PRIVATE BUYER PREPARATION GUIDE

# Your Tokyo Buyer Preparation Checklist

A practical checklist before viewing, applying, or buying property in Tokyo.

Designed for international buyers preparing for a private property consultation in English.

**NAOMI FUKUDA**

Licensed Real Estate Agent in Tokyo | English & Japanese Support

naomifukuda.com

## 01 How to Use This Checklist

This private preparation guide is designed to help international buyers clarify their goals before viewing, applying, or buying property in Tokyo. It is also intended to make your first consultation more focused and practical.

**Recommended use**

Complete the criteria sections before your consultation. The clearer your budget, preferred area, property type, and timeline are, the easier it becomes to identify realistic options and avoid unnecessary viewings.

## 02 Clarify Your Purchase Purpose

**Check all that apply:**

- □ Own residence
- □ Relocation to Japan
- □ Investment property
- □ Second home
- □ Long-term asset holding
- □ Renovation or value-up project
- □ Business use or company purchase
- □ Future rental income
- □ Not sure yet

**Questions to consider**

- Will you live in the property yourself?
- Will you rent it out?
- Are you buying for lifestyle, investment, relocation, or long-term asset protection?
- Do you need the property to be easy to resell in the future?
- Are you open to older buildings or renovation-ready properties?

**Why this matters**

Your purchase purpose affects area selection, property type, financing options, resale risk, and renovation strategy.

## 03 Budget and Funding Plan

Your purchase budget should include not only the property price, but also taxes, fees, registration costs, insurance, renovation, furniture, and moving costs.

### Basic budget information

☐ Target purchase budget

☐ Maximum purchase budget

☐ Estimated cash available

☐ Expected down payment

☐ Budget for purchase-related costs

☐ Budget for renovation, furniture, or moving

☐ Currency and location of funds

☐ Expected timing for fund transfer

### If using cash or financing

☐ Cash purchase: funds available and transfer timing

☐ Proof of funds, if requested

☐ Mortgage: Japan residence status

☐ Employment status and annual income

☐ Japan tax records, if applicable

☐ Existing loans or debts

☐ Mortgage pre-approval status

**Mortgage note**

Mortgage feasibility should usually be checked before serious viewings or purchase applications, especially when timing or seller conditions are important.

## 04 Buyer Profile and Documents

### Buyer profile

☐ Full legal name

☐ Nationality

☐ Current country of residence

☐ Japan residence status, if any

☐ Japanese address, if any

☐ Japan bank account

☐ Individual or company purchase

☐ Availability for contract and closing

### Documents to confirm

☐ Passport

☐ Residence card, if applicable

☐ Inkan certificate, if available

☐ Signature certificate or affidavit, if needed

☐ Proof of address

☐ Company documents, if buying through a company

☐ Proof of funds, if requested

☐ Mortgage pre-approval documents, if using financing

## 05 Property Criteria to Prepare

Before your consultation, prepare the criteria below. These are the practical details that help narrow down suitable Tokyo property options quickly.

- ☐ Target area
- ☐ Budget
- ☐ Property type: apartment, detached house, or both
- ☐ Preferred distance from the nearest station
- ☐ Total floor size in square meters
- ☐ Number of bedrooms needed
- ☐ Building age preference: built after 1982, or newer only
- ☐ Preferred unit floor for apartments: ground floor acceptable, or higher floor preferred
- ☐ Other requirements: pets, parking, large living room, storage, balcony, view, sunlight, etc.

**Japan-specific note**

In Japan, many buyers use the post-1981 earthquake resistance standard as one reference point when reviewing building age. Building age is important, but it should be considered together with management condition, repair history, and future maintenance plans.

### Must-have conditions

| |
|---|
| |
| |
| |

### Flexible conditions

| |
|---|
| |
| |
| |

## 06 Timeline and Decision Readiness

### Prepare

- ☐ When you want to purchase
- ☐ Whether you are currently in Japan
- ☐ When you can view properties
- ☐ Whether you can decide quickly
- ☐ Whether family or business partners need to approve
- ☐ Whether mortgage pre-approval is needed first
- ☐ Any relocation, investment, or tax-related deadline

### Questions to consider

- Are you ready to view within the next few weeks?
- Can you submit a purchase application quickly if a suitable property appears?
- Can you sign a contract within approximately one to two weeks after application if needed?
- Are your funds and documents ready?

