

# 3. Apparel

## 1. Definition of Category

Knit and woven cloth garments.

HS Numbers	Commodity
6101 to 6114	Knit wear
6201 to 6211	Woven wear

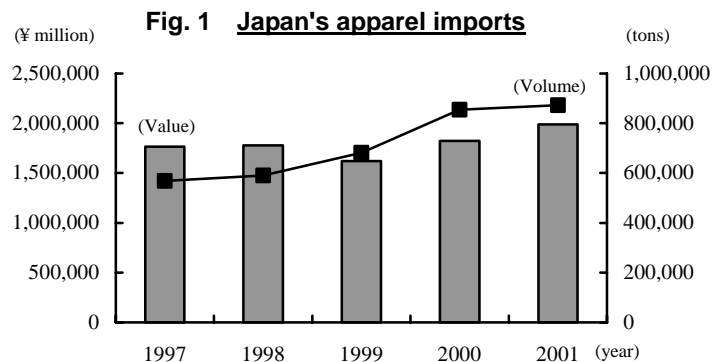
*Note: The HS Numbers above do not include socks and baby socks, gloves, brassieres, handkerchiefs, shawls or neckties, and other fashion accessories.*

## 2. Import Trends

### (1) Recent Trends in Apparel Imports

Domestic production of apparel has declined since 1992 on both a value and volume basis. The reasons are the slump in the market, combined with the fundamental shift to offshore production on the part of Japanese apparel makers to cut production costs. There has been a clear shift away from the Republic of Korea and Taiwan toward China as a base for production and a source of imports. As China's productive capability has increased markedly through improved stitching technology combined with the relative ease of obtaining raw materials and labor resources, apparel imports from China has soared.

In 1997, however, against the background of the yen's sharp fall in value and a plunge in private consumption, imports experienced their first decline since the Plaza Agreement in the fall of 1985. Apparel imports recovered shortly, and total apparel imports in 2001 came to 872,744 tons (up 2.1% from the previous year), and ¥1.99 billion (up 9.1%) in value.



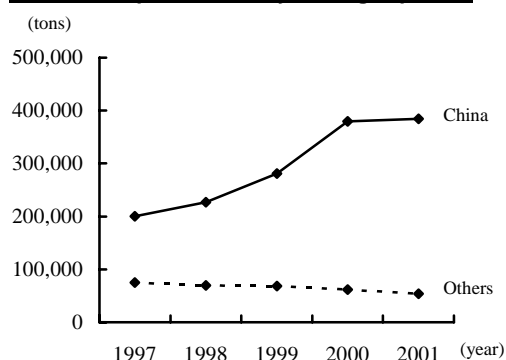
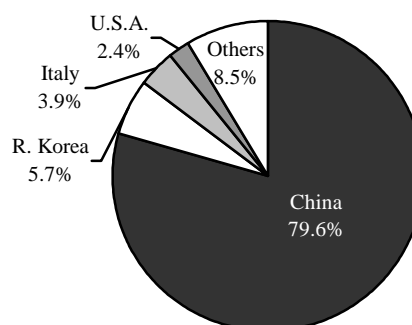
	1997		1998		1999		2000		2001	
	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value
Knit wear	275,396	770,665	296,953	783,104	349,540	719,293	441,413	808,612	438,037	853,171
Woven wear	293,029	995,394	293,029	995,394	331,989	902,634	413,529	1,013,980	434,706	1,135,825
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>568,425</b>	<b>1,766,058</b>	<b>589,981</b>	<b>1,778,498</b>	<b>681,529</b>	<b>1,621,928</b>	<b>854,942</b>	<b>1,822,592</b>	<b>872,744</b>	<b>1,988,996</b>

