

Japan Railway Journey Workbook

Self-guided Osaka, Kyoto & Nara and Tokyo railway tours, with room for your own discoveries.

Let the network introduce the city.

Ride a useful line, step out into an interesting neighbourhood and return by a route you understand. These city journeys bring together places to enjoy and transfers worth knowing. They are independent travel ideas, not guided departures or booking packages.

Osaka: two complementary days

Start with the Midosuji Line and central Osaka, then add Osaka Castle Park and a subway-to-JR connection.

Kyoto & Nara: two separate outings

Explore eastern Kyoto by rail, subway and walking. Give Nara its own day, with a simple return and enough time for the park and temples.

Tokyo: three flexible city days

Discover Ueno, Asakusa and Ginza, make sense of the Keiyo transfer, then enjoy Shinjuku and Shibuya. Keep airport travel as a separate planning decision.

Make the day your own

The order is a suggestion. Choose fewer stops, take a break, or split a circuit across two days. Stated durations include visits and walking, rather than promising a fixed train timetable.

Read the route before setting off; use current departure boards, station signs and staff instructions on the day. Bring a charged phone, a saved route and the right ticket. The tours work without live Fumi assistance, which is not yet available.

[Open the Railway Tours collection at FumiTours.com](https://fumitours.com)

Learn Osaka by riding.

First day: the Midosuji spine, neighbourhood streets and Osaka Station City.

Start: Hommachi, Osaka Metro; optional arrival from Kansai Airport or Rinku Town.

Finish: Hommachi, with each city day returning to the same base.

Allow: Two days, about 4-6 hours each including walks and breaks; add the airport arrival separately.

Lines: Osaka Metro Midosuji Line / Osaka Metro Chuo Line / JR West Osaka Loop Line / Optional Nankai Airport Line / Main Line

Shopping streets on the Midosuji spine

Hommachi > Shinsaibashi > Namba · Osaka Metro Midosuji Line

Begin at Hommachi and take a southbound train to Shinsaibashi. Follow signs to your chosen street exit, then enjoy a shopping-street walk.

Enjoy: Shinsaibashi shopping streets, the Namba district and the Dotonbori waterfront.

Useful transfer: Namba has separate Nankai, Osaka Metro, Kintetsu/Hanshin and JR stations. Follow your operator and line name rather than a Namba sign alone.

The great roof at Osaka Station

Metro Namba > Metro Umeda > walk to JR Osaka > Metro Umeda > Hommachi

Ride north on the Midosuji Line to Umeda. Leave the Metro gates and follow the signed connection to JR Osaka.

Enjoy: Osaka Station City and the surrounding shopping streets.

Useful transfer: Metro Umeda, JR Osaka and Hankyu Osaka-umeda are different stations in one large district. Allow time for the walk between them.

Ticket / IC card: A compatible transport IC card is convenient for the ordinary Metro, JR and Nankai rides. Use the same card to enter and leave each journey. Leaving the gates for sightseeing normally ends that ride; the next ride has a new fare. Compare any pass with the rides you actually plan.

Reservation: No seat reservation is normally needed for the listed city trains. Nankai Airport Express uses an ordinary fare; Rapi:t requires an additional limited-express ticket and a reserved seat.

[Full route and official sources at FumiTours.com](#)

[Osaka network guide](#)

[Kansai Airport arrival](#)

A park-side arrival.

Second day: Osaka Castle Park, a change to JR and a familiar way home.

A park-side arrival and a JR return

Hommachi > Morinomiya · Chuo Line; Morinomiya > JR Osaka · Osaka Loop Line; Metro Umeda > Hommachi · Midosuji Line

Take the Chuo Line east to Morinomiya and leave for a walk towards Osaka Castle Park. After the visit, find the separate JR gates and take an Osaka-bound Loop Line service via Kyobashi. At JR Osaka, follow signs back to Metro Umeda and return to Hommachi.

Enjoy: The park approach from Morinomiya. Reaching the castle keep adds a further walk and any visit inside depends on opening hours and admission.

Useful transfer: The Metro-to-JR connection at Morinomiya makes the operator change easy to recognise. Check the JR train destination and stops: a Loop Line train is not a promise that it will circle forever.

