

V-3 Driver's License

To operate an automobile or motorcycle in Japan, a driver's license is required. When you drive, you must carry your driver's license and keep the vehicle inspection certificate in the car.

1. International License

You can drive in Japan with a valid international driver's license, issued by countries ratified in the Geneva Convention. However, the period of validity is only for a year from arrival in Japan or the valid period of the international license, whichever comes first. You cannot renew your international license in Japan. If you reside in Japan for a year or longer, please switch to a Japanese license.

2. Converting Your Foreign License to a Japanese Driver's License

If you have a valid license in another country and remained in that country more than 3 months in total since obtaining the license (proof of duration of stay, generally, your passport with official departure and entry stamps or other evidence is required), you can obtain an equivalent (same classes of vehicle for the Japanese version as noted on your foreign license, such as "passenger car," or "motorcycle," etc.) Japanese license and be exempted from the actual driving test and part of the required written driver's license test.

Applications can be made at the Public Safety Commission managing the area where you live or stay. In Osaka, the Kadoma Drivers License Examination Office and the Komyoike Drivers License Examination Office are authorized. Necessary procedures are screening documents and oral questions, then your knowledge and technique of driving is checked. After that, if they confirm your competency as a driver, you may be exempted from the practical driving test and much of the written driving license test.

Required Items:

1. Driver's license from another country. (If the date of issue is not noted, you will need to prove your driving history)
2. Photocopy of both sides of the foreign driver's license.
3. Proof of translation of the foreign driver's license written in Japanese. (Available at the embassy or consulate in Japan of the country issuing the driver's license, or The Japan Automobile Federation (JAF))
<Osaka Branch, Kansai Headquarters, The Japan Automobile Federation (JAF)
☎072-645-1300>
4. Passport (If you have renewed it recently, bring your old passport as well)
5. Photocopy of passport
6. Photocopy of your Certificate of Proof of Residence, with your nationality listed on it (If you are not eligible to register as a Resident under the Basic Resident Registration Law, a photocopy of your passport and documents proving that you are staying at the address you are using to apply) .
7. A photograph (must be taken within 6 months of application for Japanese driver's license. 3 cm height x 2.4 cm width. It must be a head and shoulders photo with no cap or hat. You must be facing the camera and the photo should be on a plain background.)
8. Pens (black or blue ball point pen)
9. Processing fee

Additional documents may be required.

For the language used in the knowledge assessment examination, you can choose from Japanese, English, Korean, Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese, Persian, Russian, Tagalog, Thai and Vietnamese. For details, contact either the Kadoma Drivers License Examination Office or the Komyoike Drivers License Examination Office.

3. Obtaining a New Japanese Driver's License

There are two ways to obtain a new driver's license in Japan (not converted from a foreign nation's license):

- At a driver's license examination office, pay the required fees, take a practical and written examination as well as an aptitude test and a vision test. Upon completion of the test and

examination you will also be subjected to a lecture for new drivers. Written examinations in English, Chinese and Portuguese are available.

- Attend a driving school, pass the school's test and then take the official test, generally just the written examination, aptitude test, and vision test at the Drivers License Examination Office. The cost for driving school is generally between 200,000 and 300,000 yen.

Drivers License Examination Office

Kadoma Drivers License Examination Office

23-16chibancho, Kadoma-city

Keihan Line Furukawabashi Station → Keihan Bus “Menkyo Shikenjo” Stop

About 15 min (1.5 km) walk from Keihan Line Furukawabashi Station

☎06-6908-9121

Komyoike Drivers License Examination Office

5-13-1 Fuseyacho, Izumi-city

About 5 min walk (400m) from Senboku Kosoku Railway Komyoike Station

☎0725-56-1881

4. Translation of Foreign Licenses

The Japan Automobile Federation (JAF) translates foreign licenses for a fee. There are times when JAF has staff on duty that are proficient in English. When requesting a translation, you will be asked to present your valid foreign driver's license to be translated.

Osaka Branch, Kansai Headquarters, Japan Automobile Association (JAF)

2-1-5 Nakahozumi, Ibaraki City (About 19 min walk from JR Ibaraki Station)

☎072-645-1300

URL <https://jaf.or.jp/common/visitor-procedures/switch-to-japanese-license>

5. Driving Rules in Japan

You can purchase the Japan Automobile Association (JAF)-issued “Rules of the Road” in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Chinese.

URL <https://jaf.or.jp/common/visitor-procedures/rules-of-the-road>