Units: tons, ¥ million

Source: Japan Exports and Imports

### (2) Imports by Place of Origin

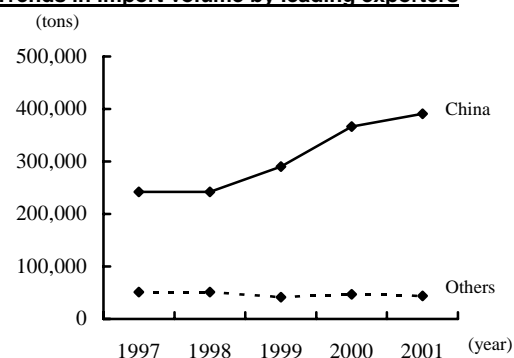
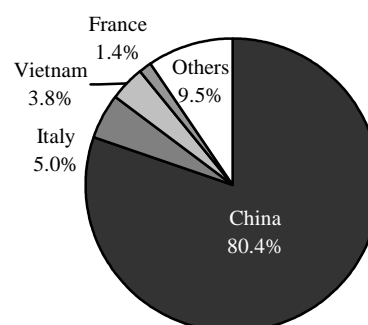
China has an overwhelmingly lead as an exporter of apparel to Japan, accounting for 79.6% in knit wear and 80.4% in woven wear on a value basis in 2001. On a volume basis, China has much higher share with 87.7% and 89.9% respectively. Not only having leading Japanese makers shifted much of their production to China, but also European and American makers have outsourced production to factories in China in order to lower prices and to shorten delivery times. Some of the output is being shipped directly to Japan. Recently, imports from the Republic of Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong have fallen, while imports from Vietnam, Indonesia, and other ASEAN countries have not been in a position to compete with China. In 2001, China is the only exporter nation of apparel to Japan that has seen its exports substantially grow. Imports from Italy, other EU member countries, and the United States have together a market share of less than 10%, but many upscale brands are either produced under license in Japan or shipped directly from factories in other Asian countries. Accordingly, these products have an impact in the Japanese market disproportionate to their numbers.

**Fig. 2 Principal exporters of knit wear to Japan****Trends in import volume by leading exporters****Shares of knit wear imports in 2001 (value basis)**

	1997	1998	1999	2000		2001			
	Volume	Volume	Volume	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value
China	200,290	227,063	280,899	379,564	620,455	384,088	87.7%	678,873	79.6%
R. Korea	27,125	31,600	33,093	28,936	61,377	25,475	5.8%	48,439	5.7%
Vietnam	7,929	7,065	7,081	6,239	12,179	5,216	1.2%	11,724	1.4%
Thailand	6,589	6,187	5,864	5,187	11,247	5,124	1.2%	11,901	1.4%
U.S.A.	11,359	7,478	7,277	6,729	23,999	4,720	1.1%	20,103	2.4%
Others	22,104	17,559	15,326	14,758	79,355	13,414	3.1%	82,131	9.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>275,396</b>	<b>296,953</b>	<b>349,540</b>	<b>441,413</b>	<b>808,612</b>	<b>438,037</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>853,171</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
(E U)	5,060	4,133	3,283	3,133	46,116	2,910	0.7%	49,083	5.8%

Units: tons, ¥ million

Source: Japan Exports and Imports

**Fig. 3 Principal exporters of woven wear to Japan****Trends in import volume by leading exporters****Shares of woven wear imports in 2001 (value basis)**

	1997	1998	1999	2000		2001			
	Volume	Volume	Volume	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value
China	242,040	242,040	290,334	366,642	798,302	390,805	89.9%	912,752	80.4%
Vietnam	11,397	11,397	9,706	14,599	41,739	13,809	3.2%	42,753	3.8%
Indonesia	7,684	7,684	5,686	6,353	13,626	6,252	1.4%	14,565	1.3%
India	3,341	3,341	3,375	4,298	9,841	4,000	0.9%	9,967	0.9%
Thailand	4,289	4,289	3,603	3,990	10,387	3,580	0.8%	10,095	0.9%
Others	24,278	24,278	19,285	17,647	140,085	16,260	3.7%	145,692	12.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>293,029</b>	<b>293,029</b>	<b>331,989</b>	<b>413,529</b>	<b>1,013,980</b>	<b>434,706</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,135,825</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
(E U)	5,710	5,710	4,759	4,300	76,419	4,285	1.0%	86,293	7.6%

