What is the Comic Market?

The Comic Market (Comiket) is a marketplace where individuals can offer their own self-produced creations to a community that appreciates and supports such creative personal activities. Comiket primarily focuses on acting as a communal exchange place for self-published books, known as dōjinshi. Japanese dictionaries define dōjinshi as self-published material aimed toward likeminded individuals and the Comic Market invites any publication (books, music, films, software, etc.) published by individuals that are not available through standard commercial outlets. Applications for booths are processed prior to the event. You cannot apply for a booth at Comiket itself.

One goal of the Comiket is aiding creative efforts conducted outside the established commercial realms, and thereby encourage innovation and interaction within the overall community revolving around manga, anime, and games. Comiket places emphasis on community building that empowers individual creativity, initiative, freedom, and to that end we strive our best to accommodate a large and diverse collection of dōjinshi publishing groups, known as circles, to offer their dōjinshi (non-corporate, limited distribution publications). Comiket places great priority on artistic freedom, subject to certain conditions necessary to ensure smooth operation of the Comic Market and retain compliance to Japanese laws.

Comiket is a large scale, privately run exposition and marketplace. Comiket is neither a commercial enterprise, nor a governmental operation. The operation of the Comic Market is made possible by a volunteer based organization, the Comic Market (Comiket) Committee.

Comic Market: Its History and Ideas

Comiket was established out of frustrations regarding existing manga fan events and disappointment at the lack of diversity in commercial publications in the mid 1970’s. Many venues where manga fans could converge tended to be narrow-minded and outlets for experimental young manga authors were limited in the commercial sphere, thus a manga critique group Meikyu (‘Labyrinth’) not only started publishing a manga review dōjinshi, but also established an event where manga artists and fans from all over Japan could share their publications. The small startup event only featured 32 circles and approximately 700 people attending, taking place in a relatively small conference space, and yet the event was so popular that the Comic Market were already in place. Namely, an event focused on individual’s personal creations, regular attendees supporting and encouraging such creative efforts, a volunteer group managing the operation of the event, and all parties involved doing their best to help each other. This cooperative emphasis continues to be part of the operation of the Comic Market. Comiket is an event of the fans by the fans for the fans of manga in general and other mediums of self expression. All operations of Comiket are designed to provide the maximum degree of freedom allowable while at the same time maintaining order and safety so that Comiket can continue to be held year after year.

In recent years, the Comic Market has grown to become an event with over 35 years of history, boasting 35,000 dōjinshi circles and 500,000 general attendees at each session, usually held twice a year. Dōjinshi authors and fans from all over Japan, and some from overseas, converge upon Comiket to directly intermingle among their peers, with whom they share a common devotion toward a diverse and unique range of creative works, made possible by independence, imagination and self-expression.

In addition to dōjinshi booths, Comiket houses a corporate dealers’ area, attended by corporations who understand and support the ideals of the Comic Market. Nipponbashi Gumi and such well-known companies often wear costumes at Comiket, an activity known as cosplay. Other events, such as symposiums, exhibits, talk shows, etc. may also take place. For most dōjinshi circles, earning money is not the goal for their activities, but instead they aim to interact with their fellow participants through their own creations. Communication encourages creation through inspiration, and thereby lays the groundwork for even greater works to come into being. This is the paramount goal of the Comic Market.

Important Comiket Policies

All attendees must follow all rules and policies established by the Comiket Committee without exception. Attendees must obey all instructions issued by police, firefighters, Comiket staff, or security guards, and employees of the Tokyo Big Sight. Below is a list of specific policies and rules of the Comic Market.

• Anyone attending the Comic Market mustsyndicate Japanese laws and Tokyo Metropolitan Government ordinances.

• All Comiket attendees must follow disaster prevention and public safety rules established below.

• Do not run or push people. It is very easy for a trampling incident or a crowd collapse to occur with so many people packed together. Always remain calm and don’t rush. Comiket also prohibits people walking on moving escalators for safety reasons.

• Do not sit down or place luggage, sort books, etc. near fire fighting gear or emergency exits. These areas are marked by red or yellow tape on the floor or by the facility. Furthermore, do not leave baggage unattended anywhere within the premises. If you come across a suspicious object, please inform Comiket staff or a security guard.

• Do not smoke anywhere at designated smoking areas.

• Do not start any open flames, bring in pyrotechnic devices, or any easily flammable items within Tokyo Big Sight.

• Attendees must follow commonsense rules for public behavior, respect others in personal interaction, and avoid causing crowd control issues or being a public nuisance.

• Do not loiter inside or near the Tokyo Big Sight during late night hours.

• Do not swing around, throw or kick objects about.

• Do not tamper with Tokyo
Prohibited and Restricted Items

Attendees must not bring in any items whose possession or use is either prohibited or restricted by Japanese law.