Walking and access: Expect changes of level at Namba, Morinomiya and the Osaka/Umeda complex. The lift route may use a different exit from the shortest stair route. Check current operator station maps and ask staff for the step-free connection. Castle grounds and the Umeda district can add substantial walking; shorten either stop when needed.

Luggage: Take a day bag for the city outings. For an arrival journey, keep luggage close and clear of doors. Leave larger bags with your accommodation or use an available locker before sightseeing.

Optional airport beginning

Kansai Airport > Rinku Town > Nankai Namba > Metro Namba > Hommachi

Use Rinku Town as a separate stop or continue towards the city. Nankai Airport Express is the simple ordinary-fare option; select a service calling at your station. At Nankai Namba, follow signs to Osaka Metro and the northbound Midosuji Line. Read the arrival guide before choosing between JR, Nankai and a reserved airport train.

Optional extension

Once the Midosuji route feels familiar, revisit Namba for dinner or karaoke. Check the last useful train back to your own accommodation before going out; a late return to Rinku Town is a different journey from a return to Hommachi.

[Full route and official sources at FumiTours.com](#)

[Osaka network guide](#)

[Kansai Airport arrival](#)

A rail day through Kyoto.

First outing: Higashiyama, Gion and a useful return by another railway.

Start: Hommachi in Osaka, or join at Kyoto Station.

Finish: Hommachi via Yodoyabashi on Day 1; via Osaka-Namba on Day 2. Kyoto-based travellers can return to Kyoto instead.

Allow: Two full outings, about 6-8 hours each from Kyoto; add the Osaka connections where used. Split Inari and Nara into separate days for a shorter walking programme.

Lines: Osaka Metro Midosuji Line / JR West Kyoto Line and Nara Line / Kyoto Subway Karasuma and Tozai lines / Keihan Main Line / Kintetsu Nara Line; optional Kyoto Line

A Kyoto arrival that reaches your neighbourhood

Hommachi > Metro Umeda > JR Osaka > Kyoto; Karasuma Line > Karasuma Oike; Tozai Line > Higashiyama

From Osaka, use the Midosuji Line and signed walk to JR Osaka, then a Kyoto-bound JR Kyoto Line service. At Kyoto Station, follow the Karasuma subway signs, change at Karasuma Oike and take the Tozai Line east to Higashiyama.

Enjoy: The station concourse and a compact Higashiyama walk.

Useful transfer: Karasuma Oike links Kyoto's two subway lines. At Kyoto Station, JR and the subway have different gates; allow walking and waiting time beyond the regional train ride.

Gion streets and a different railway home

Higashiyama / Gion walk > Keihan Gion-shijo > Yodoyabashi > Metro Hommachi

Let the walk lead towards Gion and the river, with time for lunch or a quiet break. Use a suitable Keihan service from Gion-shijo to Yodoyabashi and the Midosuji Line for the final ride.

Enjoy: Higashiyama lanes, the Gion area and the riverbank.

Useful transfer: The Keihan arrival is different from JR Kyoto Station. A return by another operator can bring you closer to the afternoon's final stop.

Ticket / IC card: Compatible transport IC cards are useful for the ordinary trains and Kyoto City Bus. Each separate ride and operator change must be handled at the correct gates. A JR pass does not automatically cover the subway, Keihan or Kintetsu. Choose a pass only after comparing its coverage with your planned rides.

Reservation: The listed ordinary JR rapid, subway and Keihan services do not require a reserved seat. On Kintetsu, distinguish ordinary express services from reserved limited express: a limited-express ticket is required in addition to the basic fare.

[Full route and official sources at FumiTours.com](#)

[Kyoto, buses and Nara guide](#)

[Osaka network guide](#)

Give Nara its own day.

Second outing: a short Inari visit, Nara by JR and a Kintetsu return.

The shrine beside the railway

JR Kyoto > JR Inari · JR Nara Line

Start at Kyoto Station and take a train calling at JR Inari for the Fushimi Inari shrine approach. Kyoto's current official guidance lists both local and rapid services calling here; confirm the selected train's stopping list on the day.

Enjoy: The shrine entrance and lower precinct.

Useful transfer: JR Inari and Keihan Fushimi-Inari are separate stations. If using Keihan instead, note that its limited-express trains do not stop at Fushimi-Inari.