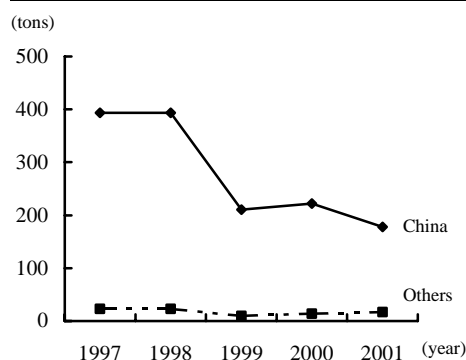
Units: tons, ¥ million

Source: Japan Exports and Imports

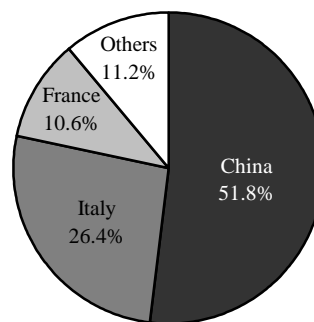
On a value basis, Italy and France have a fairly sizable share of the market for women's silk blouses, and these nations registered better results in 2001 than the year before, as indicated below.

**Fig. 4 Principal exporters of silk wear to Japan**

**Trends in import volume by leading exporters**



**Shares of silk wear imports in 2001 (value basis)**



	1997	1998	1999	2000		2001			
	Volume	Volume	Volume	Volume	Value	Volume		Value	
China	393	393	211	222	1,925	178	81.4%	1,958	51.8%
Italy	23	23	10	14	703	17	7.9%	997	26.4%
Thailand	2	2	2	4	24	4	1.9%	42	1.1%
France	7	7	2	4	289	4	1.9%	399	10.6%
India	1	1	1	3	31	4	1.7%	49	1.3%
Others	15	15	11	8	319	11	5.1%	333	8.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>3,292</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>3,778</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
(E U)	32	32	13	19	1,070	23	10.4%	1,478	39.1%

Units: tons, ¥ million

Source: Japan Exports and Imports

HS No. 6206.10-100, 210, 220 (blouses, shirt-blouses, open shirts and similar shirts of silk)

### (3) Imports' Market Share in Japan

While domestic production declined year-by-year, apparel imports have soared. Imports accounted for 70.7% of the market on a value basis in 2000. In many categories, imports' share on a volume basis already is over 80%. Now imports from China dominate the mass-market segment of the apparel market in Japan. In the distribution channel, these imports are treated the as same as products physically made in Japan.

**Fig. 5 Imports' share in the Japanese market**

		1997	1998	1999	2000
Knit wear	Domestic production	415,062	381,422	314,742	280,585
	Exports	8,706	8,645	9,146	10,549
	Imports	770,412	782,895	719,019	808,410
	Domestic market total	1,176,768	1,155,672	1,024,614	1,078,446
	Imports' share	65.5%	67.7%	70.2%	75.0%
Woven wear	Domestic production	660,404	585,595	484,036	502,190
	Exports	17,759	15,204	14,291	15,337
	Imports	995,394	995,394	902,634	1,013,980
	Domestic market total	1,638,039	1,565,785	1,372,379	1,500,833
	Imports' share	60.8%	63.6%	65.8%	67.6%
TOTAL	Domestic production	1,075,466	967,017	798,778	782,775
	Exports	26,465	23,849	23,437	25,886
	Imports	1,765,806	1,778,289	1,621,653	1,822,390
	Domestic market total	2,814,806	2,721,457	2,396,994	2,579,279
	Imports' share	62.7%	65.3%	67.7%	70.7%

Units: ¥ million

Source: Statistics of Textile, Japan Exports and Imports

### 3. Key Considerations related to Importing

#### (1) Regulations and Procedural Requirements at the Time of Importation

There is no system restricting the import of apparel. Apparel may be freely imported. But apparel using special fur or leather even for partial decoration, may be subject to the restrictions of the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Law under terms of Washington Convention (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, so-called CITES). Accordingly, it is preferable when importing apparel using special fur or leather to list the scientific name on the invoice, even if the fur or leather indisputably came from a species not covered by the Convention. Japanese-style apparel accessories made from silk originated in or shipped from China, the Republic of Korea, and Taiwan is subject to prior confirmation requirements. For more information, please contact the Trade Licensing Division, Trade and Economic Cooperation Bureau, Ministry of Economic, Trade and Industry.

