Topic Page: **Tokyo**

**Definition:** **Tokyo** from *Collins English Dictionary*

1 the capital of Japan, a port on SE Honshu on **Tokyo Bay** (an inlet of the Pacific): part of the largest conurbation in the world (the Tokyo-Yokohama metropolitan area) of over 35 million people; major industrial centre and the chief cultural centre of Japan. Pop (city proper): 8 025 538 (2002 est)

Summary Article: **Tokyo**

*From The Columbia Encyclopedia*

(tō‘kēō), city (1990 pop. 8,163,573), capital of Japan and of Tokyo prefecture, E central Honshu, at the head of Tokyo Bay. The Tokyo-Yokohama metropolitan area is the world's most populous metropolitan area, with over 28,000,000 people. Tokyo proper consists of an urban area divided into wards, a county area with farms and mountain villages, and the Izu Islands stretching to the S of Tokyo Bay. Tokyo prefecture (1990 pop. 11,854,987), is governed by a popularly elected governor and assembly. The wards and other subsidiary units of the city have their own assemblies.

The city of Tokyo is the administrative, financial, educational, and cultural center of Japan and a major industrial hub surrounded by numerous suburban manufacturing complexes. Tokyo is also one of the world's most important cities in terms of economic power and influence, and it serves as the corporate and communications hub for the E Pacific Rim. Frequent rebuilding in the wake of disasters has made Tokyo one of the most modern cities on the globe. Because space is so precious, it is also one of the most crowded and expensive cities in the world.

**Economy**

In accordance with the city's world position, Tokyo's economy has shifted to put much more emphasis on financial services and banking. It is also an important wholesale center. Among the diverse industries of Tokyo are the manufacture of electronic apparatus, transport equipment, automobiles, cameras and optical goods, furniture, textiles, and a wide variety of consumer items, as well as publishing and printing.

The city, which lies on the Kanto plain, is intersected by the Sumida River and has an extensive network of canals. Yokohama is its seaport, but there is a large constructed port at the mouth of the Sumida, through which such items as electrical products, cameras, and automobiles are exported. The deepening of Tokyo's harbor and the development of storage facilities have gradually lessened the city's dependence on Yokohama. Land reclamation projects in Tokyo Bay have led to waste disposal islands, additional port functions, and even new residential developments.

Tokyo has an outstanding subway system, and the world's first public monorail line runs between downtown and Haneda international airport. Narita International is Tokyo's main airport. The transportation system also includes the Shinkansen, whose “bullet trains” connect Tokyo with Osaka and other cities.

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Landmarks and Institutions

Landmarks include the Hie Shrine; the temples of Sengakuji, Gokokuji, and Sensoji; and the Korakuen, a 17th-century landscape garden. The Ginza is Tokyo's shopping and entertainment center; the Marunouchi quarter is the business center. Other developments, which include railway stations, office buildings, shops, and stores, have been constructed in Shinjuku, Shibashi, Shibuya, Ikebukuro, and other places. The Sky Tree, the highest (2,080 ft/634 m) self-supported structure of its type in the world, was completed in 2012. The architecturally acclaimed International Forum, combining exhibition and performance spaces, opened in 1997.

One of the world's foremost educational centers, Tokyo has over 100 universities and colleges, including Keio-Gijuku Univ. (est. 1867); Tokyo Univ., formerly Tokyo Imperial Univ. (1869); Rikkyo or St. Paul's Univ. (1883); Waseda Univ. (1882); and Tokyo Women's College (1900). There are numerous museums and more than 200 parks and gardens. Tokyo was the site of the 1964 summer Olympic games, and in 2013 it was selected as the site for the 2020 summer games.

History

Archaeological evidence indicates that the site of Tokyo was inhabited by Stone Age tribes. The present city was founded in the 12th cent. as the village of Edo (also Yedo or Yeddo) [estuary]. A local warlord, Edo Taro Shigenada (whose family, according to tradition, probably took the name Edo from their place of residence) built a fort there. In 1456–57 Ota Dokan, ruler of the Kanto region under the Japanese shogunate, constructed a castle at Edo.

The castle passed in 1590 to leyasu Tokugawa, founder of the Tokugawa line of shoguns, who made Edo the capital of a province and, after formally assuming the title of shogun in 1603, the capital of the shogunate. The imperial capital, however, remained at Kyoto. In Tokugawa times, the shogun's palace, encircled by the residences of the daimyos [feudal barons], samurai, and merchants, dominated the city's life. The urban population was increased by the shogun's retainers and by the large retinues of the daimyos, who were obliged to divide their time between their regional power centers and the capital.

Although the city prospered as a commercial and cultural center, it later declined as the shogunate weakened. On Apr. 11, 1868, the last Tokugawa shogun surrendered Edo Castle to the imperial forces. The emperor, restored to power, made Edo his capital, renaming the city Tokyo [eastern capital] as distinguished from Kyoto, since then often called Saikyo [western capital]. The castle then became the royal palace.

The 1923 earthquake and fire destroyed nearly half the densely populated city and took more than 150,000 lives. The rebuilt city included wide streets, designed to serve as firebreaks. Heavy Allied bombing during World War II devastated half of Tokyo, destroyed or damaged many famous landmarks, and ruined nearly all of the city's industrial plant. The American firebombing of Mar. 10, 1945, alone killed 80,000 to 100,000 people. The Meiji shrine (still the most popular in Japan), which was dedicated to Emperor Meiji and his consort, was badly damaged but has been restored. Left entirely intact were the imperial palace grounds and the surrounding area where the embassies, the diet building, and the newest office buildings stand; this area is the administrative center of the city.

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