Nara by JR, home by Kintetsu

JR Inari > JR Nara; town / park walk > Kintetsu-Nara > Osaka-Namba > Metro Namba > Himmachi

Choose a Nara-bound JR Nara Line service, making any change shown by the timetable. Walk through the city towards the park and leave time for a meal.

Enjoy: Nara's town streets and a chosen area of Nara Park.

Useful transfer: JR Nara and Kintetsu-Nara are different stations. The latter usually gives a shorter approach to the park. At Osaka-Namba, follow Osaka Metro signs for the Midosuji return.

Walking and access: Kyoto Station has several operators and levels. Consult the station maps for lifts before the transfer. Higashiyama lanes, shrine grounds and Nara Park include longer walks, slopes or uneven surfaces; reaching upper shrine paths adds many steps. A shrine approach, café and one park area can make a satisfying shorter day. Ask the operator about a specific step-free route rather than assuming the suggested walk is fully accessible.

Luggage: Keep these outings to a day bag. Kyoto sightseeing buses can be crowded and are poor places for a large suitcase. Locker availability is never guaranteed; leave bigger luggage at your base when possible.

Optional extension

Add a short bus segment only if it saves an awkward walk. Choose the route and direction from the current stop board. On ordinary Kyoto City Bus routes, board at the rear and pay when leaving at the front. EX100 and EX101 use front boarding, payment on entry and rear exit. Other companies can differ. Skip a crowded bus and keep the day rail-led if that is easier.

[Full route and official sources at FumiTours.com](#)

[Kyoto, buses and Nara guide](#)

[Osaka network guide](#)

Discover the city networks.

First outings: Tokyo Station, the Keiyo corridor, Ueno and Asakusa.

Start: Tokyo Station on Day 1; Shiomi or Hatchobori on Day 2; Tokyo Station on Day 3.

Finish: Tokyo Station or your own base. The optional airport journey finishes at the Haneda terminal named on your flight.

Allow: Three outings, about 4-6 hours each including visits and breaks; optional airport transfer on another suitable day.

Lines: JR East Keiyo Line, Chuo Rapid and Yamanote Line / Tokyo Metro Hibiya and Ginza lines / Toei Asakusa Line / Optional JR to Hamamatsucho and Tokyo Monorail

Tokyo Station, beyond the façade

Tokyo Station concourse > JR Keiyo platforms > Shiomi > Tokyo Station / Marunouchi

Begin with a clear starting point inside or outside Tokyo Station. Follow Keiyo Line signs to the more distant platforms and take a train stopping at Shiomi.

Enjoy: The Marunouchi station façade and the station neighbourhood.

Useful transfer: Treat the Keiyo corridor as a walk in its own right. Allow a comfortable margin rather than assuming all Tokyo Station platforms are adjacent.

Ueno and Asakusa by two Metro lines

Shiomi > Hatchobori · JR Keiyo; Hatchobori > Ueno · Hibiya Line; Ueno > Asakusa · Ginza Line

At Hatchobori, follow the connection from JR to the Hibiya Line and ride towards Ueno. Make time for the park or one museum before changing to the Ginza Line for Asakusa.

Enjoy: Ueno Park and a selected museum, then Asakusa's public streets and temple approach.

Useful transfer: At Hatchobori, JR and Metro are separate journeys. At Ueno, choose the signed Hibiya-to-Ginza connection and the Asakusa direction.

Ticket / IC card: Compatible transport IC cards make the separate urban rides convenient. The Tokyo Subway Ticket covers Tokyo Metro and Toei subway lines, but not the JR Keiyo, Chuo or Yamanote lines, or the Monorail. Compare the covered rides before buying a pass and keep the same card or device for entry and exit.

Reservation: No reserved seats are needed on the listed ordinary city trains or Tokyo Monorail. A booked Shinkansen arrival is separate from the city journey; do not assume its ticket or assigned IC card covers the next urban ride.

[Full route and official sources at FumiTours.com](#)

[Tokyo and Haneda guide](#)

[IC cards and station essentials](#)

Find your own Tokyo.

A Ginza return, then another day for Shinjuku and Shibuya.

