRIPTION

The train officers main task is to make sure that the trains keep their scheduled arrival and departures. Many foreigners believe that they push people onto to the train, but this only happens on special crowded events such as annual firework festivals.

ACTIVITIES

Daily:	Patrols the stations and guides the trains and people
Weekend	Unknown
Seasonal/yearly	Executes means of crowd control on the stations at seasonal festivals



Jostein Fardal
Tokyo | Hike-ability
Fall 2012