- All weapons and weapon-like items must be in compliance with the Firearms and Swords Control Law.
- All items deemed to be a violation of Penal Code 175 (obscenity restrictions) or the Child Pornography Law are not permitted.
- Other restricted items include: Electrical generators, large batteries, people-carrying vehicles (i.e. bicycles, unicycles, skateboards, roller-skates, etc.), any balloons that may float up, and any other items deemed dangerous by police, firefighters, Comiket staff, or security guards.

Cosplay Activities and Photography

Comiket welcomes those who would like to wear costumes, but they must come to premises of Comiket in plain clothes. At Comiket, first register as a cosplayer and then use the dressing room provided. (See "Location and Hours of Operation" above for locations and hours.) Registration will cost 800 yen for each day. Note that all specific policies and rules regarding costume play are listed on pg. 22 of this catalog as well as listed on the official Comiket website. (Both are in Japanese only.)

- Always wear Comiket guidelines regarding cosplay.
- Do not wear anything that is risqué. Exposing too much skin may cause legal problems.
- Do not wear anything that may physically harm others and/or stain property and clothing. No wet paint or substances that can rub off easily are permitted.
- Any costumes that may cause injury to others should be designed with safety in mind, i.e. making parts removable to ensure safety during movement. Sharp objects and pointed tips may harm others simply by walking through crowds.
- When wearing uniforms of police officers, firefighters, etc. please ensure you will not be mistaken to be real uniformed officers. Any attire that would make others mistake you to be a uniformed officer is prohibited.
- The Comiket staff at the dressing room will be happy to answer any questions regarding costumes or attire and items.
- Always get permission from the person. This rule also applies to those in costume. Comiket features a costume play public square for the specific purpose of facilitating interaction and photography, but you still must get someone's permission before photographing them. Details pertaining to photography at Comiket is listed under "Regarding Photography and Recordings by Individuals for Non-Commercial Purposes" at http://www.comiket.co.jp/info/a/TAPFO/NonProfitCollect_E.html
- Always be aware of the safety of others around you. Please do not block passageways or stand on objects and do not use equipment that may interfere with the flow of traffic. Use of light reflection and tripods is restricted in some locations. All photographers must obey signs and directions issued by Comiket staff.

Press Coverage and Interviews

If you are attending the Comiket as part of any type of fieldwork for a public or commercial news media service or entertainment provider, you must register at the Press Registration located in the 2nd floor of East Hall 1 and follow instructions issued at that time. Japanese laws regarding privacy restricts the unsolicited photography of private individuals even in public spaces. Please refrain from any interviewing or filming inside or near the premises of Comiket prior to registration.

Navigating Comiket - A Beginner's Guide

Comiket is no ordinary event. It is very crowded and massive. We recommend first time visitors to come past 12 noon to avoid long lines. You should be in good health when visiting Comiket and make sure to dress accordingly. It can get very hot and humid in summer while very cold winds can be felt in winter.

While the Comiket does have first aid stations staffed by volunteering medical professionals, they can only provide rudimentary medical care for ordinary, minor injuries. In case of a very serious condition that may hamper your ability to safely navigate Comiket and its intense crowds, we strongly recommend you seek advice from your doctor.

Make sure to use public transportation. Visit the Tokyo Big Sight web page listed above for access information.

Do not leave your personal belongings, especially when you are in line to get into Comiket. It is very easy to lose track of your place in line. Make sure to keep money, passports, travel tickets, and other important items with you at all times just in case. If you lose or drop something important, contact Comiket staff for assistance.

Cell phone service and/or Internet access may become unreliable due to heavy traffic. Do not rely on cell phones or Internet access as the sole means of contacting others accompanying you or who you plan to meet. You cannot use Comiket's public address system to attempt to find someone. This service is reserved for official notices and emergencies.

- It is very easy for someone to get lost or separated at Comiket. Make sure to designate at least two places where you can meet each other at specific times in case you get separated. (e.g. Near spot X at the top of every hour or at spot Y at the end of the day before leaving.) We highly recommend you bring a note written in Japanese, that indicates where you are staying and how to get back in cases you need return back alone.

- Comiket is harsh enough for regular adults. All parents should place the highest priority on child welfare if they are attending Comiket. In addition to making sure to keep an eye on your child, please monitor your children's condition at all times. Comiket does not have child medication designed for children. If your child is too young to be able to return home alone, make sure to give them an ID badge, bracelet or card. The ID should contain your child's name, address and emergency contact information (i.e. cell phone, the circle you are working at, hotel, etc.) Contact Comiket Staff if your child has gotten lost.

- Publishers at the Comiket are raving on the goodness of amateur manga hobbyists to professional manga authors, but most share a common devotion towards dōjinshi and Comiket, a place where one can experience first hand the diverse as well as unique creativity made possible by the medium of dojinshi. Comiket thrives on diversity, and while you may not approve of certain creations, please do not openly criticize their works in a way that is disrespectful. While many circles are happy to offer their creations to you, some may disagree about the merits of outsiders who don't know much about Comiket or dōjinshis in general from purchasing their personal creations. Please respect the individual dōjinshi circles' decisions on what they create and to whom they offer them.