

## Column

### Elementary School Backpacks: A Japanese Tradition

Nearly all children in Japan carry a “randoseru” leather backpack during their six years of compulsory elementary-school education. It is said to have its origins in the ransel military backpack which was imported from the Netherlands in 1885 and adapted as a school satchel in the drive for educational equality. Its box-like shape and sturdy functionality have hardly changed since 1887, but it now comes in more colorful variations, reflecting the present age, with a number of materials and sizes.



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