



Furniture to Japan.

Trends and opportunities

The market

There are a great number of small manufacturers, with a few relatively large-scale manufacturers of furniture for household use, primarily made of timber. 'Sanchi' or regional production centres are formed in a number of regions, such as:

- ≠ Okawa (Fukuoka Prefecture)
- ≠ Fuchu (Hiroshima)
- ≠ Hida (Gifu)
- ≠ Asahikawa (Hokkaido)
- ≠ Shizuoka (Shizuoka)
- ≠ Tokushima (Tokushima)

On the contrary, a small number of major manufacturers dominate the office furniture sector, such as Okamura, Itoki and Kokuyo, who are all headquartered in Tokyo and Osaka.

There are a number of developments:

- ≠ Increased price competitiveness in what is an increasingly price-sensitive deflationary environment.
- ≠ More Japanese furniture manufacturers purchasing Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM) produced furniture from overseas companies to remain cost competitive.
- ≠ Greater number of Japanese furniture manufacturers are forming strategic alliances with overseas counterparts to complement existing product lines.

There is also increasing Japanese consumer and industry interest in legged furniture, such as dining-room tables, chairs, sofas, beds, and dining-room cupboards. Overseas manufacturers mainly produce legged furniture whereas domestic manufacturers mainly produce storage furniture.

The emergence of new players engaging in furniture imports, such as furniture wholesalers, furniture retail chains, large-scale furniture stores, and furniture manufacturers is also changing the furniture industry in Japan.

Industry organisations such as the [International Development Association of the Furniture Industry of Japan](#) expect furniture imports to keep increasing.

Opportunities

The best opportunities for Australian exporters of furniture to Japan are in **wooden and plastic furniture for domestic and office use**.

Competitive environment

Generally, Asian furniture manufacturers supply the low to mid-priced furniture, while Europeans and North Americans supply mid to high priced product.

Japan's furniture imports by major items are as follows:

Description	Australia's ranking	Top 5 supplying countries
Swivel seats, exc. Medical, dental or barber	14	Taiwan, China, USA, Germany, Malaysia
Seats, wooden frame, upholstered	29	Thailand, China, Italy, Malaysia, USA
Seats, wooden frame, covered with leather, etc	25	China, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam

Seats, metal frame, upholstered	22	China, Taiwan, Indonesia, Italy, Thailand
Seats, metal frame, covered with leather, etc.	30	China, Taiwan, Italy, Thailand, Denmark
Metal furniture, used in office	5	Malaysia, Taiwan, USA, China, Australia
Metal furniture, other	24	China, Taiwan, Malaysia, USA, Thailand
Wooden furniture, used in office	2	USA, Australia , Taiwan, China, Indonesia
Wooden furniture, used in kitchen	21	Thailand, Germany, China, USA, Vietnam
Wooden furniture, used in bedroom	26	Indonesia, China, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam
Wooden furniture, other	30	China, Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, Indonesia
Plastic furniture	20	China, USA, Taiwan, Italy, RO Korea
Furniture of rattan, marble and other materials	15	Indonesia, Italy, China, Taiwan, Vietnam

(Source: Japan Customs)

More information

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