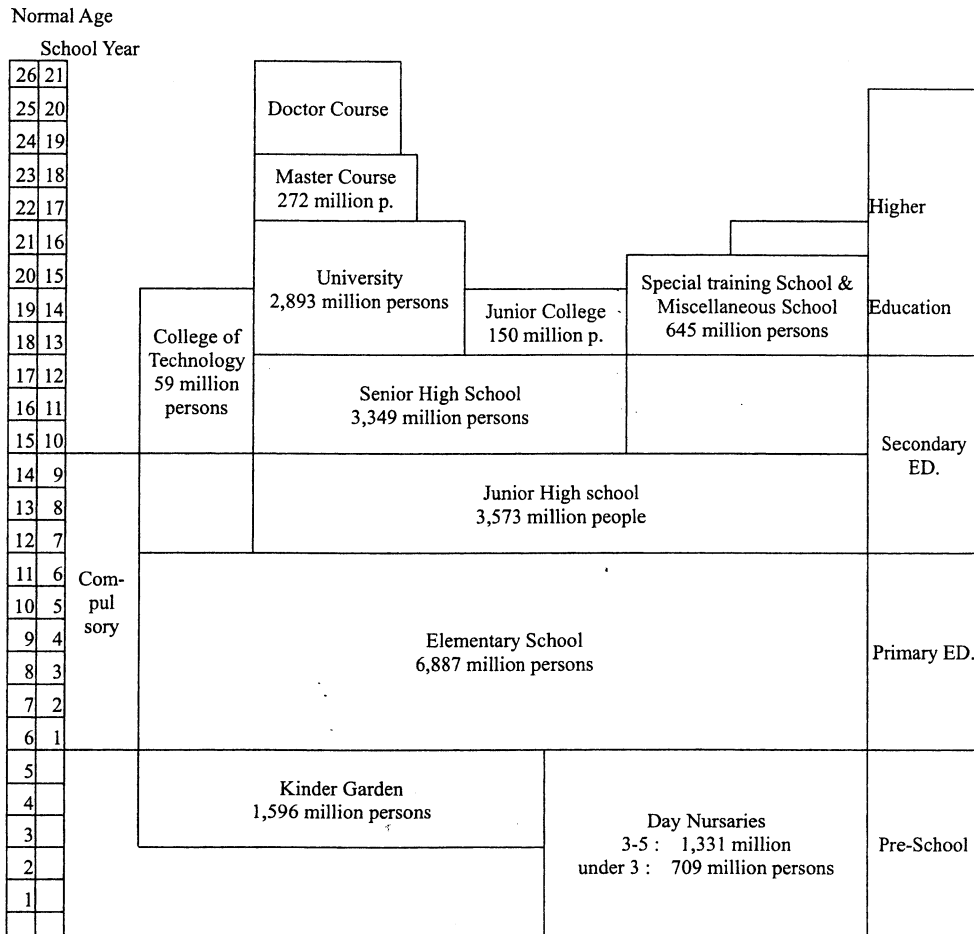


1 Japanese School Education System and Home Economics

1-1 The Framework of Formal School Education in Japan

The current Japanese education system was established after World War II with a big change. As shown in fig.1-1, there are kindergartens, elementary schools, lower secondary schools, upper secondary schools and other tertiary education such as universities. The state, local governments and private educational foundations can establish schools.

Fig. 1-1 Organization of the present school system



Note: Number is the peoples who study at the each school system in 2010

Table1-1 indicates the number and percentage of schools by type of establishment. At the compulsory school level, elementary and lower secondary schools have a larger number of local public schools, whereas at the elective school level, kindergarten, upper secondary schools and higher education institutions have a large number of private schools.

Table 1-1 Number and percentage of schools by the type of established body in 2011

	Total Number	Total %	National	Local Public	Private
Kinder Gardens	13,299	100.0%	0.4%	37.8%	61.9%
Elementary Schools	21,721	100.0%	0.3%	98.7%	1.0%
Lower Secondary Schools	10,751	100.0%	0.7%	92.2%	7.1%
Upper Secondary Schools	5,060	100.0%	0.3%	73.6%	26.1%
Special Education Schools	1,049	100.0%	4.3%	94.4%	1.3%
College of Technology	57	100.0%	89.5%	5.3%	5.3%
Junior Colleges	387	100.0%	0.0%	6.2%	93.8%
Universities	780	100.0%	11.0%	12.2%	76.8%
Specialized Training Colleges	3,266	100.0%	0.3%	6.1%	93.6%
Miscellaneous Schools	1,426	100.0%	0.0%	0.6%	99.4%

Sauce: School Basic Survey by Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture

There are two type of schools provided for children aged under 5: Kindergartens and Nurseries. Kindergartens fall under the school education and admit children aged 3 to 5. Nurseries come under the welfare system and aims to support child-care mainly for working parents. They admit children aged 0 to 5. Kindergartens will provide education and Nurseries will provide child-care. However, there is not a big difference between the two institutions regarding their activities for children aged 3 to 5. Fig. 1-1 shows 90% or more children aged 5 years old go to either a kindergarten or nursery and the number of children attending either institution is approximately the same.