The Customs Tariff Law prohibits the importation of items that infringe trademarks, design rights and other intellectual property rights. These include fake brand-name goods that are copies of well-known foreign brands, as well as designs that copy the products of famous designers. Such products will be intercepted at customs in Japan, and ordered confiscated or destroyed.

#### (2) Regulations and Procedural Requirements at the Time of Sale

The sale of apparel is subject to provisions of the Household Goods Quality Labeling Law, the Law for Control of Household Products Containing Harmful Substances, and the Act Against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representations. In addition, containers and packaging may be subject to provisions of the Containers and Packaging Recycling Law and the Law for Promotion of Effective Utilization of Resources. For more detailed information about the subject, scope, labeling method, etc., please consult the competent government agencies listed below.

##### 1) Household Goods Quality Labeling Law

When selling apparel, it is subject to labeling requirements imposed by the Household Goods Quality Labeling Law. (see 4. Labeling)

##### 2) The Law for Control of Household Products Containing Harmful Substances

The Law established content standards substances present in textile products that may cause damage to the skin (including formalin and dieldrin). Textile products with a formalin content of 75 ppm or greater may not be sold in Japan. This requirement also applies to imported products.

##### 3) Act Against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representations

The Act establishes country of origin label standards so that consumers will not make a Japanese-made products for a foreign-made products, and so they can readily identify the country of origin. Products with vague, confusing or misleading labeling regarding the country of origin may not be imported. The place of origin is regarded as the country where work was performed to fundamentally transform an item into the product as it is. In the case of knitted articles, the country of origin is regarded as the place of knitting, while for woven articles the country of origin is regarded as the place of weaving.

#### (3) Competent Agencies

- Household Goods Quality Labeling Law  
Consumer Affairs Policy Division, Consumer Affairs Department, Commerce and Information Policy Bureau,  
Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry  
TEL: 03-3501-1511 <http://www.meti.go.jp>
- Law for Control of Household Products Containing Harmful Substances  
Safety Division, Pharmaceutical and Medical Safety Bureau, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare  
TEL: 03-5253-1111 <http://www.mhlw.go.jp>
- Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Law (Washington Convention)  
Trade Licensing Division, Trade and Economic Cooperation Bureau, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry  
TEL: 03-3501-1511 <http://www.meti.go.jp>
- Customs Tariff Law  
Compensation and Operation Division, Customs and Tariff Bureau, Ministry of Finance  
TEL: 03-3581-4111 <http://www.mof.go.jp>
- Act Against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representations  
Consumer Related Trade Division, Trade Practices Department, Fair Trade Commission of Japan  
TEL: 03-3581-5471 <http://www.jftc.go.jp>

- Containers and Packaging Recycling Law / Law for Promotion of Effective Utilization of Resources  
Recycling Promotion Division, Industrial Science and Technology Policy and Environment Bureau,  
Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry

TEL: 03-3501-1511

<http://www.meti.go.jp>

Recycling Promotion Division, Waste Management and Recycling Department, Ministry of the Environment

TEL: 03-3581-3351

<http://www.env.go.jp>

## 4. Labeling


### (1) Legally Required Labeling

#### 1) Household Goods Quality Labeling Law

The Household Goods Quality Labeling Law sets labeling requirements for textile products. Apparel must be labeled with the following information:

- Composition of fiber  
The fiber used for the product must be indicated using the designated terminology. Further, the ratio of each fiber used in the product must be indicated by percentage to show the mixture.
- Home washing and other methods of handling  
The method of home washing and other suitable handling must be indicated using handling marks prescribed in JIS L 0217 (Labeling Marks for Handling of Textile Products and Other Labeling Methods).
- Water repellency  
Apparel such as raincoats given special coatings must be labeled to indicate water repellency.
- Indication of type of leather for products partially using leather  
Apparel partially using leather or synthetic leather must be labeled to indicate the type of leather in accordance with the provisions on quality labeling of miscellaneous industrial products under the Household Goods Quality Labeling Law.
- Labeler  
The name and address or telephone number of the entity responsible for the labeling must be indicated.

