



## Vintage & Antique Japanese Kimonos & Collectables

The largest selection available outside of Japan of women's, men's, children's & geisha's kimonos plus beautiful haori kimono jackets, obi, geta, zori and a varied array of Japanese art, dolls, textiles, Buddhist, Shinto and other Japanese items

# 和服

**wafuku** - noun: traditional Japanese clothing,  
written above in kanji

## Glossary of Japanese Terms

**Handy Tip** - you can search for any word or phrase in this glossary by going to Edit/Find in your browser's menu (shortcut Ctrl F). In IE a search box will open, in Firefox the search box appears on a grey bar on the very bottom left of the browser window. There will also be a Next button to let you check through the entire page. Another handy tip is to use the Page Up & Page Down keys on your keyboard, to scroll easily up and down any page.

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Note that English spellings vary a lot, for example zori may also be spelled zoori or zouri, homongi may be spelled houmongi etc. I use the ones I am most accustomed to

**Abare-Noshi:** A rough bundle of decorative strips

**Ai:** Indigo blue dye; derived from the indigo plant. Various shades are achieved by repeated immersions interspersed with periods of drying (allows dye to oxidize and darken). Medicinal properties are ascribed to both plant and dye. Commonly believed, cloth dyed in indigo will resist insect damage

**Ageha:** Butterfly

**AKIGUSA:** Also called akikusa: autumn flowers and grasses. A classic motif consisting of various selections of flowers and autumn grasses; traditionally includes hagi (bush clover), kiku (chrysanthemum), susuki (pampas grass), kikyo (Chinese bellflower)

**Ama Coat:** A Japanese coat, in the style of a michiyuki, designed to be worn over the kimono and obi, to help keep off rain. Made from closely woven fabric that is rain resistant

**Ama Geta:** Japanese, thong toed sandals with wooden soles with two diagonal pieces of wood, making them somewhat stilt-like. The height is intended to help keep the kimono hem off the ground. The ama part of the name means they are for rainwear and have the addition of toe covers to help keep the feet dry.

**Aoi:** Hollyhocks

**Araihari Washing:** A technique of un-picking a kimono, washing the individual pieces, then re-tailoring it

**Asagao:** Morning Glory flowers

**Asanoha:** A pattern made up of triangles, based on the hemp leaf

**Atsurae:** Also called O-atsurae. A custom-made kimono.

**Awashie:** Sometimes spelled awase. Means the garment has a lining

**Ayame:** Iris

**Azayaka:** A textile art technique that has a very painterly effect

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**Bangasa:** Traditional, Japanese, paper umbrellas

**Bingata:** A polychrome stencil dying technique developed in Okinawa. This colourful stencil and gradation technique creates complex and unique tone.

**Boke:** Japanese quince

**Botan:** Peony

**Bukkaku:** Buddhist temple

**Bunka-Obi:** Another name for a pre-tied obi. Also known as a tsuke obi and a tsukure obi

**Byobu:** (Sometimes Byoubu) Folding screen

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**Cha-ire:** Tea containers made of ceramic, for green tea at tea ceremonies

**Chaya-Tsuji:** A traditional kimono pattern of landscape, with such things as houses, bridges, trees and flowers

**Chikara-nuno:** Collar adjustment

**Chirimen:** Silk, crepe weave fabric - slightly crinkled surfaced silk fabric, with a distinctive weaving technique, twisting the threads while weaving.

**Cho cho:** An popular obi knot for hanhaba obis worn with yukata kimonos, in the form of a bow, representing a butterfly

**Choju-giga:** An otoko-e (made by a man) emaki (scroll), accredited to Toba Sojo, comprises four scrolls, which is unusual in that it does not contain any text, only pictures. It depicts scenes of anthropomorphic animals in amusing scenes, analogizing Japanese society in the 12th century and mocks the upper classes. Choju-giga is considered a Japanese national treasure; two of the four scrolls are in the Tokyo National Museum and the other two are in the Kyoto National Museum.

**Chonin:** The merchant class

**Chu-Furisode:** A Furisode with sleeves that are around 100cm in length. "Chu" means "medium"

**Chuhaba-Obi:** A formal obi that is worn by brides or girls with a bridal costume or girl's formal Kimono

**Chuya-Obi:** A casual obi that was worn by women as a basic obi

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**Dandarazome:** Pattern of multi-colored stripes

**Darari-Obi:** Also called Darari-no-Obi. A special order maru-obi that is worn by maiko & is 700cm in length.

**Darari-No-Obi:** Also just called Darari Obi. A special order maru-obi that is worn by maiko & is 700cm in length.

**Date Eri:** Also known as Eri Sugata. An extra collar layer, stitched onto the inside of a kimono collar, with only its edge showing. Particularly in summer, layers of kimono can be very hot; as the edge of the collar of the naga-juban kimono can be seen at the edge of the outer kimono's collar; a date-eri stitched to the collar of the outer kimono gives the impression of a naga-juban beneath, allowing the wearer to omit the naga-juban, in order to stay cooler

**Date Jime:** A wide sash, often with velcro tabs (magic belt), to anchor undergarments

**Dharuma:** Based on Bohidharma, the father of Zen Buddhism, there are dharuma dolls, bought at New Year, which have rounded bases, so when knocked over they bounce back up, signifying bouncing back when life knocks you down. When new, they have plain white eyes and the owner draws on the black pupils, making a wish with each one

**Donpa:** A garment with a donsusu lining

**Donsu:** Damask silk, characterized by heavy texture and glossy facing which is woven by means of "Shusu-Ori (Silk Satin) and sometimes found in high quality men's haori, displaying a scene or such

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**Edo Komon:** A type of komon characterized by tiny dots arranged in dense patterns that form larger designs. The Edo komon dyeing technique originated with the samurai class during the Edo period. A kimono with this type of pattern is of the same formality as an iromuji, and when decorated with kamon, may be worn as visiting wear (equivalent to a tsukesage or homongi)(see also Komon)

**Edo-Yuzen:** One of Yuzen techniques. Edo-yuzen is characterized by its pale colors and patterns painted only on the front side

**Eigata:** A distinctive stencil dyeing technique developed in Okinawa. This monotone textile is dyed only using "Ai" indigo, so it is very different from the normal, colorful bingata dyeing

**Emaki:** Emakimono, often shortened to emaki (emakimono, lit. 'picture scroll'), is a horizontal, illustrated narrative form created during the 11th to 16th centuries in Japan. Unique to Japan, emakimono combines both text and pictures, and is drawn, painted, or stamped on a handscroll. They depict battles, romance, religion, folk tales, and stories of the supernatural world. Examples are often seen on the textile art on kimonos, particularly designs from The Tale of Genji. There are otoko-e (Men's pictures) and onna-e (Women's pictures) styles of painting, differentiated most easily by the story content. Onna-e typically deals with court life, particularly the court ladies, and with romantic themes. Otoko-e, on the other hand, often recorded historical events, particularly battles. Onna-e is epitomized by the Tale of Genji handscroll, a tale written by Murasaki Shikibu's dating from about 1000, the novel deals with the life and loves of Prince Genji and the world of the Heian court after his death. While only 15% of the original Tale of Genji scrolls remain, the fragments are held as national treasures). Choju-giga, an otoko-e emaki set by Toba Sojo, is unusual in that it contains only pictures and no text

**Emoyo:** Pictorial design, as opposed to geometric or abstract patterns

**Eri Shin:** A long, narrow, reinforcing strip that makes the kimono collar stiff

**Ezoshi:** Picture books

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**Fudangi:** Everyday wear

**Fuji:** Wisteria [Wistaria chinensis]

**Fuki:** An addition or extension of the hemline of a kosode, especially the uchikake. It is a roll of padding covered by the lining that both weights the garment, thereby controlling the fall of the skirt, and protects the expensive fabric of the kosode from soil and wear

**Fukizumi:** A spatter technique of producing pattern, giving a speckled appearance

**Fukuro:** A type of Obi. Fukuro means double-fold or bag. The fukuro obi is a slightly less formal style than the maru obi. The fukuro obi was created in the late 1920s. The fukuro obi is made with a fine brocade or tapestry, which is often rokutsu, which means only patterned along 60% of its length on one side. The back of the fukuro obi may be lined with a plain silk or brocade, making it less expensive and less bulky to wear than the maru obi. Even though the fukuro obi is not as quite formal as the maru obi, the fukuro obi can be used for formal occasions. The length and width of the fukuro obi is the same as the maru obi. Thus, fukuro obi can hardly be distinguished from maru obi when tied over the kimono

