



Hello, everyone. The cherry blossom flowers have all fallen, and in their place fresh green leaves have begun to sprout. The weather is getting warmer and warmer, and more comfortable conditions are right around the corner.

April is when my wife and I celebrate our wedding \*party\* anniversary. I specified “party,” there, because we actually have three anniversaries surrounding our marriage. The first one is our actual wedding anniversary in November. We had a small ceremony at our church, just for immediate family, where we exchanged vows, and



began our lives together as husband and wife. Our second anniversary is our registration anniversary in January. As you would probably guess, marrying a Japanese person, as a foreigner, is quite an ordeal. There’s a lot of paperwork, including an essay about how we met, and that all took so long that by the time we had it all ready, it was already January. Our third anniversary is our aforementioned wedding party anniversary in April. My wife and I invited our friends, family and colleagues, and threw a ceremony and dessert party. Even my mother and three friends from my school days came over from America, something for which I’m eternally grateful. It truly was a wonderful, memorable occasion.

Speaking of weddings, what image do you have of a Western-style



wedding? Traditionally, marriages have been held in churches. There is typically a reading from the Bible, as well as hymns sung by the congregation. You’ve probably seen such a wedding in a foreign drama. Our wedding was such a wedding, and we the pastor of the church be the officiant.



In the past, Americans have largely had weddings in churches. One of my brothers, my parents and grandparents all had church weddings.

However, recently couples have opted to hold weddings in all sorts of places: beach weddings, garden weddings, etc. One type of wedding that has become exceedingly popular of late (especially with people from rural or suburban areas) is something that may come as a surprise to you: a barn wedding. My brother and his wife had a barn wedding, and it was lovely. Now, don’t worry, these aren’t actually in-use barns, so you won’t find a cow or horse standing next to the altar. Some barns have been remade into wedding facilities, and some have been built from scratch, specifically for weddings.

Japan has many different kinds of weddings, as well. Some people have them at temples, still others have western-style weddings. What’s important is that the couple-to-be comes together and makes a wedding that they can both be happy with. Even more important, however, is the relationship that they will have after the wedding is over, one that will last the rest of their lives. Until next time,  
- Jeff

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