

# Rugby players to hide tattoos in Japan

Sources: [bbc.com/](http://bbc.com/) [smh.com.au](http://smh.com.au/) / [japantimes.co.jp](http://japantimes.co.jp)

Rugby players with tattoos are being asked to cover them up during next year's World Cup in Japan. The request by the sport's governing body World Rugby is to avoid offending people in Japan. It is somewhat of a taboo in Japan to be seen in public with a tattoo. Tattoos are usually associated with the notorious yakuza crime gangs, for whom tattoos are a source of great pride. Many swimming pools, gyms, bath houses and onsen in Japan ban people with tattoos from using their facilities. However, in 2016, Japan's tourism agency asked onsen to relax their rules. It said tourists had tattoos for very different reasons. The agency suggested giving tourists stickers to cover their tattoos. The Rugby World Cup director Alan Gilpin said all the competing teams understood the cultural sensitivity in Japan regarding tattoos. He said: "When we raised it with the teams a year or so ago, we were probably expecting a frustrated reaction from them, but there hasn't been at all." He added that the players want to respect Japanese culture. He said the wearing of a vest used for water sports would be a form of "self-policing" among the players. The famous All Blacks rugby team from New Zealand has confirmed that its players will comply with the request. It said: "We endeavor to be respectful of the local customs and culture, and this will be no different when we visit Japan."

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

rugby / tattoos / request / offending / crime gangs / pride / facilities / onsen / rules / director / sensitivity / teams / reaction / culture / self-policing / famous / request

## True / False

- a) All sports players must now cover tattoos in Japan. T / F
- b) Tattoos in Japan are associated with crime syndicates. T / F
- c) Japan's tourism agency requested spas relax rules regarding tattoos. T / F
- d) The tourism agency suggested spas give out stickers to cover tattoos. T / F
- e) Only half of rugby teams understood the reason for covering tattoos. T / F
- f) The rugby players said they wanted to respect Japanese culture. T / F
- g) World Rugby said the police would make sure tattoos were covered. T / F
- h) New Zealand's rugby team said it would endeavor to get smaller tattoos. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in bold are from the news article.)

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. asked       | a. quite        |
| 2. avoid       | b. feelings     |
| 3. somewhat    | c. honor        |
| 4. pride       | d. try          |
| 5. relax       | e. refrain from |
| 6. sensitivity | f. about        |
| 7. regarding   | g. type         |
| 8. reaction    | h. requested    |
| 9. form        | i. response     |
| 10. endeavor   | j. loosen       |

## Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- What do you think of tattoos?
- What should tourists do to respect culture in your country?
- Why are tattoos so in fashion nowadays?
- Is it a good idea to have a tattoo of your lover's name?
- What do you think of face tattoos?
- How important is it to respect local customs?
- What questions would you like to ask a tattoo artist?

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of rugby?
- Why do people get tattoos?
- What kind of tattoo would you think is best?
- Should people have to cover up their tattoos?
- Do tattoos make people more attractive?
- What three adjectives best describe tattoos?
- At what age should people be able to have a tattoo?
- What do you know about how to behave in Japan?

## Phrase Match

- |  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. The request by the sport's governing          | a. so ago                 |
| 2. notorious                                     | b. to cover their tattoos |
| 3. relax their                                   | c. sensitivity            |
| 4. tourists had tattoos for very                 | d. body                   |
| 5. The agency suggested giving tourists stickers | e. with the request       |
| 6. cultural                                      | f. yakuza crime gangs     |

7. a year or
8. a form of self-
9. players will comply
10. respectful of

- g. different reasons
- h. the local customs
- i. rules
- j. policing

## Spelling

1. the sport's *goirmengv* body
2. avoid *oniefndgf* people
3. *roonuotis* yakuza crime gangs
4. a *recsou* of great pride
5. using their *aelitfics*
6. *kstrisec* to cover their tattoos
7. understood the cultural *tiyijenstsv*
8. we *raesdi* it with the teams
9. *eesrpct* Japanese culture
10. a form of "self-*gpicilon*"
11. *omcply* with the request
12. We *ovdenrae* to be respectful

## Role Play

### Role A –Heart

You think a heart is the best image for a tattoo. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their images. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): dragon, rose or yin and yang.

### Role B –Dragon

You think a dragon is the best image for a tattoo. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their images. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): heart, rose or yin and yang.

### Role C –Rose

You think a rose is the best image for a tattoo. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their images. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): dragon, heart or yin and yang.

### Role D –Yin and Yang

You think yin and yang is the best image for a tattoo. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their images. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): dragon, rose or heart.

## Speaking –Tattoo image

Rank these with your partner. Put the best tattoo image at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- rose
- lover's name
- sports team emblem
- yin and yang
- heart
- dragon
- tear drop
- smiley

## Writing

The body is too beautiful to put tattoos on. Discuss.

Answers – Synonym Match

1. h
2. e
3. a
4. c
5. j
6. b
7. f
8. i
9. g
10. d

Answers – True False

- A F
- B T
- C T
- D T
- E F
- F T
- G F
- H F

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.

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