**Fukusa:** Fukusa is a piece of square cloth, sometimes with embroidery. It is used at an auspicious occasion like pre-wedding. It is used to wrap or put on a present

**Fundoshi:** Traditional mens' underwear, in the form of a loin-cloth

**Furisode:** A type of Kimono for unmarried women. It is worn at wedding, Coming-of-Age Day, and parties. A furisode is a statement that declares the wearer is now an adult woman and available for marriage, as a married woman never wears a furisode kimono. The surface is designed with graceful patterns. The total length of the sleeves is longer than other Kimonos; roughly between 39 and 42 inches (1,100 mm) in length. Furisode literally translates as 'swinging sleeves'. Pronounced foori-so-day, with no stress on any syllable

**Fuurin:** Wind Chime

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**Garamihon:** various pattern samples

**Garazome:** Design dyed on white fabric

**Geiko:** A geisha; this is the currently preferred name

**Geisha:** Geisha means 'woman of art. The art may be shamisen playing, singing, dancing etc. and, of course, the arts of conversation and tea ceremony hostess. Contrary to opinion, geisha do not tend to wear such white make up (shiro nuri) or ornate outfits many of us associate with geisha, it is maiko who wear the very white shiro nuri and who dress ornately. Maiko are apprentice geisha. Not all geisha start as maiko. Nowadays geisha prefer to be called geiko, as geisha has an unwarranted stigma attached to it

**Genji-Gumo:** One of the cloud-shaped kimono patterns. This is named after cloud designs drawn in the famous Japanese tale, "Tale of Genji"

**Genji-Kou:** One of the kimono patterns, derived from a traditional game called, Kou-awase, which is played by guessing the name of the incense. Signs used in the game became patterns for textiles

**Genroku-Sode:** A form of sleeve design for women's kimono. It has a shorter length and rounded corners

**Geta:** Japanese, thong toed sandals with wooden soles with two diagonal pieces of wood, making them somewhat stilt-like. The height is intended to help keep the kimono hem off the ground

**Gofuku:** Kimono fabric

**Gosho:** Imperial. Sometimes spelled gosyo.

**Goshodoki:** Imperial landscape, often with gardens, pagoda, bridges, screens etc

**Gosho Guruma:** An imperial carriage, from the Heian era (794-1192 AD)

**Gosho Ningyo:** Sometimes spelled gosyo ningyo. The gosho doll is one of noble descent, and the name means "palace doll," a reference to the Imperial Palace in Kyoto during the Edo period. In most examples, the clothing is limited to a strict minimum. Gosho ningyo are a uniquely Japanese form, and by tradition, they represent chubby, almost naked little boys with large heads, round bodies and brilliant white skin. They generally show an originality and character, which places them in a special category of Japanese dolls. In Japan these dolls are considered to be a classic art form and are appreciated as such

**Gosyo:** Imperial. SMore often spelled gosho.

**Gosyo-Doki-Monyo:** One of the scenic kimono patterns with dynamic bright patterns, (Gosyo-Guruma or fan) and quiet patterns (stream or grass)

**Gotenjyou:** One of the kimono patterns. This originates from the design for a ceiling, combination of square woods. This design is common in shrines and temples. This type of design is mostly used for formal kimonos and obis

**Gunbai:** Referee's fan (e.g. in sumo)

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**Habutae:** Smooth, glossy and tight silk textile, which resembles taffeta; first produced at Nishijin (Kyoto), from the Momoyama period onward

**Hada Juban:** The various pieces of kimono underwear

**Han Juban:** A waist length kimono top, worn as underwear, like an undershirt, beneath the naga juban

kimono, both of which are worn under the outerwear kimono

**Hagi:** Japanese bush clover

**Hakkake:** The hem of the lining of kimono. Usually, the colour for hakkake is bright and selected to suit the color of Kimono. It is also called suso-mawashi. The colour and design of hakkake appears and disappears while walking, which looks very elegant

**Hakama:** A pleated garment worn by both men and women, often seen in martial arts, with 7 folds, a stiff backboard and long ties that have a complex way of being tied. The Hakama has significant meaning applied to its design. The seven folds in the hakama represent seven virtues of the Samurai - Yuki (courage), Jin (humility), Gi (justice), Rei (chivalry), Makoto (honesty), Chugi (loyalty), and Meiyō (prestige)

**Hakata-Obi:** A kind of stiff Obi. Hakata-Obi is woven with thin warp and thick weft. As Hakata-Obi is firm, stiffeners are unnecessary. Hakata is a name of district in Japan's Kyushu area, where this type of weave comes from. The style of Hakata characterises the pattern of kenjo, full of mystic Buddhist symbols. Kenjo means 'gift for tycoon', from the fact that, once upon a time, grand lords reigning over Hakata used to present this style of fabric to tycoons. It is also a popular style of design on men's kaku obi

**Han-Eri:** A loosely stitched, removable collar, worn on a juban kimono. Removed for washing, so the juban need not be washed so often

**Hanabi:** Japanese fireworks

**Hanabishi:** Lozenge (diamond) shaped flowers

**Hanafuda:** 'Flower cards', cards for a traditional Japanese game

**Hana Guruma:** An imperial carriage/cart (Gosho-Guruma) filled with flowers; one of the popular kimono patterns. From the Heian era (794-1192 AD)

**Hanao:** The thong toe straps of Japanese footwear

**Hanhaba Obi:** The hanhaba obi is half the width of other obis. The hanhaba obi is a casual obi for wear at home, under a haori (kimono coat), with children's kimono or with summer yukata. It can be tied with a smallish, flatter knot, such as a clam knot

**Han Juban:** A kimono top, worn as underwear, beneath both the outerwear kimono and the naga juban kimono

**Hannyasyō:** Buddhist scriptures

**Hamaguri:** Clam shells

**Hanawa:** A floral roundel design

**Haori:** A kimono shaped jacket, designed to be worn on top of a kimono. Originally worn by men only; women were allowed to wear them after the Meiji era and women's ones became all the rage in Taisho era (1912-1926). Haori are versatile garments, as they translate well into western-world outfits too, looking good when worn either dressed up for the evening or dressed down with jeans

**Haregi:** Special, formal wear

**Hasu:** Lotus

**Haura:** The decorative lining of haori kimono jackets

**Heian Hime:** Noblewoman of the Heian era (noblewoman)

**Heko-Obi:** A kind of Obi for boys, girls or men.

**Hifu:** A waistcoat with deep armholes, to be worn over a kimono

**Higaki:** Basket weave pattern

**Hikeshi:** Firemen from Edo (now known as Tokyo), hired in 1850. Traditional Japanese houses were made of wood, bamboo, straw and paper and prone to fire, which could spread quickly

**Hikizuri:** Also known as Susohiki. A geisha's kimono that has a thick (not as thick as an uchikake) padded hem. Worn indoors that allowing the full hem to trail after the wearer; not commonly seen, except among geiko (geisha). Susohiki literally means "trail the skirt". Where a normal kimono for women is normally 1,5-1,6 m or 4,7-5,2 ft long, a susohiki can be up to 2 m or 6,3 ft long. This is also why geisha and maiko lift their kimono skirt when walking outside, also to show their beautiful underkimono or naga-juban. **Also** used to mean a kosode that has an unbroken pattern which continues onto the interior lining; often worn in dance recitals with the lower overlap purposely folded outward

**Himo:** Bridled ties, usually silk, used to hold a haori jacket closed. Women's ones are tied and untied but men's ones are too complicated to tie, as they have a different knot from women's ones, so they are hooked on and one side is unhooked to open the haori

**Hina:** A girl

**Hinoki:** Cypress tree

**Hinomaru:** Japanese national flag; plain white with a simple red disc in the centre that represents the rising sun

**Hiougi:** A kind of fan made of the Hinoki, Japanese cypress tree

**Hiraki Nagoya Obi:** An opened nagoya obi, the sash section is not folded in half

**Hira-gumi:** A kind of obijime made of flat-braided cord

**Hitoe:** Literally "one layer". Hitoe used as a noun is a name for the unlined silk summer kimono. As an adjective, hitoe is used to describe a single-layered garment

**Hitokoshi-Chirimen:** A kind of Chirimen, crepe silk. Characterized by its very small wrinkle, it is flat and very firm

**Hitotsu mon:** A self coloured kimono with one mon (crest) at centre back of shoulders. The mon makes it slightly formal

**Hitotsumi:** Hitotsumi means baby's garment. The name derives from the fact that the back is made from a single width of fabric, instead of the usual two widths

**Hiyoku-Jitate:** One of the tailoring methods to make Kimonos two-layered on easily stained parts, such as collar, cuff, bottom and so on. In old days, Tomesode was worn over the white Habutae, an under garment in addition to Nagajuban which is always worn under any Kimono. As wearing both Habutae and Nagajuban was heavy and hot, current Kimono are tailored with Hiyoku-Jitate.

