

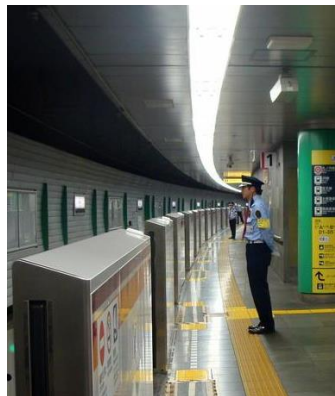
JAPAN: Fukuoka

July 2, 2016



According to Japan National Tourism Organization, there are approximately 5.52 million vending machines in Japan generating sales of almost 6.95 trillion yen. Of course I had seen vending machines before, but what surprised me was seeing so many of them absolutely everywhere. Most offer cold drinks such as green tea, iced coffee, lemonade, or water. They are very easy to use and fast making them convenient for everyone.

On escalators, all the people that are not in a rush stand on the left side. It does not matter if you were previously talking to the person next to you; once you reach the escalator, you are expected to be in one line only. This allows for people who are in a hurry to walk up the escalator on the right side without a problem. I like that trains are always on time. Train stations usually have the time of the next 2 trains. On every occasion that I have taken the train, it has been exactly on time, never late. Also, I noticed that in the underground mall at the Tenjin stations between the Nanakuma and the Kuko subway lines, there is fast paced music playing. Psychologically, I believe this makes people walk and keep moving at the speed of the music.



I noticed that everywhere throughout the city there is a thick yellow line with texture on all sidewalks, train stations and even the university campus. At first, I thought that it was to separate and organize the left pedestrian traffic from the right but I didn't see everybody following this rule. I asked my Japanese friend about it

to see if I was right and this was not the case. In fact, the lines are placed there for the blind. People who are able to transport themselves all around the city by following the texture as they walk. If the textures are lines, then they can follow it straight. If they are dots, then it is to prepare to turn left, right, or to enter the train. The same evening I was on my way back from the university and I was able to see firsthand how a blind person used the system. Everyone moved out of the way without hesitation and she was able to walk without a problem. She was even walking faster than I was!