At the compulsory education level, elementary schools enroll children aged 6 to 12 for 6 grades and lower secondary schools enroll children aged 12 to 15 for three grades. With both schools, nearly all children aged 6 to 15 enroll in school. There is basically one local public elementary school within the walking distance. In overcrowded districts such as Tokyo and Osaka, there are two or three classes for each grade, and 12 to 18 classes in one elementary school. There is one lower secondary school in each two

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to three elementary school districts.

The maximum number of students is 40 per class in public schools as prescribed by. Therefore, there will be two classes in case there are 41 or more students and there will be three classes in case there are 81 or more students. In contrast, there could be only one student at school in less populated areas. From 2011, the maximum number of students in the first grade of elementary school is 35 per class in public schools as prescribed by. The state and private schools enroll 40 students per class with entrance exams. The number of students and classes in these schools are relatively fixed. As of 2011, the average number of students per class throughout Japan was 24.9 in elementary schools. One teacher is assigned to each class and generally he/she will teach basic nine subjects, perhaps there are several teachers who teach particular subjects such as Music, Art and Home Economics. Recently, co-teaching system is tried in many schools. Principals and vice principals are in an administrative position. They are recruited from the ranks of teachers.

The average number of students per class throughout Japan was 29.2 in lower secondary school as of 2011 Upper secondary school level is not compulsory education. However, 90% or more students advance to this level. The vast majority of upper secondary schools are 3-year institutions. In terms of contents of education provided, upper secondary school courses are classified into two courses: general and specialized courses. Specialized courses include Industry, Agriculture and Home Economics. Students who wish to advance to higher education are enrolled in general courses by and large, however, the chance to enter higher educational institutions is fair to both sides.

In addition, there are also nationally funded 5-year upper secondary specialized training colleges. It is recognized by the Minister to rank with Junior colleges and Colleges of technology.

All upper secondary schools require applicants to take entrance exams and the accepted number of students is set at 40 students per class. The number of students and classes in upper secondary schools is relatively flat. Upper secondary schools are graded based upon the degree of difficulty of entrance exam. Recently, some low level schools are being consolidated for falling short of quota.

As for higher education institutions, there are colleges of technology, junior colleges, universities and graduate schools. Years of requirement vary by each Colleges of technology and various type of qualification associated to their career will be provided. Universities offer four-year courses leading to a bachelor's degree. Junior colleges offer two-year courses leading to title of associate. More than half of the

universities have set up graduate school offering advanced study in a variety of fields leading to master's and doctor's degrees. About 50% or more students who graduated from upper secondary schools advance to higher educational institutions.

The current enrollment ratio at higher educational institutions is higher than other countries. However, this was not the case 50 years ago. For instance, the enrollment ratio at upper secondary school was 39.7% in 1935 and was low as 5.8% for universities. The enrollment ratio at upper secondary school started increasing from 1920s and exceeded 80% in 1970. Higher educational institutions such as universities were developed around 1970.

Table 1-2 The enrollment and advancement ratio (Unit: Percentage)

	Kinderg arten	Compulsory education		Upper secondary education			Higher education		
		Elementary school	Lower secondary school	Except correspondence course			Except correspondence course		
				Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1950	8.9	99.64	99.2	42.5	48	36.7	30.3	34.6	17.2
1960	28.7	99.82	99.93	57.7	59.6	55.9	17.2	19.7	14.2
1970	53.8	99.83	99.89	82.1	81.6	82.7	24.2	25	23.5
1980	64.4	99.98	99.98	94.2	93.1	95.4	31.9	30.3	33.5
1990	64.0	99.99	99.99	94.4	93.2	95.6	30.5	23.8	37.2
2000	61.1	99.98	99.98	95.9	95	96.8	45.1	42.6	47.6
2010	56.2	99.96	99.97	98.0	97.8	98.3	54.3	52.8	56.0