**Homongi:** Often spelled houmongi. Literally translates as 'visiting wear'. A type of semi-formal Kimono. Homongi can be worn at any age and any occasions from a formal ceremony to daily occasions such as visiting a friend's house. They have no mon (crests). Homongi is less formal than the Furisode (formal dress for unmarried women). Characterised by patterns that flow over the shoulders, seams and sleeves

**Houou:** Phoenix. It is composed of several different creatures including peacock and pheasant. It is a symbol of longevity and good fortune

**Houmongi:** Sometimes spelled homongi. Literally translates as 'visiting wear'. A type of semi-formal Kimono. Homongi can be worn at any age and any occasions from a formal ceremony to daily occasions such as visiting a friend's house. They have no mon (crests). Homongi is less formal than the Furisode (formal dress for unmarried women). Characterised by patterns that flow over the shoulders, seams and sleeves

**Houzuki:** Ground cherry

**Hyakunin-Isshu:** A card game based on 100 poems by 100 poets. Hyakunin-isshu is sometimes spelled Hyakunin-issyu. This card game is also known as Uta Karuta. See 'Ogura Hyakunin Isshu' below

**Hiyoku-eri:** A piece of cloth that is sewn on or is fixed on kimono's neckband by a few pins and peeps out between kimono and han-eri as only thin line

**Hyotan:** Bottle gourd. Sometimes spelled hyoutan

**Hiyoku:** Double layered lining, usually at the inner collar edge and lower (hakkake) lining of a kimono, to give the impression of layered kimonos

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**Ichimatsu:** Checkerboard pattern

**Icho:** Ginko

**Igeta:** One of the kimono patterns. It looks like the mouth of a Japanese traditional well, which looks rather like a noughts and crosses (tic tac toe) grid

**Iki:** Understated elegance

**Iko:** Occasionally spelled ikyo but more usually spelled ikou. A special rack for displaying a kimono

**Ikou:** Occasionally spelled ikyo or iko. A special rack for displaying a kimono

**Ikyo:** Sometimes spelled iko though more usually spelled ikou. A special rack for displaying a kimono

**Inaho:** Autumn rice ear

**Inro:** A pill container, carried attached to an obi

**Iro Muji:** A style of kimono; an iro muji is a less formal kimono than the hitotsu mon kimono. Iro muji is a plain, self coloured kimono with no mon(crests). It is used for various purposes between formal and casual, for that reason, iro muji is regarded as the basic kimono that one often wears as the first kimono

**Irosode:** Also irotomesode. Single-color kimono, patterned only below the waistline. Irotomesode are slightly less formal than kurotomesode, and are worn by married women and, at weddings, usually close relatives of the bride and groom. An irotomesode may have three or five mon (crests)

**Irotomosode:** Also irosode. Single-color kimono, patterned only below the waistline. Irotomesode are slightly less formal than kurotomesode, and are worn by married women and, at weddings, usually close relatives of the bride and groom. An irotomesode may have three or five mon (crests). Pronounced eero-toe-may-so-day, with no stress on any syllable

**Itomake:** Decorative spool of thread

**Ityou:** Ginkgo

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**Jacquard:** Historically draw looms and more recently jacquard looms, have been used to produce a variety of weaves with stunning tone-on-tone patterning. Damasks, brocades and twills are among the structures employed. White wedding kimono often exploit the possibilities of these techniques, and obi designs have employed an even wider range of complex weaves. Brocade designs have been woven with contrasting colours or materials such as metallic or lacquered threads. It is frequently seen in the linings of women's haori

**Jinken:** A natural fibre, made from plant fibres, often woven to simulate silk. Jinken is much the same as rayon, also a natural fibre often used to simulate silk

**Jingasa:** A hat for the lower-level warrior like foot soldiers. It was made of light iron or leather covered with lacquer. Later it became a common fashion of Samurai

**Juban:** (Short for nagajuban/naga-juban) Under the kimono, one wears a Naga-Juban to keep the kimono from getting worn or stained. Only the collar edge of the Naga-Juban can be seen between the neck and the kimono, but it can create a subtle balance of the entire outfit you are in. The juban also shows when the hem of the kimono is lifted to walk. Of course there are several kinds of Naga-Juban. Some are for the use on the ceremonial occasions with mourning kimono or bridal Furisode, Others are for rather casual occasions with Tsukesage etc. Rinzu, Chirimen, Muslin are usually used as the material of Naga-Juban. And with summer kimonos, Sha or hemp are mainly used. Each material has each own characteristic. It is said that a nagajuban is a hidden smartness

**Junoe Hitoe:** Twelve-and-one-fold layered kimono outfit of Heian Hime (noblewoman)

**Jyofu:** A textile made of hemp, which is thin and light and used for summer wear

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**Kabuto:** Samurai's armour helmet

**Kabuki:** A traditional style of Japanese theatre

**Kaga-Yuzen:** One of the yuzen dyeing techniques, which was developed in Kanazawa. It uses a nature motif and it has distinctive calmness and tenderness

**Kagekiyo:** A Noh mask representing a warrior character

**Kagome:** Cage Braided Patterns; bamboo strip hexagonal lattice work)

**Kaiawase:** Kaiawase, a shell-matching game. The shells for this game are stored in a kaioki

**Kaioki:** A hexagonal container for holding decorated shells for Kaiawase, shell-matching game

**Kaji:** Mulberry

**Kaki:** Persimmon

**Kaku obi:** A stiff, roughly 3 inch deep, men's formal obi, worn with the knot at the back

**Kame:** A turtle

**Kameshibori:** Tie dye giving a roundish, bean like pattern

**Kamibari:** metallic thread made of foil on thin membrane or paper strips, which are wrapped around silk threads. These metallic threads cannot be stitched through the silk fabrics, so they are traditionally "couched": laid on the fabric surface and stitched down with fine silk threads. Often seen outlining designs on ornate kimono

**Kamishimo:** Worn by samurai and court men, the outfit consists of a formal kimono, hakama, and a sleeveless top with exaggerated shoulders (supported by bamboo strips and usually lined with paper) called a kataginu

**Kamome:** A gull

**Kamon:** A formal, family crest. Mon is a crest, kamon is a family crest. A disc of fabric is masked to be left undyed, the family crest design is then stencilled on. Families either use the mon passed down through their family or simply select one they like and adopt it as their kamon

**Kanzemizu:** A swirling vortex in a stream

**Karahana:** China flower, also known as Chinese flower

**Karashishi:** A lion, considered protective. Often shortened to shishi

**Kari himo:** A temporary cord used in kimono dressing

**Karinui:** Temporarily tacked/basted, to check the complete patterns on kimono. When you buy a karinui kimono it is untailored and needs to be sewn together