#### Example label for apparel

Composition	Wool	80%
	Nylon	20%
		
Name of labeler		
Place to contact (address or telephone number)		

#### 2) Act Against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representations

Apparel is subject to country of origin labeling requirements imposed by the Act Against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representations.

#### 3) Law for Promotion of Effective Utilization of Resources

When paper or plastic is used as a packaging material for wrapping of individual product items, or for labels, tags, external packaging or elsewhere, a material identifier mark must be displayed with information where the material is used.

< Example >



External packaging



Tag

**(2) Voluntary Labeling Based on Provisions of Law**

<Labeling of Size under the Japan Industrial Standardization Law (JIS Law)>

The Industrial Standardization Law (JIS Law) defines size-labeling standards compliant with standards of the International Standards Organization (ISO). For more information, contact:

- Japanese Standards Association TEL: 03-3583-8005 <http://www.jsa.or.jp>

**(3) Voluntary Industry Labeling**

Voluntary industry labeling on apparel includes the wool mark by the Woolmark Company, and the silk mark by the Japan Silk Association Inc.

Contacts:

- The Woolmark Company, Japan TEL: 03-5950-9371 <http://www.woolmark.gr.jp>
- The Japan Silk Association Inc., JSA TEL: 03-3215-1212 <http://ns1.silk-center.or.jp>

**5. Taxes****(1) Customs Duties**

Product categories, textile categories, surface processing, structure, and country of origin precisely define tariff rates on apparel.

<Preferential Tariff System>

In order to apply for preferential tariff rates, the importer should submit a certificate of origin issued by the Customs or other issuing agency in the country of export (not required if the total value of the shipment is no greater than ¥200,000). For more details, please contact the Customs and Tariff Bureau, Ministry of Finance.

<Exceptional Measures under the Temporary Tariff Measures Law>

If fabric or other auxiliary material is exported from Japan and used as raw material to manufacture a woven apparel product (HS No. 62), then imported back to Japan within one year of the export permit date, the Temporary Tariff Measures Law provides for a reduction on applicable customs duties on the exported article. The reduction is equal to the price of the exported raw materials times the tariff rate for the imported product. To qualify for the reduction, a “Declaration of Confirmation of Processing or Assembly Export Cargo” form must be filed and be approved by the Customs at the time of export.

**Fig. 6 Customs duties on apparel**

HS No.	Description	Rate of Duty (%)			
		General	WTO	Preferential	Temporary
6101- 6114	Articles of apparel and clothing accessories, knitted or crocheted				
	1. Containing embroidery or lace, or figured	16.8%	12.1%	*Free	
	(1) Of wool or fine animal hair				
	(2) Of cotton				
	(3) Of man-made fibres				
	(4) Of other textile materials	16.8%	10.1%	*Free	
	2. Not containing embroidery or lace, or figured	14%	11.5%	*Free	
	(1) Of wool or fine animal hair				
	(2) Of cotton				
	(3) Of man-made fibres				
(4) Of other textile materials	14%	9.5%	*Free		
3 Some of shirts	11.2%	8.2%	*Free		
4 Some of blouses, sweat shirts	14%	10.1%	*Free		
5 Other articles of apparel	6.4%-16.8%	5.8%-12.1%	*Free		
6201- 6211	Articles of apparel and clothing accessories, knitted or crocheted				
	1 Containing fur skin	16%	12-14.2%	*Free	
	2 Some of shirts	9%	8.2%-(9.4%)		
	3 Other articles of apparel	7.8-11.2%	7.2-(10.8%)	*Free	

Note 1: “\*Free” in Preferential Rate is applicable only for Least Less Developed Countries.

