

Article 12 : Driving in Japan

There are 4 ways for foreigners to drive in Japan.

1 International Driver's License

Holders of an international driver's license are generally allowed to drive in Japan. However, depending on the country of issue of your driver's license, you may not be allowed to drive in some cases. Your international driver's license is effective for one year from the day you land in Japan.

2 Converting From a Foreign Driver's License

You can apply to have your foreign license converted to a Japanese one. You will obtain a Japanese license if you pass the driving aptitude test and have the required documents. (You can take the test in English, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, Portuguese, Spanish, Persian, Russian, Thai.) Also, please be aware that you are only able to convert your license while it is still effective (before the expiration date.) In some parts of the country, you do not have to take a driving aptitude test. Not updatable.

You need to make a reservation for applying.

【Yamagata Prefecture Transportation and Safety Center】 023-655-2150

3 Italian, Swiss, German, French, Belgian and Taiwanese Driver's License

If you have a driver's license from one of these countries and bring your original license and a Japanese translation to Japan, you will be able to use the license for one year from the day you land in Japan. Please be aware that just like the international driver's license, there are cases where you may not be able to use it in Japan.

Only Japanese translation from JAF, embassy and consulate-generals will be recognized.

4 Acquiring a Japanese Driver's License

You can acquire a Japanese driver's license by taking a test the same way Japanese nationals do. Costs for attending the driving school will at least be 300,000 to 400,000 yen.