**Kasen:** Synthetics

**Kashiwa:** Oak leaf

**Kasuri:** One of the Kimono patterns. As it is woven with pre-dyed threads, sometimes an undyed part appears. That part is used as motif. These ikat fabrics are made by selectively binding and dyeing parts of the warp or weft threads, or even both, before the fabric is woven. It is an arduous and exacting process. For either silk or cotton fabrics, the threads are stretched on a frame, selected design areas are bound, then the hanks of bound threads are immersed in the dye pots. In meisen silk kats, both warp and weft are bound and dyed. For warp ikats, it's the warp threads that are bound and dyed. The fabric is woven with plain wefts, as all of the patterning is in the warps. The irregular, feathery design outlines are a characteristic feature, where the dye seeps under the bindings slightly. In contrast, vertical pattern lines are crisp and smooth. For weft kasuri, more juggling is possible. It's the wefts that are bound selectively and dyed, and the weaver has a little freedom in positioning the dyed pattern areas exactly during the weaving process. This makes quite complex motifs possible. It presumes, however, that the bindings were done with much care and precision. Fabric ornamentation with elaborate weft-ikat motifs is known as "picture kasuri," or e-gasuri. Sometimes the warps are printed or painted before the final weaving process. The fabric below appears to combine

techniques

**Katabami:** Wood sorrel

**Kataginu:** A sleeveless top with exaggerated shoulders, worn with hakama and a formal kimono by samurai and noble court men

**Katamigawari:** Half-and-half: style of garment in which the halves are made from different fabrics or designs; sleeves may be alternated as well

**Katazome:** These fabrics are also produced with stencils. Rice paste is pressed through the elaborately cut, heavy, oiled stencils onto the fabric; then after drying, the fabrics are immersed in the dye pots. This process has often been used with indigo blue on cotton for summer yukata kimono or for futon covers. Sometimes wax has been used instead, as in batiks made elsewhere

**Kazanshi:** Hair ornaments

**Kesa:** A jacket worn by a Buddhist monk, pleated at the lower back

**Kichou:** Sometimes spelled kicho. Curtain in Heian era (794-1192), which was used to divide a room

**Kiji:** Pheasant

**Kiku:** Chrysanthemum

**Kikkou:** One of the Kimono designs resembling the shell of a turtle/tortoise or a hexagonal pattern

**Kikyo:** Sometimes spelled kikyō. Bell flower, also called balloon flower

**Kinkoma:** Couched, metal thread embroidery

**Kinkakujū:** A fabulous Buddhist temple with gold roofs

**Kinran:** Textile woven for use in Buddhist temples and Buddhist clothing. Kinran is woven with real, 24 carat gold thread

**Kinsai Yuzen:** (See also Surihaku). Kinsai means gold leaf yuzen means hand application of textile art. Kinsai yuzen is gold leaf application on a kimono; an art form which reached its peak in the Azuchi-Momoyama period

**Kinsya:** High quality silk-gauze woven with foil, gold and silk threads. As it is thin and light, it is used for summer wear

**Kin-to-gin-no-kazari:** Brocade

**Kiri:** Paulownia; said to be the plant with the only branches phoenix will land on. Also known as foxglove tree and princess tree

**Kiri Hoo:** Combined paulownia and phoenix motif

**Kissyo-Ka:** Auspicious flowers such as chrysanthemum, peony, plum flower and others

**Kityo-Mon:** A traditional split curtain

**Kitsuke:** The process of putting on a kimono. In Japan one can take kitsuke classes.

**Kitsuke Kimono:** The accessories used to assist putting on a kimono outfit. Kitsuke means putting on a kimono

**Kiza:** The kneeling position, where the buttocks rest on the heels which are still propped up, is called kiza. If one then lowers the tops of the feet to the floor, one will be in the seiza position

**Koban:** An oval coin, usually gold or silver

**Ko Furisode:** Shorter sleeved Furisode, with sleeves that are around 85cm in length. "Ko" means "small"

**Kohaze:** A hook fastener used on tabi etc

**Koi:** Carp. When a carp finishes climbing the waterfall of the 'dragon gate' of Yellow River, it becomes a mighty dragon, according to old Chinese legend. Carp is the symbol of the advancement in life and it is also the popular motif in kimono

**Koi-kuchi:** Carp mouth; koi means carp and kuchi means mouth. It refers to the shape of the carp's mouth. This is the neck shape of a style of Japanese shirt

**Koinobori:** A carp banner, popular in displays on boys' day. The banner may have carp on it or be in the form of a carp shaped windsock

**Kokeshi:** Wooden dolls, very simple in shape, with no actual arms or legs. Originally carved by fathers when off at work, to take home to their children

**Komochi Yoshiwara:** A traditional, chainlink pattern

**Komon:** Means fine pattern or repeat pattern. Kimono with a small, repeated pattern throughout the garment. This style is more casual and may be worn around town, or dressed up with a formal obi for a restaurant. Both married and unmarried women may wear komon (see also Edo Komon)

**Ko-omote:** A Noh mask representing an unmarried woman. Ko means beauty and youth and omote means face. The mask is used to portray a noble woman or a lover who dies in her prime

**Kouka:** Safflower

**Kougai:** An ornamental hairpin

**Korin belt:** An elastic, adjustable belt used to anchor the kimono before applying the obi

**Kosode:** Literally "small sleeves". The kosode is the forerunner to the modern kimono worn by married women. In the Heian period, it was worn as an undergarment by both men and women of the court nobility. Later it became the outer garment for all the classes. The "small sleeves" referred originally to the small opening for the wrist, which distinguished the kosode from the "osode", large sleeves, in which the wrist opening was the full length of the sleeve. In modern times, "kosode" also have small sleeves, in the sense that they are shorter than those of the furisode

**Kosori:** Patterns woven into the base fabric of a kimono, known as damask

**Kousa:** Plaid (check, like tartan etc)

**Kumadori:** Stage make-up

**Kumihimo:** Braided cord, most often used to make himo and obijime. It used to be also used to fasten samurai armour pieces together

**Kumodori:** A break in the clouds, popular in Japanese design

**Kura:** A warehouse

**Kuro:** A black tint derived from initial immersion in brown (usually derived from native acorns), followed by application of iron mordant

**Kurotomesode:** Black kimono, if patterned, pattern only below the waistline. Kurotomesode are the most formal kimono for married women. They are often worn by the mothers of the bride and groom at weddings. Kurotomesode usually have five mon (crests) printed on the sleeves, chest and back of the kimono

**Kushi:** A comb

**Kyokusui:** An abstract stream pattern

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**Mae-Ita:** Also Obi-Ita. a stiffening board for obi. Worn behind the sash at the front

**Maiko:** An apprentice geisha. Maiko dress very ornately and wear shiro nuri, the very white, china doll like make up that many associate with geisha. Not all geisha start off as maiko. A geisha who was a maiko has extra kudos

**Mari:** Also called temari. A decorative ball, the pattern made by winding dyed thread around it

**Maru-gumi:** A kind of obijime made of round-braided cord

**Maru Obi:** A type of obi. The maru obi is the most formal obi, with both sides fully patterned and pattern along its entire length. The classic maru obi measures 33cm wide. Maru obi with narrower width can be custom made for a petite client. The maru obi is usually made of elaborately patterned brocade or tapestry, which is often richly decorated with gold threads. However, due to its exorbitant cost and weight (which makes it uncomfortable to wear), the maru obi is rarely worn today, except for traditional Japanese weddings and other very formal occasions. Both outside and backside are beautifully patterned. Fully patterned Maru-Obi appeared in the end of Edo era, 1603 to 1687 and it was most popular during the Meiji and Taisho eras. In the Edo era, Maru-Obi was luxurious and the most formal one for wealthy people. Due to its thickness, Maru-Obi can't be folded in half like contemporary Obi. So, it is worn unfolded. Even if it looked gorgeous, it was hard to wear because of its thickness and heaviness. Moreover, it was expensive. These days, Fukuro-Obi (double fold-Obi) is worn instead of it. Maru-Obi is worn only on the special occasions such as wedding

**Matoi:** A traditional cheering pole, originally used at fire fighting by hikeshi (Edo firemen). Different fire departments would have different matoi. It was also used as a practise target for shooting water at. The main task of the firemen was to isolate a fire by tearing down the neighboring houses. Nowadays it is used as a festival item, representing firemen

**Matsu:** Pine trees, which represent strength and longevity

**Matsuba:** Pine needles

**Matsukasa:** Pine cone

**Meisen:** Meisen is woven with dyed cocoon using Hiraori technique. It has a taffeta like feel and body. Worn by wide range of classes. Meisen Kimono is a casual cloth for wealthy people but a fine cloth for ordinary people. This type of Kimono often has dynamic art nouveau style patterns. This weave was extremely popular in 1910 to 1950