Note 2: Refer to “Customs Tariff Schedules of Japan” (published by Japan Tariff Association) etc. for interpretation of tariff table.

**(2) Consumption Tax**

(CIF + Customs duty) x 5%

**6. Product Characteristics**

**(1) Comparisons with Japanese Products**

Previously, imported apparel could be divided into four broad categories based on a dominant salient characteristic.

- 1) Products with superior fashion appeal  
Products with superior appeal in terms of color, pattern, product quality, design and workmanship. Primarily from Europe and the United States.
- 2) Products made from raw materials difficult to obtain in Japan  
Examples: cashmere, angora, mohair and other less common types of wool.
- 3) Labor-intensive products  
Products requiring detailed handiwork that are produced in low-wage countries.
- 4) Traditional or hand crafted products  
Products, which come from a folk, craft or hand craft tradition. Today, however, garments in virtually every category are imported into Japan.

**(2) Characteristics by Producing Countries**

**Fig. 7 Classification and characteristics of products from different countries/regions**

Mass market items	China, ASEAN	Abundant materials available. Much consignment processing.
Medium quality items	China, South Korea, Hong Kong, ASEAN	Ability to meet demands of Japanese market of small sized lots, short delivery times, and large variety to certain extent. Prices competitive for quality.
High quality items	Western countries	Small sized lots, large variety of types of brand name good. Limited sales, fashion goods, and other expensive products.

- **China**  
China offers abundant supplies of raw materials, low wages and competitive prices, and these advantages have made it the leading supplier in almost all categories. In particular, in recent years, there has been remarkable growth due to the increase in consignment processing. China has already established a solid footing in the apparel market in Japan. In China, sub-material sectors have also grown, allowing Chinese manufacturers to source sub materials locally. Also, physical distribution related operations such as finished goods inspections and price tagging are increasingly being performed in China as well.
- **Republic of Korea**  
Because goods can be shipped in a day by ferry from Pusan to Shimonoseki in Western Japan, The Republic of Korea enjoys an advantage over other countries in terms of transport convenience. However, due to the recent strengthening of the won and higher wage rates, the price competitiveness of Korean apparel is diminishing, and its exports are shifting from mass-market items to mid-range items.
- **Taiwan**  
As Taiwan's industrial structure is being upgraded, it is shifting more and more into heavy industry and tertiary industries. Rising wages have undermined the competitiveness of its apparel exports.
- **Hong Kong**  
Hong Kong frequently takes pre-finished goods made in China and adds final finishing work. Most consists of medium and higher-class products such as knits and fashion products.

- **ASEAN Countries**

Since the middle of 1980s, Republic of Korea, Vietnam, Taiwan and other so-called NIEs declined as apparel exporters to Japan, while ASEAN countries such as Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines, stepped in to take their place. Despite the development of the industry, ASEAN products face fiercer competition from Chinese products. Recently, garment imports from Vietnam have shown remarkable growth. Although these countries still must resolve certain problems regarding raw material supplies, production technology and worker compensation, their exports to Japan are expected to grow further in the future.

- **EU Countries**

EU countries have the twin handicap of geographic distance from Japan and higher wage scales than Japan's Asian neighbors. Nevertheless, Europe exerts a greater influence over the apparel market in Japan. European apparel wins praise for its superior use of color, and tends to use more subtle combinations of primary colors than Japanese products. From the late 1980s onward, most European name brands have become manufactured in Japan under license rather than imported.

- **United States**

Imports of garments from the United States began growing remarkably in the late 1980s, making the country one of the most important suppliers in the Japanese market. Mainly casual garments and fashionable garments are imported from the U.S., which is also strong in cotton garments.