Sauce: School Basic Survey by Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture

Table 1-3 Percentage distribution of educational background by age group in 2010

Years Old	Population	Education Career ended at: (%)			With no School Education
		Compulsory Education	Upper Secondary Education	Higher Education	
25~29	7,366,500	4.6%	30.4%	47.3%	0.0%
35~39	9,660,100	4.8%	37.0%	45.3%	0.1%
45~49	7,985,600	4.4%	44.8%	40.5%	0.1%
55~59	8,600,000	12.8%	48.6%	29.3%	0.1%
65~69	8,177,300	28.7%	45.5%	15.3%	0.1%
75~79	5,937,600	40.2%	39.5%	10.0%	0.2%
85~	3,882,000	52.4%	27.8%	6.3%	0.6%

Sauce: national census 2010

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Regarding the education level, 5% of people aged 25 to 29 years old completed compulsory education and more than 30% advanced to upper secondary education. This reflects the high enrollment ratio over 90% at upper secondary school, and about 50% enrollment ratio at higher educational institutions. In contrast, half of the people in age group over 85 years old finished only compulsory education, and stayed at 28% for upper secondary education. This explains the low enrollment ratio in higher educational institutions during the 1960s.

1-2 The Function of the Central Council for Education

The Japanese education system is highly centralized and administered under the law authorized by the Minister. The Prime minister launches several councils and these councils decide the outline of curriculum based on their discussion. So far there was the Central Council for Education, *Kyouiku Katei Shingikai* (The Educational Curriculum Council) and several other educational councils. These councils were reformed and integrated into three councils: The Central Council for Education, The *Kyokash-you Toshō Kentei Chousa Shingika* (Textbook Authorization Research Council), *Daigaku Secchi Gakkou Houjin Shingikai* (The Council for University Chartering and School Juridical Person). The Central Council for Education has five sub-divisions such as *Kyouiku Seido Bunkakai* (Education System Sub-division) and *Shotou Chutou Kyouiku Bunkakai* (the Subdivision on Elementary and Lower Secondary Education).

The Central Council for Education held its first meeting in 1953. The Council has submitted Council reports each decade and has been reviewing the education system. The most recent report by the Central Council for Education was titled "Redesigning Compulsory Education" was submitted in 2005. It discussed the purpose to cultivate "Tashikana gakuryoku (solid academic capabilities)", and make the propose increasing study hours. The Central Council for Education launched a new curriculum for elementary and lower secondary schools in 2008 (Table1-4 and Table1-5) and for upper secondary schools in 2010 (Table1-6). It was enforced in 2011 for elementary, and in 2012 for lower secondary schools, in 2013 for upper secondary schools.

1-3 The Curriculum Standards for each School

At elementary schools, all subjects are taught as shown Table 1-4. One unit school hour is 45 minutes and the total school hour, and hour per subject is in the Table. The official school year for elementary students lasts for 35 weeks. A typical school day starts at 8:30 a.m. and has four periods in the morning and one or two periods in the

afternoon. School will end around 3:50 p.m. With five classes per day for 35 weeks, there will be 875 classes in a year. With the Course of Study which was revised in 1999 and became effective in 2002, unit hour for each subject was reduced in order to implement the comprehensive five-day school week system and allocate time for "Period for Integrated Study".

The previous Course of Study stipulated 70 periods for Home Economics for both 5th and 6th graders. It became 60 periods for the 5th grade and 55 periods for the 6th grade in new Course of Study. 60 periods or 55 periods a year is a halfway number, since one period per week will not be enough to finish the annual curriculum, but two periods a week would be too much. This complicated time management is also required to other subjects under the new Course of Study.

Table 1-4 Subjects in elementary school and total school unit hours in a year

Grade		I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Subjects	Japanese	306	315	245	245	175	175
	Social Studies	—	—	70	90	100	105
	Mathematics	136	175	175	175	175	175
	Science	—	—	90	105	105	105
	Life Environment Studies	102	105	—	—	—	—
	Music	68	70	60	60	50	50
	Art & Hand-craft	68	70	60	60	50	50
	Homemaking	—	—	—	—	60	55
Physical education	102	105	105	105	90	90	
Moral Education	34	35	35	35	35	35	
Foreign Language Activities					35	35	
Period for Integrate Study			70	70	70	70	
Special Activities	34	35	35	35	35	35	
Total		850	910	945	980	980	980