A Toei return and a Ginza pause

Toei Asakusa > Higashi-ginza · Asakusa Line; Higashi-ginza > Hatchobori · Hibiya Line; Hatchobori > Shiomi · JR Keiyo

After Asakusa, find the Toei Asakusa Line entrance, which is separate from the Ginza Line station. Take a southbound service stopping at Higashi-ginza.

Enjoy: Asakusa and the Higashi-ginza / Ginza area.

Useful transfer: The Metro and Toei networks overlap, but have distinct lines and gates. Follow the line name and station code; at Higashi-ginza, follow the current Hibiya Line transfer signs.

Two major stations, two different city views

Tokyo > Shinjuku · JR Chuo Rapid; Shinjuku > Shibuya · JR Yamanote; then a route back to your base

Use a Chuo Rapid train from Tokyo to Shinjuku. Choose a street destination before leaving the gates, spend time in that neighbourhood and return to JR for a Yamanote service to Shibuya.

Enjoy: A chosen Shinjuku neighbourhood and the Shibuya station district.

Useful transfer: Check signs at each large station rather than following a familiar exit by habit. For a straightforward JR return, the Yamanote Line serves Tokyo too; compare it with a shorter route in the current planner.

Walking and access: Tokyo Station's Keiyo platforms are a substantial walk from many other lines. Lift routes can differ from the escalator route. Shinjuku and Shibuya have several operators, levels and exits; consult current maps and allow for works or diversions. For Asakusa, check the separate Metro and Toei street entrances. Staff can help plan a specific step-free connection; none of these walking loops is a guarantee of uninterrupted step-free access.

Luggage: Use a day bag for sightseeing. Tokyo Station's Keiyo corridor and large-station transfers are noticeably easier without a suitcase. Leave bigger bags at your base or an available locker; keep your bags clear of lift doors and train aisles.

Optional airport journey

Shiomi > Tokyo > Hamamatsucho · JR; Hamamatsucho > correct Haneda terminal · Tokyo Monorail

Use a suitable JR service from Tokyo to Hamamatsucho, then follow the separate Tokyo Monorail connection. Choose the terminal from the current airline ticket and airport guidance. Compare a Keiyo route from your actual accommodation as well. A hotel attached to Terminal 3 does not determine the departure terminal. Save airport exploration for a day without an imminent flight.

[Full route and official sources at FumiTours.com](#)

[Tokyo and Haneda guide](#)

[IC cards and station essentials](#)

A few things make it easier.

Ticket, stopping pattern, walking and a sensible return: the useful essentials.

Read the departure board

Match operator, line, direction and stopping pattern. A familiar colour or a district name is not enough. Current displays determine the platform.

Use the same IC card for entry and exit

IC cards work on participating urban networks, but not every train or geographic boundary. Check reserved-seat and limited-express supplements separately.

Treat the walk as part of the journey

Large stations can mean concourse walks, stairs and busy lifts. Use the operator station map for a step-free route where needed; allow extra time and ask for assistance if it is important.

Take a smaller bag when you can

Leave your main case at the hotel on a sightseeing day. Keep luggage out of aisles and doorways. For intercity travel, check the operator baggage rules before reserving.

Keep a simple return

Save the return route and last practical service. If the plan stops making sense, step aside, locate your station or street and ask staff with the destination and line name.

Protect the airport connection

Use the terminal on the current flight information, allow the station-to-check-in walk and follow the airline deadline. Choose a familiar route rather than adding sightseeing to a tight departure.

Diagrams and routes are selected suggestions, not operator maps or guaranteed timetables. Notes are optional; enjoy the journey first. Keep photographs to permitted public areas and respect other travellers.

A journey worth remembering.

A printable notes sheet for any railway day; write only what is useful to you.

City / date / weather / how the day felt

Start station and useful entrance / finish and useful exit

Operators / lines / train direction / ticket or IC card used

Places enjoyed / a good meal, walk or quiet place to pause

Useful transfer / clear sign / lift or walking route

Approximate walking, waiting and riding times

Something difficult or unexpected / what helped

A detail a route planner did not explain

Official source or staff advice to revisit

What I would do again / what I would change

Keep private tickets, booking references, health information and contact details out of a copy you intend to share.
