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# The Japan Times

## For long-distance lovers, apps that make the heart grow fonder

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Congratulations, you've found your soulmate ... but due to unavoidable circumstances, they live halfway across the globe. So now what?

With overseas travel for work or play becoming ever cheaper, and technology enabling instantaneous pixel-perfect communication across huge distances, it's easier than ever to fall for someone thousands of miles away — or to suddenly find yourself separated from your partner by several time zones. But keeping a long-distance relationship (LDR) going can be a challenge.

The longest I've ever gone without my SO (significant other) is a month. This may not seem like long to LDR veterans, but I assure you there were plenty of tears in the mix. We would often write letters to each other, and every night we'd squeeze in a FaceTime session. Normally it was close to 1 a.m. in America while my SO was enjoying a sunny afternoon in Japan.

One thing LDR couples must quickly learn to do is respect time difference. With 17 hours separating Tokyo and San Francisco, it was hard to find time to talk when neither of us was in work/study mode. Also, though it may be romantic, getting multiple “good morning” texts at 4 a.m doesn't agree with my sleep schedule.

But with the help of technology — and in particular, a fast, reliable internet connection — almost anything is possible. Line, WhatsApp and Skype are some already popular chat apps, but there are also options aimed specifically at couples.

📩 **Between** (<https://between.us/?lang=en>) is an app that allows you to share and store private photos and messages, as well as see the weather in your partner's city. You can also keep a gallery of “memories” to keep your relationship's milestones organized.

Then there is the ever-popular 📩 **Snapchat** (<https://www.snapchat.com/download>), which can be useful for when things get a little more risqué, because all evidence will be automatically deleted after you view a picture or video. The app's messaging service also makes text disappear after a short amount of time, but for those heartfelt emojis, just hold your finger over a bubble until it turns gray and it will be saved.

What's missing with all these apps, of course, is that most sensual of senses: touch. But software and hardware developers are working hard to fill that void.

In terms of gadgets, [📧 Ringly \(https://ringly.com/\)](https://ringly.com/) offers a range of admittedly feminine rings and bracelets that will alert you of messages from your loved one so you can feel closer than ever. It offers personalized vibrations and colored lights that flash every time you hear from your partner, so even when you are busy you'll know someone special is thinking of you.

📧 [Couple \(https://couple.me/\)](https://couple.me/) is a popular app that puts touch into the mix by allowing you to share "thumb kisses" on your touch screen. On the Apple App Store, Couple has a 4½-star rating, with customers raving about its interactive interface and custom alerts that add a personal touch.

📧 [Bond Touch \(https://www.bond-touch.com/\)](https://www.bond-touch.com/) promised to take the tactile a step further, acting as a transmitter for touches between you and your beloved. Each time you tap the module, which fits on a bracelet, your SO can feel a vibration on their matching module, no matter where they are in the world. Bond Touch is expected to start shipping this summer, but first only to the U.S., although the firm says it is working hard to extend this to other countries. Those in Japan may have to wait or call in a favor from a friend Stateside in the meantime.

On the topic of touch, sometimes a buzz on your wrist just isn't enough. 📧 [We-Vibe \(http://we-vibe.com/\)](http://we-vibe.com/) is an adult toy that is app-compatible, meaning that no matter what the distance, couples can interact with each other using both, er, toy and tech. 📧 [Lovense \(http://www.lovense.com/\)](http://www.lovense.com/) has a similar concept, giving each partner a personal toy that syncs up to its counterpart during use. For couples needing something more, Bluetooth is your best friend.

With a positive attitude and a smartphone in hand, it is definitely possible to find and keep love, even if it's halfway across the globe. With technology, your loved one can always be with you, in your pocket — or under your thumb.

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*All apps mentioned are available in Japan in both Android and iOS formats. Send your queries and comments to [lifelines@japantimes.co.jp](mailto:lifelines@japantimes.co.jp) (<mailto:lifelines@japantimes.co.jp>).*

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### American aspires to fulfill childhood dream as geisha in...

(http://www.japantimes.co.jp/life/2017/03/15/usa/american-aspires-fulfill-childhood-dream-geisha-japan/)



### Bolt stripped of Beijing gold

(http://www.japantimes.co.jp/sports/2017/03/15/bolt-stripped-2008-relay-gold-teammate-tests-positive/)



### NFL Quarterbacks in the Red Zone: From Best to Worst

(http://nfl-players.pointafter.com/stories/183610/ranking-en\_buildings&#build-red-zone-quarterbacks-nfl-tom-brady-manning?utm\_medium=cm&utm\_source=outbrain&utm\_campaign=i3.cm.o



### Gamers around the world have been waiting for this...

(http://om.forgeofempires.com/fo



### Government of Japan, survey thyself

(http://www.japantimes.co.jp/community/2017/03/15/japan-survey-thyself/)



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(http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/01/21/asia-pacific/crime-legal-asia-pacific/south-korean-culture-minister-arrested-alleged-blacklist-artists-criticized-park/)



### RANKED: The Best Point Guards of All Time

(http://basketball-players.pointafter.com/stories/42091/ranking-multiple/male-pattern-baldness-study-uncovers-potential-genetic-predictors?utm\_medium=cm&utm\_source=outbrain&utm\_campaign=i3.cm.o



### Male Pattern Baldness Study Uncovers Potential...

(https://www.genomeweb.com/multiple/ranking-male-pattern-baldness-study-uncovers-potential-genetic-predictors?utm\_medium=cm&utm\_source=outbrain&utm\_campaign=i3.cm.o



### Actress, 22, reportedly plans to quit show biz,...

(http://www.japantimes.co.jp/community/2017/03/15/parents-ai-japan/family-japans-foreign-drag-scene/)



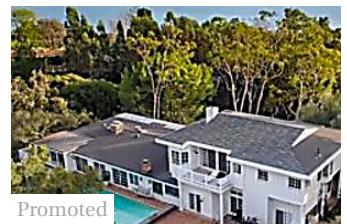
### Finding a family in Japan's foreign drag scene

(http://www.japantimes.co.jp/community/2017/03/15/issues/finding-family-japans-foreign-drag-scene/)



### If you own a computer you must try this game

(https://plarium.com/play/en/vikings/009\_navy\_hybrid\_g?adCampaign=102600&adPixel=outbrain&#buildings)



### What A Million Dollars Can Buy You Around the World

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