Note: One unit school hour is a class period of 45 minutes

Table 1-5 Subjects in lower secondary school and total school hours in a year

Grade		I	II	III
Subjects	Japanese	140	105	105
	Social Studies	105	105	140
	Mathematics	140	105	140
	Science	105	140	140
	Music	45	35	35
	Fine Art	45	35	35
	Health & Physical education	105	105	105
	Industrial Art & Homemaking	70	70	35
	Foreign Language	140	140	140
Moral Education	35	35	35	
Period for Integrate Study	50	70	70	
Special Activities	35	35	35	
Total		1015	1015	1015

Note: 1. One unit school hour is a class period of 50 minutes

2. Special Activities use for Homeroom activity.

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At lower secondary schools the subjects shown in Table 1-5 are taught. One period is longer than in elementary school, 50 minutes.

Home Economics in lower secondary schools is taught as “Industries Arts and Homemaking”. “Industries Arts and Homemaking” is a subject with covers two areas: Industries Arts and Home Economics. It is required to acquire two separate teachers’ license for Industries Arts and Home Economics respectively. In many cases, two teachers are in charge and halve the time.

The 1988 Course of Study provided 70 periods to “Industries Arts and Homemaking” for first and second grade and, 70 to 105 periods for third grade. It became 70 periods for first and second grade and 35 periods for third grade in the 1998, 2008 Course of Study. Most subjects’ hours increased in the 2008 Course of Study, but Home Economics study hours had not increased.

For upper secondary school there are General and Specialized courses. Table 1-6 shows subjects taught at General course. Students need to acquire more than two credits from each subject and more than 70 credits in total for graduation. To qualify for a credit, students must participate one period per week for 35 weeks, and acquire the contents based on the Course of Study. There is no national unified graduation exam, therefore, teachers make the decision of approval for the credit. The academic level differ by each upper secondary school, therefore, credit qualification is judged by the relative academic level within the school and the attendance of classes.

In the Course of Study reissued in 1992, Home Economics became a mandatory subject for both boys and girls. Students are required to select a course among “General Home Economics”, “Home Life Techniques” and “General Home Life”. Each course was assigned for four credits. It became “Basic Home Economics” (2 credits), “General Home Economics” (4 credits), and “Home Life Techniques” (4 credits) in the Course of Study reissued in 1998. In the Course of Study reissued in 2008, subjects’ name changed “Home Life Techniques” to “Design for Living”.

Students are allowed to choose among these three subjects. In fact, it is difficult for teachers to response to the selective course system, since schools often have only one Home Economics teacher. In addition, there is less variety in Home Economics. It is often the case that schools decide the course without asking students’ will. For example, 50% schools selected General Home Economics and 40% schools chose Basic Home Economics in 2003. Now, more than 70% schools selected “Basic Home Economics” (2credits) in 2010, and study hours of Home Economics become smaller.

Table 1-6 General education subjects in upper secondary school and number of general credit of 2008 Course of Study

Area	Subjects	Credits	Area	Subjects	Credits
Japanese Language	Contemporary Japanese Language	4	Physical Education	Physical Education	7~8
	Expression	3		Health	2
	Japanese Language Classics A	4	Art	Music I	2
	Classics B	2		Music II	2
Geography and History	World History A	4		Music III	2
	World History B	2		Fine Art I	2
	Japanese History A	4		Fine Art II	2
	Japanese History B	2		Fine Art III	2
	Geography A	4		Craft Production I	2
	Geography B	2		Craft Production II	2
Civics	Contemporary Society	2		Craft Production III	2
	Ethics	2		Calligraphy I	2
	Politics and Economy	2	Calligraphy II	2	
Mathematics	Mathematics I	3	Calligraphy III	2	
	Mathematics II	4	Foreign Language	Basic English Communication	2
	Mathematics III	3		English Communication I	3
	Mathematics A	2		English Communication II	4
	Mathematics B	2		English Communication III	4
	Application of Mathematics	2		English Expression I	2
	Science	Science and Our Daily Life		2	English Expression II
Basic Physics		2		English Expression III	2
Advanced Physics		4	English Conversation	2	
Basic Chemistry		2	Home Economics	Basic Home Economics	2
Advanced Chemistry		4		Integrated Home Economics	4
Basic Biology		2		Design for Living	4
Advanced Biology		4		Information	Information Study of Participating Community
E Basic arth Science		2	Information Study by Scientific Approach		2
Advanced Earth Science		4	The Period for Integrated Studies		3~6
Science Project Study		1			

Note: 35 School hours of lesson per school year are counted as one credit.
One school hour lasts 50 minutes

For Specialized courses there are Agriculture, Business, Marine Products Industry, Nursing and Home Economics as shown in Table 1-7.