**Michiyuki:** A coat for Kimono with a square collar in front

**Minokame:** Turtle swimming with a trail of algae behind it; a symbol of longevity

**Miyatsuguchi:** The slit under the arm on the body of a women's kimono

**Mizutama:** Polkadot

**Mofuku:** Formal style of mourning dress with five mon (crests) worn by both genders

**Mokko:** Gourd

**Momen:** Cotton

**Momi:** A fine red silk, rarely seen nowadays, found in some antique kimonos etc.

**Mon:** A formal crest. A disc of fabric is masked to be left undyed, the crest design is then stencilled on. Mon means crest and kamon means family crest. Onna mon is the mon associated with the woman's family, as she does not have to wear her husband's family mon. There are different styles of mon; hinata - full sun, solid colour (usually white), nakakage - mid shadow, a medium thickness outline mon, and kage - shadow, a finer outline mon

**Montsuki:** Sometimes spelled montuki. A plain, self coloured kimono with mon (crests)

**Montuki:** Sometimes spelled montsuki. A plain, self coloured kimono with mon (crests)

**Momi:** Kimono lining fabric, made of a special weave of silk that is semi-translucent and very strong. Rarely seen now, except on antique kimonos

**Momiji:** Japanese maple

**Musubi:** Knot(s). For example, the cho cho musubi is a bow shaped knot, popular for casual hanhaba obis. The Japanese have very specific ways of tying knots for all sorts of things, such as obis, himos, decorative mizuhiki, hakama ties and all sorts of noshi (cords) etc.

**Myouga:** Japanese ginger

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**Nadeshiko:** The flower known as pinks, one of the carnation (dianthus) family. The name comes from the serrated edge, as though cut with pinking shears. It is said the name of the colour pink comes from these flowers

**Nagajuban:** (Often shortened to juban) Under the kimono, one wears a Naga-Juban to keep the kimono from getting worn or stained. Only the collar edge of the Naga-Juban can be seen between the neck and the kimono, but it can create a subtle balance of the entire outfit you are in. The juban also shows when the hem of the kimono is lifted to walk. Of course there are several kinds of Naga-Juban. Some are for the use on the ceremonial occasions with mourning kimono or bridal Furisode, Others are for rather casual occasions with Tsukesage etc. Rinzu, Chirimen, Muslin are usually used as the material of Naga-Juban. And with summer kimonos, Sha or hemp are mainly used. Each material has each own characteristic. It can be said that Naga-Juban is a hidden smartness

**Nagoya obi:** The most convenient obi today is the nagoya obi. First produced in the city of Nagoya at the end of the Taisho era (1912-26), the Nagoya obi is lighter and simpler than the fukuro or maru obi. The nagoya obi is characterised by a portion of the obi being pre-folded and stitched in half. The narrow part wraps around the waist, while the wider part forms the bow of the obi tie. When worn, a nagoya obi is tied with a single fold, while a maru or a fukuro obi, being longer, is tied with a double fold. Most nagoya obi is less expensive a maru or fukuro obi. Nonetheless, its design can be stunning

**Nanamejima:** Diagonal

**Nanten:** [Nandina domestica]; traditional motif modeled on the shrub of the same name; especially noted for its red berries

**Natsume:** Tea containers made of wood, for green tea at tea ceremonies

**Nihongami:** The coiffured hairstyles still prevalent, that replaced the previously popular, long and straight taregami hairstyle

**Nikko Toushouguu:** A Shinto shrine; located in Nikko, Tochigi Prefecture, Japan

**Nindo:** Honeysuckle [Lonicera Sempervirens]

**Nishijin-ori:** Nishijin-ori is traditional, artistic, expensive, silk fabric from Kyoto. It has been made there for more than one thousand years

**Nobori:** A banner

**Noh:** A traditional style of musical, Japanese theatre, notable for its use of masks. Noh (sometimes spelled as No) is a very traditional form of Japanese theatre, dating all the way back to the 14th century. Actors (usually male) will chant and sing their roles accompanied by a chorus and an orchestra of flute and drums. There is little in the way of stage props, although the masks and costumes themselves can be lavish. The movements of the actors are slow, deliberate and precise. Noh mask designs from the start Edo era are still reproduced, as exact copies, for Noh plays today. Visit [www.the-noh.com](http://www.the-noh.com) for more info on Noh theatre

**Noshi-himo:** Decorative, tasselled, silk cords

**Nuihaku:** Translates as embroidery and foil. Embroidery is combined with the application of gold or silver foil (see kinsai yuzen and surihaku) , to create a vibrant design, based on the contrast between the three-dimensional effect of the embroidery against the flat sheen of the metallic leaf

**Nuitori-Shishu:** A weaving technique that makes woven patterns look like surface embroidery. Often seen on valuable Kimonos

**Nuregaki:** Watercolour artwork

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**Obi:** A sash for kimono. Maru Obi is ranked the highest of all the formal Obi. It originally has twice the depth compared with that of others. Maru is usually a sumptuous obi which has the same pattern on both sides. Around the late 40s, Maru Obi was developed into Fukuro Obi, a little less deep and heavy and slightly easier to put on. Fukuro Obi still has ceremonial or formal aspects, but can be worn on rather casual occasions too. Fukuro has the pattern on the front side only. Nagoya-Obi is used in the wide range of occasions from casual to formal. It was invented in the Taisho Period. You can distinguish Nagoya-Obi from others because of the difference of their shapes. Nagoya-Obi has a

narrow part and a wider part, the narrow part being a folded section. Hanhaba means "half the width". Hanhaba Obi is usually put on with casual kimono, so that you can 'do little things', that is, be more mobile and flexible. The main feature is "easy to put on, easy to take off". The reversible ones are often seen with gorgeous embroidery.

**O-atsurae:** Also just called atsurae. A custom-made kimono.

**Obiage:** An obi scarf, worn through the rear knot, to help hold it in place, and tied at the front at the top of the obi, then tucked slightly under the top edge of the obi. The younger the wearer, the more of it is allowed to show at the top of the obi. The obiage covers the obi makura, the padding worn inside the rear knot of the obi, holding the makura in place

**Obidome:** A decorative piece, rather like a brooch, through which and obijime is threaded. The obidome sits at the centre front of the obi sash and, when an obidome is worn on an obijime, the obijime is tied at the back, inside the rear obi knot

**Obi-I ta:** Also Mae-Ita. a stiffening board for obi. Worn behind the sash at the front

**Obijime:** A cord, usually braided silk, worn through the rear obi knot, helping to hold it in place, and tied in a special knot at the centre front of the obi sash, The ends are pulled back round the sides and then tucked into itself

**Obi Makura:** Bustle padding for an obi's rear knot. Worn inside the knot, at the top, and held in place by the obiage

**Odori:** A traditional, Japanese dancer's item, such as a kimono or obi

**Ogura Hyakunin Isshu:** 100 poems by 100 poets, from 7th to 13th century. Ogura Hyakunin Isshu, also just called Hyakunin Isshu (or Hyakunin Issyu), is an anthology of 100 poems by 100 different poets. The poems are all "waka" (now called "tanka"). Waka are five-line poems of 31 syllables, arranged as 5, 7, 5, 7, 7. The waka represented in Hyakunin Isshu were court poetry, which almost exclusively used the waka format from the earliest days of Japanese poetry until the seventeen-syllable haiku came into prominence in the seventeenth century. Hyakunin Isshu is said to have been compiled by the famous thirteenth-century critic and poet Fujiwara no Sadaie (also known as Teika), though his son Fujiwara no Tameie may have had a hand in revising the collection. Teika also compiled a waka anthology called Hyakunin Shuka (Superior Poems of Our Time), which shares many of the same poems as Hyakunin Isshu. The 100 poems of Hyakunin Isshu are in rough chronological order from the seventh through the thirteenth centuries. The most famous poets through the late Heian period in Japan are represented. Hyakunin Isshu has had immense influence in Japan.

