

Trends in Japan

Pop Culture

Discover manga, anime, J-pop, and much more in this section showcasing the latest pop culture phenomena to capture the imagination of Japan's young people.

Web Japan <http://web-japan.org/>
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Come to Manga Country: Japan

The Real-World Settings for Japanese Comics



Toaru Majutsu no Index (C)KAZUMA KAMACHI / ASCII MEDIA WORKS / PROJECT-INDEX



Today, growing numbers of anime and manga feature specific locations and real buildings in detail, making them popular pilgrimage spots for fans.



Toaru Kagaku no Railgun (C)KAZUMA KAMACHI / MOTOI FUYUKAWA / ASCII MEDIA WORKS / PROJECT-RAILGUN



Tokyo Godfathers (C)2003 Satoshi-Kon_Mad House / Tokyo Godfathers Committee.

Japanese Creativity Brings Objects to Life as Cartoon Characters

The tradition of giving human characteristics to animals and other objects has played a leading role in the development of the manga aesthetic. Today, the personification phenomenon has entered the mainstream of Japanese culture. Cute, humanlike characters have become a vital part of popular culture and a key element in corporate and government public relations.



Chôjû-giga (Scrolls of Frolicking Animals) In the collection of Kosanji Temple. Picture supplied by Kyoto National Museum



Anpanman (C)Yanase Takashi / froebel-kan, TMS, NTV



Miracle Train (C)Miracle Train Project / MTC



Nekodarake (C)Kimuchi Yokoyama / Kodansha



Aoharu Tetsudo (C)Aoharu / Mediafactory



Tetsujin 28-go (C)Hikari Production

The Creation of Manga

The Japanese System That Keeps the Hits Coming



In a meeting with the editor.
(C)Okubo Keizo

Japan's manga culture has legions of fans around the world. One thing overseas readers often want to know is: Why Japan? What is it about the Japanese system that has enabled it to produce one high-quality hit after another? We take a look behind the scenes at some of the factors that have made Japanese manga an artistic genre with the diversity and depth to stand alongside novels and movies.



A team of five assistants gets to work on a manga drawn by Kumagai Kyoko (shown in the back of the picture). (C)Okubo Keizo



An assistant works on a fan, drawing from life to ensure absolute accuracy. (C)Okubo Keizo



Manga artist Kumagai Kyoko at work.
(C)Okubo Keizo



The characters are an extremely important factor in any manga, and are drawn by the artist in person. (C)Okubo Keizo

Japan's Social Manga Networks

Picture-Sharing Sites Attract Millions of the World's Amateur Artists

Behind Japan's rich manga culture is a long history of drawing as a hobby among young people. The latest twist on this culture is a range of hugely popular social networking services that allow people to post their own manga on the Internet.



The Piapro top page.



The pixiv top page.



A work posted to pixiv by "vania600."



A work by "k2pudding," "recreating" an image of Hatsune Miku posted to Piapro.



A work by "Akino," "recreating" an image of Kagamine Rin/Len posted to Piapro.