

Do you speak real English?

Adapting to London life and language

- **Introduction to Peter Bernstein and PS English**
- **Why start PS English?**
- **Adapting to doing business with Japanese people**
- **Adapting to London life – it’s not all bad!**
- **Problems adapting to London life**
 - **General cultural differences**
 - **Making friends**
 - **Customer services**
 - **Popular culture**
- **Learning real English**
 - **Differences between education systems**
 - **Fundamental language differences**
 - **Grammar**
 - **Exams**
 - **Accents**
- **Solutions**
 - **The wrong solutions**
 - **Learn “real English”**
 - **Adapting lifestyle to improve English**
- **Philosophy of PS English**

Adapting to British Lifestyle

a) Although in many ways British and Japanese character is similar (eg polite, reserved, stoical), there are major differences in the way we express ourselves. British

culture is more opinionated as we're taught to express individual views from an early stage in our education, not just follow received opinion. Therefore, do not be afraid to express your own views. No one will think the worse of you for doing it!

b) Do not expect the same level of service in UK shops etc as you get in Japan. (Exceptions, John Lewis, Marks and Spencer, some neighbourhood shops, Bond St) But do not interpret indifference as rudeness. Be forceful about getting what you want.

c) The same applies to service calls to your home. Late deliveries, failure to turn up on time etc. Can drive you mad but do not be afraid to complain-loudly.

d) Public transport does not have the reliability or punctuality of Japan. Grin and bear it. Or grumble to a British person, who will be happy to agree with you. The weather, or a grumble, are always good ways to start a conversation with strangers...

e) Prices in London are very high-especially rent, restaurants, and transport. A recent survey by banking and financial group UBS put London top for living costs, followed by New York and Oslo, with Tokyo fourth. Tips-buy an Oyster card: eat in neighbourhood restaurants, visit London's markets for bargains, hit the sales, etc.

f) But all the Museums are free except for special shows and there's a marvellous diversity. Plus London's parks are the best in the world. Visit your local Library for a list of local activities-eg visiting private gardens in summer, or special groups for kids. There's lots to do in London that is virtually free. 'Time Out' magazine will tell you everything that's on.

g) Londoners may seem to work short hours compared to Japan but actually work the longest hours in Europe. (1726 hrs compared to average 1687) But we also place high value on leisure time. So although we do overtime when it's necessary, we feel no compulsion to stay in the office late to impress the boss and there is no stigma attached to going home at the official time...

**COMMON GRAMMATICAL ERRORS MADE BY
JAPANESE SPEAKERS**

| | |
|--|---|
| I had a breakfast and then went out. We went to bar and had drink. I like listening to the music. I'm going to the Paris next week. | Articles |
| English newspaper is difficult to read. | Sing/plural |
| She have very little free-time at the moment. He don't go out very often. | 3rd person singular present simple |
| What will you do at the week-end? I will play tennis with my friends. | Future (will/going to/present continuous) |
| English people are drinking a lot of tea. | Present simple/present continuous |
| I like watching paintings in art galleries. | Verbs of perception |
| I'm exciting because I'm going to Paris tomorrow. I am always boring in that class. | Ing/Ed |
| You don't smoke, do you? Yes, I stopped last year. | Yes/No |
| I like going to shopping. I am going to abroad tomorrow. | Prepositions |

UNNATURAL “JAPANESE STYLE” SENTENCES

1. I am not in good condition
2. The location of my flat is very convenient
3. The film was a good experience for me
4. That meal was very delicious
5. My boss is very severe
6. I will pay for these drinks for everyone
7. The congestion in London is terrible
8. Christmas is a very enjoyable season
9. Cricket is not very familiar to me
10. You are looking very smart
11. \ I work hardly
12. This is the first time for me to visit England
13. The film was nice
14. I joined the party late
15. University students have a lot of time to play
16. I like to enjoy with my friends at the weekend
17. I mistake the first time
18. I had mistake the first time
19. I spend lots of time doing internet
20. I can't believe other people

Learning English outside the lesson

a) Try and watch British TV. News, sport, comedies and soaps can all help your English. Watch programmes, which match your interests, or have a Japanese angle. Or rewatch a movie that you already know in English. If you get it on DVD you can rerun sections you didn't understand the first time.

b) Read a newspaper. British newspapers vary in difficulty from 'The Sun which only uses about 10,000 words to serious papers like 'The Times' (maybe 50,000) The free 'Metro' paper is an easy read: the 'Evening Standard' isn't too difficult and will tell you about what's happening in London. Most Japanese students can read well, and knowing the news helps in conversations. Local newspapers are also very helpful in telling you what's happening in your neighbourhood.

c) Join a club, a class, or take part in an activity with British people. Whatever your interests, there is something in London to develop it. Sports clubs are particularly welcoming and golf and tennis are cheaper in London than Japan. Take a cooking course; go walking with the Ramblers' Association, learn about antiques, or whatever. Talking to British people is much easier if you share a common interest.

d) If you have a nice local pub, visit it. Most pubs are friendly places and people talk to strangers who live locally. You can drink coffee or soft drinks as well as alcohol. You can't normally take children under 16 into pubs, but many now have 'family rooms' and quite good food

e) Talk to neighbours in your block or street. You may make good friends on your doorstep.

UNNATURAL “JAPANESE STYLE” SENTENCES - “ANSWERS”

21. *I am not in good condition*
I don't feel well
22. *The location of my flat is very convenient*
My flat is very conveniently located
23. *The film was a good experience for me*
I really enjoyed the film
24. *That meal was very delicious*
That was delicious
25. *My boss is very severe*
My boss is very strict
26. *I will pay for these drinks for everyone*
It's my round
27. *The congestion in London is terrible*
The traffic in London is terrible
28. *Christmas is a very enjoyable season*
Christmas is a very enjoyable time of year
29. *Cricket is not very familiar to me*
I don't know much about cricket
30. *You are looking very smart*
You are looking very slim
31. \ *I work hardly*
I work hard
32. *This is the first time for me to visit England*
This is my first trip to England
33. *The film was nice*
The film was good/fantastic/wonderful
34. *I joined the party late*
I was late for the party
35. *University students have a lot of time to play*
University students have a lot of free time
36. *I like to enjoy with my friends at the weekend*
I like to spend time with my friends at the weekend
37. *I mistake the first time*
I was wrong the first time
38. *I had mistake the first time*
I made a mistake the first time
39. *I spend lots of time doing internet*
I spend lots of time surfing the net
40. *I can't believe other people*
I can't trust other people