**Oharame:** A woman who used to sell flowers, brushwood and firewood in Kyoto

**Ohashiori:** The part of a kimono's length adjusting fold, showing just below the obi sash

**Oh Furisode:** Means big furisode. Worn by brides, a colourful furisode with sleeves of 114cm

**Oiran:** Japanese courtesans (prostitutes). The oiran arose in the Edo period (1600-1868), around which time they would be found in the pleasure districts, where prostitution was confined to. They had ranks; a strict hierarchy according to beauty, character, educational attainments and artistic skills, the highest rank being the tayu who were considered suitable for the daimyo (the powerful territorial lords in premodern Japan who ruled most of the country). Only the wealthiest and highest ranking men could hope to patronise them

**Okina:** A popular Noh mask, representing a very old man

**Omadaka:** Starfruit

**Omeshi:** A textile woven with strongly twisted pre-dyed silk threads. There are two types of Omeshi, one is Hiraori-Omeshi and the other is Chirimen Omeshi. By 1960, Omeshi Kimonos hold 80% of Kimono market share, but now, produced only in small quantities. Omeshi Kimonos were ranked the highest in pre-dyed silk Kimonos, and were extremely valuable. Its texture is firmer than Chirimen

**Omoto:** Japanese sacred lily. An evergreen plant with thick and waxy leaves, which produces red berries in winter. Considered to be a symbol of long life and happy fortune, by the Japanese

**Onagadori:** Long tailed cock

**Oriduru:** Origami Crane (bird)

**Origami:** Origami is one of the most popular paper crafts. A piece of paper is folded to create animals, flowers and other things. The most popular one is "Orizuru" (Crane).

**Orimono:** Fabric with a woven pattern

**Orizuru:** Origami crane. Throughout history, birds have been viewed as animals of special value and have been endowed with meanings often drawn from legends and stories that have endured over many generations. For the Japanese, the crane (tsuru) is considered a national treasure, appearing in art, literature, and folklore. The Japanese regard the crane as a symbol of good fortune and longevity because of its fabled life span of a thousand years. It also represents fidelity, as Japanese cranes are known to mate for life. Over time, the crane has also evolved as a favorite subject of the Japanese tradition of origami. Shortly after the end of World War II, the folded origami cranes came to symbolize a hope for peace through Sadako Sasaki and her story of perseverance. Diagnosed with leukemia after being exposed to radiation after the bombing of Hiroshima, Sadako became determined to reach a goal of folding 1,000 cranes in hopes of being rewarded with health, happiness, and a world of eternal peace. Although she died before reaching her goal, the tradition of sending origami cranes to the Hiroshima memorial has endured, as a symbol of the wish for nuclear disarmament and world peace. Today this tradition of folding 1,000 cranes represents a form of healing and hope during challenging times

**Oshidori:** Mandarin ducks

**Ougi:** Folding fan

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**Paulownia:** Paulownia tometosa (known as foxglove tree and princess tree)and, in Japanese, kiri. Japanese, kiri (paulownia): A deciduous tree, native to eastern Asia. In Japanese myths it is said to have the only branches phoenix will land on. It is very popular in Traditional Japanese art, particularly textile art where it is often seen on beautiful women's kimonos and a very popular mon (crest) motif. It is also the flower symbol of is the symbol of the Office of the Prime Minister of Japan.

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**Raden:** Decoration using fragments of mother-of-pearl

**Rakkan:** An artist's signature, often in the form of a red seal

**Rakuda:** Camel

**Renjishi Dancer:** A kabuki dancer who portrays a lion, with long, thick hair representing the lion's mane. From a kabuki play about a lion who teaches his son to be brave, strong and like the king of beasts. The young boy lion has a red mane

**Rinzu:** Silk with a sheen to the surface.

**Ro:** An airy, slightly sheer, Leno weave silk fabric, which is used for a summer wear.

**Rochirimen:** A type of muslin, usually incredibly fine wool

**Rohkaku:** A pieceful, craggy mountain/rock

**Roketsu-Zome:** Batik dyeing. By drawing patterns with wax, the dye runs into the crack of wax. After rinsing the wax off, irregular lines appear as a pattern.

**Roku Kasen:** The 6 greatest poets of the Heian era, popular amongst Japanese culture lovers

**Rokutsuu:** A rokutsuu obi is patterned over 60% of its length, the section of its length that is hidden when on is unpatterned, as opposed to a zentsuu obi, which is patterned along its entire length (and may have patterns on both sides).

**Ronin:** was a samurai with no lord or master during the feudal period (1185-1868) of Japan. A samurai became masterless from the ruin or fall of his master (as in the case of death in a war), or after the loss of his master's favor or privilege

**47 Ronin:** a group of samurai who were left leaderless (became ronin) after their daimyo (feudal lord) was forced to commit seppuku (ritual suicide) for assaulting a court official named Yoshinaka Kira-Kozukenosuke, whose title was Kotsuke no Suke. The ronin avenged their master's honor after patiently waiting and planning for over a year to kill Kira. In turn, the ronin were themselves forced to commit seppuku, as they had known they would be, for committing the crime of murder

**Rouketsu-zome:** batik dying

**Rou-Tataki:** A type of batik dying where wax is spattered on from a brush. Epecially prized if it has layers of different colours

**Run:** Orchid

**Ryo-zuma:** Mirror image design on fronts of a tomesode, seen on pre WW2 ones

**Ryu:** Dragon

**Ryu Sui:** Flowing water

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**Saaya:** Buddhist crosses, (swastika)

**Saga Brocade:** Japanese paper coated with gold leaf or lacquered mgold leaf is interlaced with coloured silk threads. Very difficult to weave and time consuming, even for the most skilled, who can produce only a few inches a day

**Sakasa Fuji:** Reflection of Fuji, on the water

**Sakazuki:** A sakazuki is a small to medium-sized cup used only for drinking sake. As I discussed previously, it is traditional to share sake at weddings performed in accordance with Shintoism. This custom is generally known as sakazuki-goto, though sakazuki-goto is not restricted to weddings, it is sometimes used by others to solidify friendships or bonds

**Sakura:** Cherry blossom. Sakura-Fubuki means shower of cherry blossoms (as they fall from the tree)

**Samuria:** A term for the military nobility of pre-industrial Japan. The word samurai is derived from the archaic Japanese verb samorau, changed to saburau, meaning "to serve"; thus, a samurai is a servant, i.e. the servant of a lord

**Sanbu-himo:** A little thin and short flat obijime that is often used with obidome

**Sarasa:** One of the Kimono patterns on fine quality textiles. It has colorful patterns of human, plants, or other creatures (sometimes with mythical creatures). There are two ways of painting Sarasa pattern. One is to paint directly on the fabric, the other is to use a stencil. Sarasa was invented in India in 16th century

**Sasa:** Bamboo

**Sayagata:** A pattern of interlocking circles

**Sayuri:** means 'a little lily'

**Sei-Gai-Ha:** Literally "blue ocean wave"; an imbricate scallop or shell pattern considered to be a stylization of waves. A wave pattern resembling repeat, overlapping fans/ waves/ scales. Sometimes written as seikaiha

**Seiza:** literally "proper sitting". The traditional kneeling position for sitting in Japan. The ankles are turned outward as the tops of the feet are lowered so that, in a slight V shape, the tops of the feet are flat on the floor and big toes are overlapped. The kneeling position, where the buttocks rest on the heels which are still propped up, is called kiza. If one then lowers the tops of the feet to the floor, one will be in the seiza position

**Sekitei:** A rock garden

**Senmen:** The paper part of sensu (folding fans)

**Sensu:** A folding fan

**Serafuku:** The school uniform for female students of middle schools and high schools in Japan. Also known as sailor girl. Serafuku comes from, sera, the mispronunciation of the English word Sailor, and fuku, the Japanese word for clothing

**Setta:** Flat, thong toed men's sandals

**Sha:** A slightly sheer, airy weave silk that is woven to be fairly stiff, so that it holds its shape. Used for summer wear kimonos

**Shakuhachi:** Japanese bamboo flute

**Shamisen:** A three stringed, guitar like instrument, with a small body, originally covered in cat skin or, on expensive one, in dog skin, with a long neck and three large tuning pegs. Often played by geisha as one of their arts

**Shibagaki:** Brushwood

**Shibori:** Full name is shiborizome. An intricate tie-dye method of making a pattern on fabric. Tiny sections of the fabric are tied or gathered and stitched before it is dyed. The bound area does not absorb the dye, so, when the thread is removed, it leaves a pattern of white dots. A completely shibori kimono can take an entire year to produce. Shibori is greatly prized by the Japanese, who are aware of how painstaking it is to create. Shibori has been made around the 4th century B.C.

