

## Shoes

You already know that Japanese families do not wear their shoes in the house. This is to keep the house clean. Also, culturally, there is a division between the "inside" world of the family and the "outside" world of work, shopping, etc. The entrance of the home is where you leave the outside behind and relax with your family. You have been invited to be a part of that inside group. This is more special than you may know. Some Japanese families only invite family and very close friends into their home.

You will see that unlike some American houses, most Japanese homes have a formal entry, with a step up into the rest of the house. Usually there is a shoe cupboard (called a getabako GEH TAW BAW KO) or shelf just inside the front door, or a place along the wall where shoes are lined up. When you come into the house, remove your shoes and put them away. If you are

