

# Japanese Traffic Rules

**(Driver's Edition)**

- Operating Your Car Safely -



**Edited by the Gifu Prefectural Police Headquarters**

**Compiled and Published by Gifu Prefecture**

## <1. Owning a Car>



### Driver's License

○ You must hold a drivers' license that is valid in Japan.

(1) If you have no overseas (home country) license:

You must pass the Japanese driving test (aptitude, theory and practical sections) to obtain a license. This is usually done by attending the same driving schools as Japanese people.

(2) If you have an overseas (home country) license:

A license will be granted if you fulfill the application requirements, and there are no problems with your documents, Japanese license test (aptitude section) or confirmation (theory and practical sections).

For details of the application requirements, and to book an appointment, see "The application procedure for switching an overseas driver's license over to a Japanese version" at your local police station, the prefectural police headquarters, or on the police homepage. Contact details:

International Licensing Division, Driver Licensing Department  
Gifu Prefecture Police Headquarters 1-22-8 Mitabora Higashi Gifu City  
(NB): Those who cannot understand Japanese should bring an interpreter.

○ If your name or address changes, the name and address on your license must be changed too. To do this, deliver your license to the nearest police station.

### Insurance

○ You may only drive vehicles which have received a *shaken* inspection and have a *shaken* certificate.

○ You are legally required to have Compulsory Personal Liability Insurance (*jidousha songai baishou sekinin hoken*, or *jibai sekinin hoken*).

However, this *jibai sekinin hoken* may not cover all costs stemming from traffic accidents, etc., so it is recommended that you also obtain Voluntary Insurance (*nin-i hoken*).

### Shaken (Car Inspection)

○ The *sharyo kensa* (*shaken*) is required by law every two years (starting in the third year for new cars). Its purpose is to ensure safe driving by checking the condition of your car and requiring repairs if necessary. Generally you receive your *shaken* at a mechanic, or the shop where you bought your car.

### Registering Your Car

○ You must register your car. To register, you must secure a parking space for your car, and obtain proof of parking at your local police station.

### Vehicle Tax

○ You must pay vehicle tax. Every year an invoice will be sent to the registered address of the vehicle's owner as of 1<sup>st</sup> April. Payment is due at the end of May (for new cars, the tax is paid upon purchase).

### Change of Name

- When selling a vehicle directly to an acquaintance, it is necessary to carry out a *meigi-henko* (change of name). Without this, vehicle tax invoices will continue to be sent to the previous owner.

## <2. Traffic Rules>

### Basic Traffic Rules

- Obey all traffic lights and road signs.
- Pedestrians walk on the right hand side of the road.  
Cars and bicycles travel on the left.
- On the road, pedestrians' safety is the highest priority.

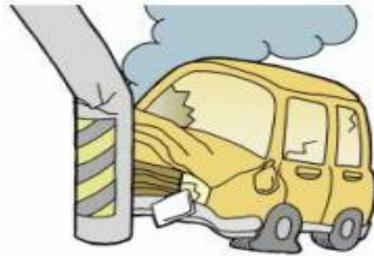


### Basic Rules for Cars

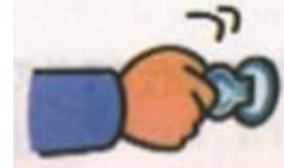
- You must stop at all stop signs, and confirm visibility to the left and right.
- You must use your headlights when it is dark.
- Do not drink and drive.
- While riding in a car, you must fasten your seatbelt.
- Children under 6 must use a child seat of appropriate size.
- While driving, do not use your mobile phone or focus on your car navigation system, etc.
- Do not drive in a way that prevents you from hearing traffic sounds and voices which are necessary for traffic safety, such as listening to the car radio very loudly or with a pair of headphones.



### <3. Traffic Accidents>



- If you have an accident, prevent others from occurring by moving your car to a safe place where it will not obstruct traffic, and then turn off the engine.



- Give highest priority to rescuing and treating any injured persons.  
Call an ambulance (telephone number 119).



- You must call the police (telephone number 110), giving them the location of the accident, number of injured persons and their condition, etc. Follow police instructions.

Police (Crimes, Accidents) **110** / Ambulance (Injuries, Illness) **119**



- If you are unable to call the police or an ambulance by yourself, ask somebody nearby for help.  
However, leaving the scene of the accident may be seen as hit-and-run. Please do not leave - wait until the police have arrived before asking a friend for help or interpretation.
- If you have problems resulting from a traffic accident, please visit the Gifu Citizens' Consultation Center. The Center provides consultations on legal damages, how to reach settlements, and how to make a claim on your Compulsory Personal Liability Insurance (*jibai seki hoken*), etc. Services are free and strictly confidential.

#### Gifu Prefecture Citizens' Consultation Center

Gifu Fureai Plaza 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, 5-14-53 Yabuta-Minami, Gifu

Tel: 058-277-1001

- Consultation Days: Monday-Friday (closed holidays and end of year period).
- Consultation Times: 8:30am - 5:00pm

(Note: If you cannot speak Japanese, please bring an interpreter).

## <4. Traffic Signs>

### Signs Displayed on Cars

New Driver Mark



Elderly Driver Mark



Disabled Driver Mark



### Major Road Signs

Road Closed



Road Closed to All Vehicles



No Entry



Only Designated Directions Permitted



No Parking



Speed Limit



One Way



Slow Down



Stop



Pedestrians Only

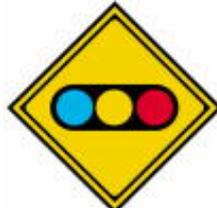


### Other Signs

Pedestrians Crossings Ahead



Traffic Lights Ahead



Level Crossing Ahead



Emergency Telephone



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