**Shiborizome:** More often known as just shibori. An intricate tie-dye method of making a pattern on fabric. Tiny sections of the fabric are tied or gathered and stitched before it is dyed. The bound area does not absorb the dye, so, when the thread is removed, it leaves a pattern of white dots. A completely shibori kimono can take an entire year to produce. Shibori is greatly prized by the Japanese, who are aware of how painstaking it is to create. Shibori has been made around the 4th century B.C.

**Shichigosan:** Shichigosan is seven-five-three in Japanese. It is a gala day for children aged three, five and seven years of age. On November 15, parents take their children to a Shinto shrine to offer prayer for their children's growth. Boys are taken at age three and five, and girls three and seven. The children are dressed up in a gala kimono or fancy clothes to go to the shrines

**Shidare Sakura:** Weeping cherry

**Shigoki:** A long scarf, with fringed ends, worn tied around a girl's obi, with the bow at the back, usually to the side. Most often red

**Shika:** Deer

**Shikishi:** Squares of tinted or decorated paper used for inscribing poetry; also used as a decorative motif on kimono

**Shikunshi:** A general term for four plants; orchid, chrysanthemum, plum and bamboo

**Shioze:** a sort of silk fabric, a thick habutae, which is characterized by its thick and solid, but supple texture. Accordingly, this fabric is suitable for obi or kimono accessories such as fukusa (Japanese traditional small wrapping cloth) or han-eri

**Shippo:** Sometimes spelled shippou. Interlocking circle motif. Sometimes spelled 'shippou'

**Shiromuku:** Wedding kimono that is all white or silver, may have some gold in it

**Shiro Nuri:** The white make up worn by Japanese maiko. Geisha do not wear shiro nuri. What is often taken for a geisha, because of the ornate outfits and white make up, is a maiko, an apprentice geisha

**Shirusi Banten:** A hanten jacket with mon (crests) on its collar or back

**Shishuu:** Sometimes spelled shishyuu. Embroidery

**Shitsuke:** Basting threads keeping a kimono in shape while the kimono is sewn. After the kimono is completed by the tailor, they are removed, though often left in or stitched back to keep edges neat during long periods of storage. One removes them before wearing the kimono

**Shochikubai:** Pine, bamboo and plum motif: an auspicious design especially felicitous for wedding decorations or gifts

**Shou-chiku-bai:** A popular design of pine, bamboo and plum blossom

**Shouken:** Pure silk

**Shunga:** Sometimes spelled sungya. Erotic art is called shunga. Japanese word shunga means 'picture of

spring'; in Japan, spring is a common euphemism for sex. Edo period shunga sought to express the sexual mores of the chonin (merchant class) in the widest variety of forms possible, and therefore depicted heterosexual and homosexual, old and young alike, as well as a wide range of fetishes. In the edo period it was enjoyed by rich and poor, men and women, and, despite being out of favour with the shogunate, carried very little stigma. Almost all ukiyo-e artists made shunga at some point in their careers and it didn't affect their prestige as artists, it is an accepted and revered, traditional, Japanese art form

**Shusu ori:** Silk satin

**Sukashi-moyou:** See-through pattern

**Sode:** Sleeve

**Somemono:** Fabric with a printed pattern

**Suisen:** Narcissus

**Sumi-e:** Free-hand painting with indelible inks and brushes (ink and wash style art); a time-honoured Japanese method of fabric decoration. In the 20th century it appeared on kimonos, but even more frequently on the pictorial linings of men's haori jackets

**Sumi-nagashi:** Design of flowing black ink. Sumi-e, a print of an ink painting

**Sungya:** More often spelled shunga. Erotic ukiyo-e art is called shunga. Edo period shunga sought to express the sexual mores of the chonin (merchant class) in the widest variety of forms possible, and therefore depicted heterosexual and homosexual, old and young alike, as well as a wide range of fetishes. In the edo period it was enjoyed by rich and poor, men and women, and, despite being out of favour with the shogunate, carried very little stigma. Almost all ukiyo-e artists made shunga at some point in their careers and it didn't affect their prestige as artists, it is an accepted and revered, traditional, Japanese art form

**Surihaku** (See also Kinsai Yuzen). Translates as rubbed metal foil. Metallic foil leaf, usually gold or silver, is applied to the fabric surface, creating lavish effects. Rice paste is first applied to the fabric in design areas -- either drawn freehand or stencilled. Then metallic leaf is pressed onto the partially dried rice paste. The foil is brushed off the surrounding areas. In the past, surihaku decoration was widely used on dramatic Noh theatrical costumes, and its use continued, especially on formal kimono and ceremonial uchikake wedding kimono

**Susohiki:** Also known as Hikizuri. A geisha's kimono that has a thick (not as thick as an uchikake) padded hem. Worn indoors that allowing the full hem to trail after the wearer; not commonly seen, except among geiko (geisha). Susohiki literally means "trail the skirt". Where a normal kimono for women is normally 1,5-1,6 m or 4,7-5,2 ft long, a susohiki can be up to 2 m or 6,3 ft long. This is also why geisha and maiko lift their kimono skirt when walking outside, also to show their beautiful underkimono or naga-juban. **Also** used to mean a kosode that has an unbroken pattern which continues onto the interior lining; often worn in dance recitals with the lower overlap purposely folded outward

**Susoyoke:** A wrap-around half slip, for women, as underwear. A single piece of cloth, with ties at the waist

**Susuki:** Japanese pampas grass, sometimes called grass tree

**Suzu:** A bell

**Suzume:** Sparrow

**Suzuran:** Lily of the valley

**Syusu:** A weaving technique, producing a smooth, glossy texture

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**Tabane-Noshi:** Narrow strips of dried abalone bundled together in the middle, it was the ritual offering to God in Japanese Shinto religion. It also is used to refer to a bound bundle of any kind of ribbon strips. One of the Noshi-monyou patterns. This motif is often seen in the masterpieces of furisode kimonos, from the middle of the Edo era, created by various techniques. It remains a very popular motif in design.

**Tabi:** split toed socks

**Tachibana:** Citrus - Mandarin orange

**Tagasode:** Japanese traditional scent bags in the form of a kimono sleeve

**Taiko Obi Knot:** An obi which is worn tied with square knot at the back. Often, even by the Japanese, mistakenly thought to be named after the taiko drum but actually named after the opening of the Taiko Bridge, which was attended by geisha sporting this new style of obi knot. It is the most common of obi knots, mainly because it is one of the more easily tied ones

**Takanoha:** Hawk feather. A popular mon (crest) design

**Takarakagi:** Treasure key, one of the auspicious Collection of Treasures motifs

**Takarabune:** Treasure ship

**Takara Zukushi:** Collection of Treasures motif: a decorative design made up of auspicious objects deriving from Chinese legend

**Takasako:** A Noh play with characters who are an old man and woman, who care for two great pine trees and are actually the spirits of the pines. They are often portrayed sweeping up the pine needles around the base of a tree

**Tale of Genji:** The Tale of Genji is a classic work of Japanese literature, attributed to the Japanese noblewoman Murasaki Shikibu in the early eleventh century, around the peak of the Heian Period. It is

sometimes called the world's first novel. More details can be found on [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org) and throughout the web and, at time of writing, it is online at [The Tale of Genji ebook](#), as it's much too long to include here. 2008 was the millenium of the Tale of Genji. The song sung in the tale, Takasago (meaning high sand), represents a harmony in marriage and a long life. The old couple from the Tale of Genji are often seen on items such as fukusa, given as wedding gifts or in the bride's trousseau

**Taka:** Hawk

**Takegaki:** Bamboo fence

**Tamatebako:** A magical treasure box

**Tamoto:** Hanging sleeve

**Tan:** A standard bolt of kimono cloth sufficient to make one kimono. Traditional width of fabric is approximately 36 cm (14 inches) and length is 10.6 meters (about 12 yards)

**Tanzaku:** Thick rectangular paper used for writing Waka and Haiku (Japanese poems)

**Tanzen:** A padded coat or kimono, for winter wear

**Tatou-shi:** Acid free paper wrappers, with ties, for storing kimono or obi

**Tatsuwaki:** Also called tatewaku. A design of wavy lines. When it includes chrysanthemum it is called kiku tachiwaki, with paulownia is kiri tachiwaki and with clouds is kumo tachiwaki

