



Renting an apartment in Japan is a unique experience. Familiarize yourself with the following terminology to avoid unnecessary confusion when securing your accommodations.

Kanri-hi/Kyouei-hi | 管理費/共営費 (= maintenance fee)

A mandatory monthly fee paid with the rent for the maintenance of communal areas of the property. This amount may be consolidated with the rent, thus indistinguishable from the rent itself. The newer and more prestigious a property, the higher the *kyouei-hi* is likely to be. It is usually equivalent to 5 to 10% of the rent.

Chuukai-ryou/Chuukai-tesuu-ryou | 仲介料/仲介手数料 (= real estate agent's fee)

A onetime fee paid to the real estate agent during contract signing. The amount can vary, but is commonly around one full month's rent depending on the property and the agency. Some real estate agents may forgo this requirement.

Hoshou-gaisha | 保証会社 (= guarantor company)

A third-party company which can act as a guarantor in a lease agreement. A fee equivalent to one full month's rent is typical. It is not uncommon for landlords to request would-be tenants to sign up with a guarantor company even when they can provide a *hoshou-nin*. On the other hand, some landlords may forgo this requirement.

Hoshou-nin | 保証人 (= guarantor/co-signer)

Mandatory to most lease agreements, a guarantor usually needs to be a Japanese citizen currently living and working in the country. This individual assumes responsibility for any outstanding fees in the event the tenant is incapable of paying.

Koushin-ryou | 更新料 (= renewal fee)

An amount paid to the landlord at the time of contract renewal should the tenant wish to continue living at the property. It is usually worth one full month's rent and is similar in concept to *rei-kin*. Rental contracts are usually one or two years in duration. This requirement is common to more sought after locations and properties, particularly in the Kanto region and Kyoto, but not in the Kansai region.

Rei-kin | 礼金 (= "key money")

A onetime, non-refundable payment to the landlord at the time of contract signing as a token of gratitude. Common to popular neighborhoods and properties, the amount is usually equivalent to one full month's rent, if not more. An increasing number of landlords are forgoing this requirement.

Shiki-kin/Hoshou-kin | 敷金/保証金 (= deposit)

A refundable amount, usually assessed in multiples of the monthly rent, paid to the landlord at the time of contract signing. This amount will be returned after vacating the property, often in full unless there are outstanding bills (rent or utilities) or significant damage. Exactly when this amount will be returned to the tenant should be stipulated during contract signing. An increasing number of landlords are forgoing this requirement.

Shiki-biki/Kaiyaku-biki | 敷引き/解約引き

A predetermined amount to be deducted from the *shiki-kin* when vacating regardless of outstanding bills or the condition of the property. It is agreed upon in advance during contract signing and is almost exclusively a Kansai phenomenon.

Chin-ryou/Ya-chin | 賃料/家賃 (= rent)

Monthly rent paid in advance for the following month. Rent is usually due by the end of the month, but some landlords require that rent is paid by the 25th of each month. Payment is usually done via bank transfer.
