

About Automobile Driver's Licenses

Automobile Driver's Licenses



- In order to drive an automobile in Japan, one of the below licenses is needed.
 - A Japanese driver's license
 - An international driver's license (based on the Geneva Convention)
 - A foreign driver's license (a national or regional license from Switzerland, Germany, France, Belgium Monaco, Estonia, or Taiwan is required, as well as an attached translation created by the issuing organization or by that country's embassy or consulate)
- When driving, be absolutely sure to be in possession of your respective license as well as any required documents (passport and translation)

● Those Who Possess a License (International License or Converted Foreign License)

	Requirements and procedures for driving and renewing a license
Foreign driver's licenses can be converted to a Japanese license	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By converting a foreign driver's license to a Japanese driver's license, you can drive in Japan as well. The requirements are that the foreign driver's license is still valid and that you have stayed in that country for three or more months after obtaining the license. Those who cannot speak Japanese should bring along an interpreter when going through the license conversion procedure. The conversion procedure requires an appointment. Contact the license center beforehand. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where to take care of the procedure: Okinawa Prefectural Police Driving Center 098-851-1000 (ex: 553) <p>【Procedure Process】</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Verification of required documents and interview with examiner Verification of knowledge and ability (by appointment) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Can take the test in languages other than Japanese. Aptitude test (vision test, etc.) After completing 1 through 3 and passing, license is issued <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are countries exempt from the knowledge and ability verifications. Please check the below website. http://www.police.pref.okinawa.jp/docs/2015030100253/
International driver's license	<p>International driver's licenses of the Geneva Convention can be used to drive in Japan. (Reference: Metropolitan Police Department website with list of countries participating in the Geneva Convention) https://www.keishicho.metro.tokyo.jp/menkyo/menkyo/kokugai/kokugai04.html</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The validity period for international driver's licenses is either a one year period from the date of issuance or a one year period after arriving in Japan, whichever is shorter. * If after arriving in Japan, you leave the country, stay in a foreign country for less than three months, then enter Japan again, the one year period will not start from that point. The one year period starts from the first time you entered the country.
Driving with a foreign driver's license	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those who possess a valid driver's license issued by the country or region of Switzerland, Germany, France, Belgium, Monaco, Estonia, or Taiwan can drive automobiles or other vehicles specified by their license while in Japan, so long as they are carrying said license, a Japanese translation of the license (limited only to those translations created by the issuing organization or that country's embassy or consulate), and a passport. You can drive for one year in Japan when using a foreign driver's license. *



● Those Without a Driver's License

- In order to drive, it is necessary to obtain a Japanese driver's license. Attend either a training institute or a driving school and learn about traffic rules and driving techniques. After graduating, you go to a license center or test location and take the final test. If you pass, you will receive a driver's license. Class semesters are 2 to 3 months long, with the longest being 9 months. Tuition is about 350,000 yen.
- There are two types of regular automobile licenses: a license where you are limited to driving AT (automatic) cars and a license where you can also drive MT (manual) cars.
- You can choose to not go to a training institute or driving school and study on your own, but passing the test would be very difficult.