## 7. Domestic Distribution System and Business Practices

### (1) Domestic Market Conditions

In the post-bubble era, Japan's apparel market has seen so-called "price destruction" and prices are lower overall. The shift of production to China and other Asian countries has added momentum to this trend. Changes in the distribution system, including the rise of discount men's wear stores, have also contributed to lower prices.

As sales remain stagnant, the domestic apparel industry is working to respond to changing consumer needs and shorten the fashion product cycle through quick-response systems. In this environment, SPA (specialty retailer of private-label apparel) brands, in which production and sales are combined, are seeing sales growth. Originally introduced in Japan by foreign-affiliated companies, SPA brands have also been released by domestic manufacturers, who have to that end begun establishing their own networks of stores. At every stage of the production process – from planning and design through material procurement and physical production – apparel makers tend to select the people, materials and places that are best for the job at hand without regard to where they happen to be located. Apparel makers are going to create vertical networks that transcend existing industry boundaries by, for example, being involved in SPA businesses.

The apparel and fashion field clearly demonstrates the trend toward consumer selectivity and focus in the current environment consumer spending. Low-cost, high-quality casual wear made in China have attracted overwhelming consumer support. At the same time, expensive upscale brands such as Hermes have seen their sales in Japan grow steadily from year to year. The market is showing a pronounced tendency toward polarization. The losers have been products in the middle price ranges with few distinguishing features.

### (2) Distribution Channels

Japanese apparel makers design and develop their own products, oversee a number of production subcontractors, and manufacture and market products under their own brands. Nearly all of these apparel makers also function as wholesalers, selling products directly to retailers. Larger makers even have their own boutiques within department stores, and some also operate outlet stores.

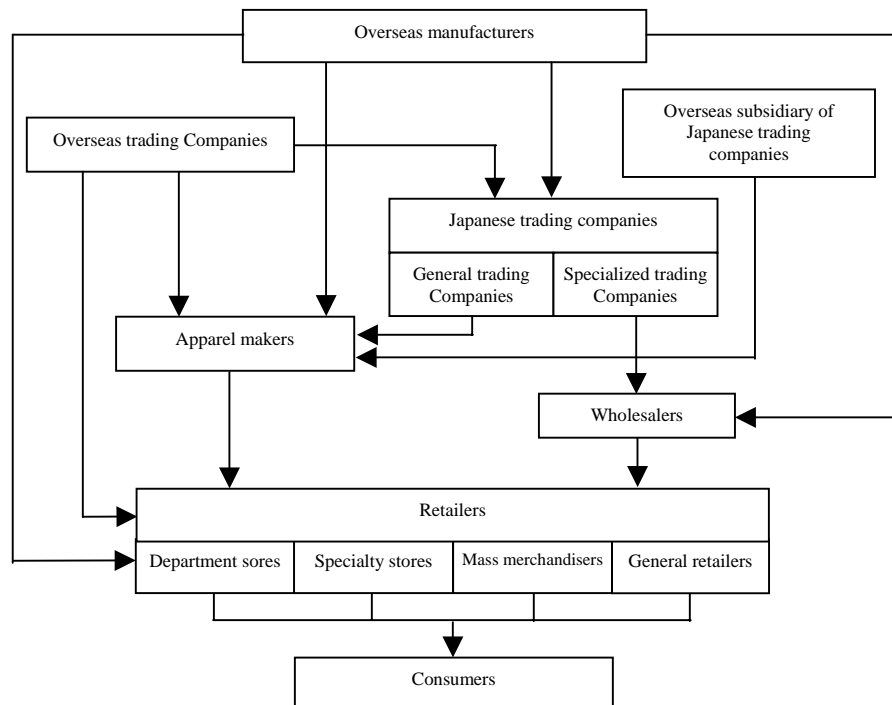
As stated earlier, about 90% of all imports from China and Southeast Asia considered of "development imports" under Japanese companies' direction. Recently this category has come to include not only underwear but also various types of practical outerwear as well. Offshore production occurs not only in China and Southeast Asia, where producers are looking to take advantage of cheap labor supplies, but also in places such as Italy, where producers hope to make use of a highly developed fashion sense and the technical skills of designers and workers.