**Tare:** The knot section of an obi

**Temari:** Also called mari. A decorative ball, the pattern made by winding dyed thread around it.

**Tengui:** A small, all-purpose towel made of lightweight cotton, often with a stencilled or shibori design

**Taregami:** The long, straight hairstyle, later replaced by coiffured nihongami hairstyles

**Tomesode:** Tomesode is the most formal kimono worn by married women at a wedding and other official celebrations, especially, black tomesode (black is kuro tomesode, all other colours are called iro tomesode/irosoode), which has a black background, is the most formal among Tomesode Kimonos. Colored tomesode feature a pattern against a colored background. All the patterns of tomesode Kimonos appear only at the bottom or with the family crests. Pronounced toe-may-so-day, with no stress on any syllable

**Tonbo:** Dragonfly

**Toyama:** A peaceful mountain with a castle on it

**Toyoma:** a Japanese city with a renowned textile industry

**Tsuba:** Japanese sword guard. Worn on daisho (paired long and short sword), fitted over the blade; often elaborately decorated. A motif sometimes used on men's clothing

**Tsubaki:** Camellia

**Tsubodare:** A pattern designed to look like dripping glaze

**Tsuke obi:** Also known as a tsukure obi and a bunko obi. A 2 piece, 'easy wear' obi, with the knot pre shaped. Sometimes the knot has a hook that sits in the top of the sash at the back. The knot is held in place the usual way, using an obiage and obijime. If a taiko style obi, an obi makura is also required

**Tsukure obi:** Also known as a tsuke obi, a bunko obi and a keisou-obi. A 2 piece, 'easy wear' obi, with the knot pre shaped. Sometimes the knot has a hook that sits in the top of the sash at the back. The knot is held in place the usual way, using an obiage and obijime. If a taiko style obi, an obi makura is also required

**Tsukesage:** A type of Kimono that is slightly less formal than Homongi. Patterned below the waist, usually one sleeve and often one shoulder. Pronounced tsoo-geh-sa-gay, with no stress on any syllable

**Tsumugi:** A silk textile woven with hand-spun threads from wild silk cocoon fibres. It doesn't have a glossy or smooth texture, but a tasteful rough texture. Very time consuming to produce, as the silk fibre has to be joined repeatedly, due to the hole in the cocoon where the silk moth exited, so a very expensive silk

**Tsunokakushi:** A rigid, white headdress, traditionally worn by Japanese brides to veil the bride's horns of jealousy, ego and selfishness. It also symbolized the bride's resolve to become a gentle and obedient wife.

**Tsuru:** Crane (bird). The crane represents fidelity, as cranes mate for life. It also represents good fortune and longevity; fable states that the crane lives for a thousand years

**Tsuru Kame:** combined crane and tortoise motif

**Tsurukusa:** Vine

**Tsuta:** Ivy

**Tsutsuji:** Azalea

**Tsuyukusa:** Day Lily

**Tsuzumi:** Small, hour-glass shaped drum, rested on shoulder to be played. Popular as a geisha art

**Tubaki:** Camellia

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**Uba:** A Noh mask character who is an old woman

**Uchide No Kozuchi:** Lucky mallet

**Uchikake:** Uchikake is a highly formal kimono worn only by a bride (and, perhaps, a stage performance). Until the Edo period, it was worn by women of Samurai, warrior, or noble families on special occasions. Since then, it had become a part of Japanese traditional bridal costume. Now it is only used for a wedding ceremony. The Uchikake is often heavily brocaded or embroidered, all white or spectacularly coloured and patterned, and is worn outside the actual kimono and obi, as a sort of coat. One never ties the obi around the uchikake. It is intended to trail along the floor, which is why it is heavily padded along the hem. It is an exceedingly heavy garment, often around 5 kilos. The design and technique for the Uchikake is wonderful and sophisticated. In Kansai district, Uchikake is also called Kaidori. Uchikake are incredibly expensive items, nowadays brides usually just hire one for their wedding; even then it can cost well over £1000 to hire one for the day. They make spectacular display items, if one has the space for one

**Uchishiki:** A triangular cloth for Buddhist altars

**Uguisu:** Nightingale

**Ukai:** Cormorant fishing. Some Japanese fishermen train cormorants to catch fish, which they cannot swallow due to a string around the neck making it impossible for the fish to pass down the gullet, and return them to the boat. The fish, at the end of the fishing, have the string removed and are given the smaller fish to eat and the fishermen keep the large ones. This method of fishing has almost died out now, due to modern fishing methods

**Ukiyo-e:** The ukiyo-e movement as a whole sought to express an idealisation of contemporary urban life

**Unmon:** Cloud shape design

**Ume:** Plum blossom. The ringed plum blossom mon (crest) is called umebachi - literally 'plum bowl'

**Utiwa:** Also spelled uthiwa. A paper fan (not the folding kind)

**Urushi-Ito:** Usually just shortened to urushi. Lacquered coated thread, can be coloured or metallic

**Uzumaki:** A swirl shape

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**Wafuku:** Traditional Japanese clothing. 'Wa' means Japanese and 'fuku' means clothing. The word was word coined in Meiji era. You can see wafuku written in Japanese kanji at the top of this page

**Waraji:** straw rope sandals which are mostly worn by monks

**Washi:** Eagle

**Watashe Ninsoku:** River porters, who carry nobles and their goods over rivers

**Wataboushi:** A large, white cap worn by a traditionally dressed, Japanese bride, large enough to fit over the ornate, shimada, piled high hairstyle, which, nowadays, is often a wig worn for the wedding. The wataboushi is a sign of the bride being a maiden and intended to hide her face from everyone but the groom. Although usually silk, wata means cotton and boushi means hat

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**Ya:** An arrow

**Yabane:** The feathered flight of an arrow

**Yamauba:** A Noh mask representing a witch character

**Yanagi:** Willow

**Yatsuhashi:** A zig-zag bridge. It is also thought that on zig-zag bridges one can avoid evil spirits that flow in straight lines

**Yofuku:** Clothing not of the traditional Japanese style, e.g. western world style clothing

**Yogi:** A futon shaped like a kimono or a kimono made from futon fabric

**Yokojima:** Coloured stripes

**Yotsume:** A Japanese mon (crest), comprising 4 diamonds, representing 4 eyes

**Yotsumi:** Kimonos for about 4-13 year-old kids

**Yujo:** Harlot

**Yukata:** Cotton Kimonos without linings worn as bathrobes or as casual clothes for the summer.

**Yukiwa:** Roundel designs, representing snowflakes

**Yuzen:** Yuzen is a colorful hand-dyeing technique. As each pattern is drawn by hand, this process requires high technique and painstaking effort for mastering this skill. Each Yuzen Kimono is an artwork so cannot be produced in large quantities. Kimono artists create an idea for the painting first, then draw it on the 'canvas' of Kimono fabric. Yuzen technique was originally invented by Yuzen Miyazaki, a famous Kyoto fan-painter during the Genroku period (1688-1704) of the Edo period. Until then, monochromatic indigo design was a trend, but his colorful dyeing design soon gained in popularity and was loved by women of all classes. Indeed, this innovative technique gave a tremendous impact on the conventional dyeing techniques. By tracing dye-

resist paste made from rice paste (later a rubber solution) on the outline of each pattern, the color is isolated, and it avoids mixing colors. In this way, colorful dyeing became possible. This Yuzen technique spread all over Japan, and each region developed its own distinctive characteristics. Two of the most famous regions for Yuzen technique are Kaga, original name of Kanazawa and Edo, original name of Tokyo.

**Yukiwa:** Roundel designs, representing snowflakes

**Yuzu:** Citrus

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**Zentsuu:** An obi that is patterned along its entire length (and may have patterns on both sides), as opposed to a rokutsuu obi, which is patterned over 60% of its length, the section of its length that is hidden when on is unpatterned.

**Zori:** Thong-toe sandals with wedge soles. Also spelled zori and zouri.

**Zoori:** Thong-toe sandals with wedge soles. Also spelled zori and zouri.

**Zouri:** Thong-toe sandals with wedge soles. Also spelled zouri and zoori.

**Zuihana:** An imaginary, lucky flower