## 07 Before Viewing Properties

- ☐ Purchase purpose is clear
- ☐ Budget range is realistic
- ☐ Funding plan is clear
- ☐ Mortgage feasibility has been checked, if relevant
- ☐ Preferred areas are prioritized
- ☐ Estimated purchase-related costs are understood
- ☐ Final decision maker is clear
- ☐ You understand popular properties may move quickly
- ☐ Basic ID and buyer information are ready
- ☐ Viewing schedule is realistic
- ☐ Key questions are prepared
- ☐ Non-negotiable criteria are clear

## 08 Before Purchase Application

- ☐ Property price
- ☐ Building age
- ☐ Property size
- ☐ Land ownership or leasehold status
- ☐ Monthly maintenance fee
- ☐ Monthly repair reserve fund
- ☐ Management condition
- ☐ Planned major repairs
- ☐ Renovation restrictions
- ☐ Pet or rental restrictions
- ☐ Seller's preferred timing
- ☐ Deposit amount
- ☐ Contract and closing dates
- ☐ Whether price negotiation is realistic
- ☐ Financing conditions acceptable to seller
- ☐ Documents and funds are ready

## 09 Questions to Discuss with Naomi

### Budget and financing

- Is my budget realistic for my preferred area?
- Should I consider cash purchase or financing?
- What purchase-related costs should I prepare for?
- Do I need mortgage pre-approval before viewing?

### Area and property type

- Which Tokyo areas fit my purpose?
- Should I prioritize convenience, yield, resale, lifestyle, or renovation potential?
- Is my desired property type realistic for my budget?

### Renovation and resale

- Is renovation a good strategy for my situation?
- Are there building or management restrictions I should check?
- What resale risks should I consider?
- Are older buildings suitable for my purpose?

### Process and next steps

- What should I prepare before viewing?
- What documents will I need?
- How quickly do I need to act if I find a suitable property?
- What is the best next step for my situation?

## 10 Buyer Preparation Summary

| | |
|---|---|
| **Purchase purpose** | |
| **Target budget** | |
| **Maximum budget** | |
| **Funding** | Cash / Mortgage / Not sure yet |
| **Preferred areas** | |
| **Timeline** | |
| **Main concerns** | |

# 11. Key Japanese Property Terms for International Buyers

Japanese property listings, contracts, and building materials often include local terms that do not translate neatly into English. These simplified explanations help you understand the terms before asking detailed questions or comparing properties.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Earthquake standards** | New earthquake resistance standards were introduced in Japan in 1981. Buildings designed under the newer standards are generally considered more desirable from a risk, financing, and resale perspective. Age alone is not enough; management condition, repair history, structure, and future maintenance plans should also be reviewed. |
| **Jo (= Tatami size)** | A jo is a traditional room-size measurement based on tatami mat size. It is often used for Japanese-style rooms. The exact size can vary by region or building, so treat it as an approximate room-size reference rather than an exact international measurement. |
| **Tsubo** | A tsubo is a traditional Japanese area measurement used for land, houses, and buildings. One tsubo is approximately 3.3 square meters. For example, 30 tsubo is approximately 99 square meters. |
| **Building coverage** | This refers to the maximum percentage of the land area that can be covered by the building footprint. For example, if land is 100 sqm and the coverage ratio is 60%, the building footprint may generally be up to 60 sqm, subject to other regulations. |
| **Floor area ratio** | This refers to the maximum total floor area that can be built in relation to the land area. For example, if land is 100 sqm and the floor area ratio is 200%, the total allowable floor area may generally be up to 200 sqm, subject to road width, zoning, and other restrictions. |

**Professional confirmation recommended**

These explanations are simplified for general buyer preparation. Actual building regulations, earthquake standards, usable floor area, redevelopment potential, and legal restrictions should be confirmed with the relevant professionals before making a purchase decision.