As of 2008, 72.3% of students belonged to General course and 27.7% of students belonged to specialized courses. The number of students in specialized courses is declining from 41.7% in 1960 to 27.7% in 2008. Companies tend not value the specialized skills they have learned into practice, thus students do not have much of an advantage. This is why the tendency to advance to higher educational institutions such as universities and junior college is growing stronger.

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Table 1-7 High School Students by the kinds of course (persons, percentage)

Year	Total	General	Agri- culture	Industry	Com- merce	Fishery	Home Economics	Nursing	Others	Compre hensive Studies	
1960	3,225,945P	100.0	58.3	6.7	10	16.5	0.5	7.8	...	0.2	...
1980	4,616,339P.	100.0	68.2	3.8	10.3	12.5	0.4	3.5	0.6	0.7	...
2000	4,157,269P.	100.0	73.3	2.8	8.8	8.5	0.3	1.7	0.5	2.5	1.7
2008	3,358,711P.	100.0	72.3	2.6	8.1	6.8	0.3	1.4	0.4	3.4	4.7
Women's Rate of All (%)	49.3	50.6	45.8	9.6	65.0	23.8	88.2	94.3	57.9	59.0	

In 1960, there was a relatively large population of students in Business courses followed by Agriculture courses. Industry courses had the second largest population in 1980. More recently, the newly established courses, such as Nursing and Comprehensive Studies are very popular. Students who specialized in Home Economics were only 1.4% of total students in 2008, and among them 88.2% were female.

As you can see, Home Economics is taught in both General courses and Specialized courses. However, the Specialized course has much more wider variety. For example, *Seikatsu Sangyo Kiso* (Basic Life Industry), *Kadai Kenkyu* (Research Project), *Seikatsu Sangyo Joho Kiso* (Basic Life Industry Information), *Shohi Seikatsu* (Consumer Living), *Kodomo no Hattatsu to Hoiku* (Child Development and Care), *Jido Bunka* (Child Culture), *Seikatsuu to Fukushi* (Living and Welfare), *Ribingu Dezain* (Living Design), *Fukushoku Bunka* (Fashion Culture), *Fasshon dezain Zoukei Kiso* (Basic Fashion and Formative Design), *Fukushoku Shugei* (Fashion Craft), *Shoku Dezain* (Food Design), *Shoku Bunka* (Food Culture), *Chouri* (Cooking), *Eiyo* (Nutrition), *Shokuhin* (Food), *Shokuhin Eisei* (Food Hygiene), *Koshu Eisei* (Public Hygiene).

1-4 The Curriculum Standards of Home Economics

The emphasis of the revised 1997 Course of Study was put on the promotion of cooperative society of both sexes and response to the aging society with declining birth rate. This indicates a new role of Home Economics was raised to meet these issues in modern life. The contents of Home Economics in the Course of Study are addressed in the next chapter.

The Course of Study indicates the contents to be taught for each subject and teachers have the obligation to comply with the Course of Study. It also has the

function of keeping a certain standard of learning. However, the binding nature leads to less flexibility on side of teachers to create various educational activities.

The Course of Study is a very short guideline with few pages explaining the teaching content and methods. Therefore it is supplemented by the Commentary of the Course of Study published by Minister of Education. Before the course of Study was revised in 1992, it was called "The Guideline" for elementary and lower secondary school, and now became to be known as "Commentary". The Commentary of the Course of Study is regarded as a reference without binding forces. However, it is generally understood that this Commentary prescribes the content to be taught for Home.

1-5 Textbooks

Before World War II, the Government designated textbooks. After World War II, the statutory textbook system was abolished and the Textbook Authorization and Research Council system was introduced. The system intends to develop better textbooks by open competition. Textbooks are written and edited by private publishers and the Minister screens and approves them in accordance with the Courses of Study and the Standards for Textbook Authorization. There are two publishers that produce Home Economics textbooks for elementary and lower secondary education, and eight publishers for upper secondary education. There is no big difference among them as a result of the screening system.

The Textbook Authorization and Research Council also refer to The Commentary of the Course of Study when screening. In this regard, the Commentary of the Course of Study has substantial binding forces.

Four textbooks of upper-secondary-school Home Economics were not authorized in 1996. According to the press reporting, the textbooks that highlighted the phenomena of diversification of family and personalized family were rejected. The Course of Study revised in 1999 included these topics as the challenges for today, so the new textbooks referring to these topics were authorized.