Imported apparel from the West usually passes from the home country manufacturer to either a general trading company or a specialized trading company, and then to a wholesaler, a retailer, and finally to the consumer. Sometimes a trading company based in the country of origin handles the merchandise.



In that case the merchandise may be distributed either through a Japanese trading company or directly to a Japanese apparel maker or retailer. In more and more cases imports are being handled by local subsidiaries of Japanese trading companies in the country of origin. In such cases the merchandise may be distributed either directly to a Japanese apparel maker or through the parent trading company in Japan. Some larger wholesalers and retailers do business directly with overseas manufacturers.

**Fig. 8 Distribution channels for imported apparel**



**(3) Key Considerations for entering the Japanese Market**

Japan has a mature apparel market, and simply offering low prices does not guarantee success. Makers have to establish a brand identity. Products that offer what Japanese consumers are looking for in materials, technical skill and styling will be accepted and will fare well in competition with other imports. Prospective importers should bear the following points in mind:

- **Delivery schedules**  
Special attention should go to seasonal goods and fashion merchandise, especially when produced in lands without four distinct seasons. It takes time to assemble raw materials, acquire accessory items and ship the finished merchandise. Sometimes the merchandise ends up getting delivered after the sales season is already past. Many foreign producers need to have a sense of importance about meeting delivery schedules.
- **Production lots**  
Because apparel production in other countries has historically been for export to Europe and the United States, production lots have always been large. This practice does not match up well with the preference of the Japanese market for small-lot orders, multiple product types and short-term production cycles. Prospective exporters should closely examine whether they have the capacity to adjust to these marketplace demands.
- **Quality control standards**  
Many products can pass inspection in their home countries but sometimes fail inspection in Japan. European and American quality standards emphasize external appearance rather than the minute details of workmanship. But Japanese consumers tend to demand perfection in the products they buy, and they judge products harshly for their flaws even if those flaws in no way take away from their utility. (Consumers are very finicky about flaws in the fabric and about stitching seam workmanship.)

Silk handkerchiefs, scarves, and neckties are not subject to any legal regulation at the time of importation. However, some of silk items may be subject to import approval and prior confirmation requirements of the Import Trade Control Order under the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Law.

## 8. After-Sales Service

The retail outlet responds to complaints about problems with workmanship or color deterioration. Sometimes problems occur with the care and handling of direct imports from countries with different life styles and customs. Consumers need to be warned of the possibility of such problems.

## 9. Related Product Categories

- Leather products (HS No. 4203) and fur skin products (HS No. 4303)

Please refer to the “II-1 Fur and Fur Products” and “II-2 Leatherwear” sections in this guidebook for information about import procedures and the regulatory environment.

- Silk fabric, silk bed lines and accessory items for traditional Japanese-style dresses

Products originating in or shipped from China, the Republic of Korea or Taiwan are subject to prior confirmation under the Import Trade Control Order. Imports of silk fabrics from certain countries of origin require import approval. Prospective importers of these products may contact the Trade Licensing Division, Trade and Economic Cooperation Bureau, Ministry of Economic, Trade and Industry.

## 10. Direct Imports by Individuals

Direct imports by individuals receive the same treatment as commercial imports, which is to say that they are unregulated. However, consumers should make sure when ordering from a catalog or some similar medium, what size, color and quality conventions are used, what are the terms of payment, and what are the terms for order cancellation and nonperformance.

## 11. Related Organizations

- |  |                   |   |
|--|-------------------|---|
| • The Japan Textiles Importers Association | TEL: 03-3270-0791 | <a href="http://www.jtia.or.jp">http://www.jtia.or.jp</a>               |
| • Japan Apparel Industry Council           | TEL: 03-5530-5481 | <a href="http://www.jaic.or.jp">http://www.jaic.or.jp</a>               |
| • The Japan Silk Association Inc           | TEL: 03-3215-1212 | <a href="http://ns1.silk-center.or.jp">http://ns1.silk-center.or.jp</a> |