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## A Typical Japanese House

A typical Japanese house has a unique design that reflects the country's traditional culture while incorporating modern conveniences. Most houses in Japan combine modern and traditional elements, creating a space that is both functional and aesthetically pleasing. The simplicity of design, natural materials, and connection to nature are key elements that define Japanese homes.

When you first enter a Japanese house, you step into the genkan, a small (1)\_\_\_\_ where shoes are removed before entering the main living space. Shoes are usually placed in a built-in (2)\_\_\_\_ designed for shoe storage. This tradition is followed to keep the house clean, as outdoor shoes are not allowed inside the living areas. Walking barefoot or in indoor slippers is a common practice inside the home.

The main (3)\_\_\_\_ is usually a large, open space. It often has (4)\_\_\_\_ doors, which can connect the room with the garden or other rooms in the house. These doors are often made of wood and (5)\_\_\_\_ paper, allowing soft, natural light to pass through while providing privacy. The floor of this room is typically covered with tatami, thick woven (6)\_\_\_\_ made from rice straw, which are soft to walk or sit on. These mats not only provide comfort but also help regulate the temperature of the room.

In a traditional Japanese house, the living room is usually connected to a small (7)\_\_\_\_, which may contain plants or a small fountain. This creates a peaceful atmosphere and a connection to nature, which is highly valued in Japanese culture. It acts as a natural extension of the living space and can be viewed from inside the house, further enhancing the feeling of calm.

Furniture in a Japanese house is generally low to the ground following the custom of sitting and sleeping close to the floor. Instead of chairs, people often sit on flat (8)\_\_\_\_ placed directly on the floor. There is usually a low wooden (9)\_\_\_\_ in the center of the living room, where family members gather to eat meals or enjoy tea.

Another important room in a Japanese house is the (10)\_\_\_\_. This room serves as the sleeping area and is often minimalistic with very little furniture apart from storage for bedding. Instead of using Western-style beds, many Japanese people sleep on futons, which are thin mattresses that can be folded and stored away during the day to create more space. This allows the room to serve multiple functions, creating more space for other activities when the futon is not in use.

### Word Bank

garden, sliding, cushions, table, entryway, living room, thin, mats, bedroom, cabinet