

Japanese Traffic Rules

(Pedestrian & Cyclist's Edition)

- Avoiding Accidents -



Edited by the Gifu Prefectural Police Headquarters

Compiled and Published by Gifu Prefecture

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 pavement/sidewalks, pedestrians' safety is the highest priority.

I Pedestrians

<1. Safely Using Pavement/Sidewalks>

- ① Use pavements/sidewalks or pedestrian lanes when available.
- ② If these are not available, walk on the right hand side of the road.
- ③ Where the view is restricted, stop and confirm whether it is safe to continue.
- ④ Never run out into the road.
- ⑤ When walking on the road, do not skip or run.



<2. Safely Crossing the Road>

- ① Cross at junctions with traffic lights or pedestrian crossings.
- ② Use pedestrian bridges or underpasses if available.
- ③ At traffic lights, wait in front of the crossing. Confirm that the light has turned green, check safety to your right, then left, then right again, and begin to cross.
- ④ Even when crossing, pay attention to the movement of cars and the situation around you.
- ⑤ Do not cross where there is a "Pedestrian Crossing Forbidden" sign.
- ⑥ Where there is no nearby traffic light, pedestrian crossing, bridge or underpass, find a place with good visibility to the left and right, check that no vehicles are coming, and cross at right angles to the road.
- ⑦ No matter how much of a rush you are in, never cross the road diagonally or without checking that it is safe.



<3. Understanding and Using Traffic Lights>

- ① What the colours mean:



Green

It is safe to go.



Amber or Flashing Green

Do not start to cross.



Red

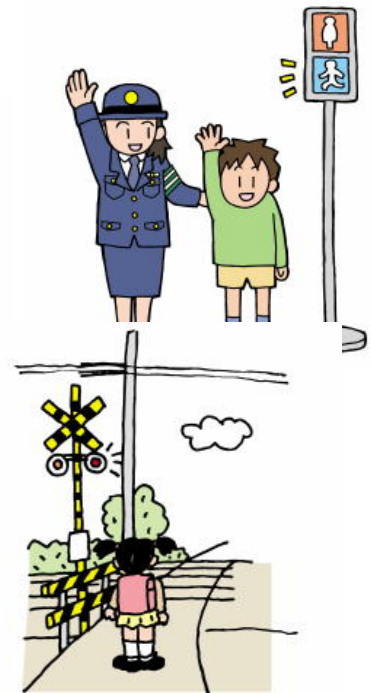
Stop. Do not cross.

※Pedestrians already crossing must quickly continue crossing or turn back.

- ② Obey pedestrian traffic lights if available.
- ③ Where there are button-style lights, press the button, wait for the light to turn green, then cross.



- ④ Obey the light directly in front of you when crossing.



<4. Safely Using Railway Crossings>

- ① Always stop in front of the crossing, and confirm it is safe to the right and left.
- ② Even when a train has already passed from one direction, another may be coming from the other direction, so be careful.
- ③ Do not start to cross when the warning bell sounds or the barrier begins to descend.
- ④ Do not play on or near the tracks, or allow children to cross alone.

In emergencies (e.g. when you cannot move your car off of the tracks) use the Emergency Button that is located next to the warning bell (it is different from a traffic light crossing button, so be careful).

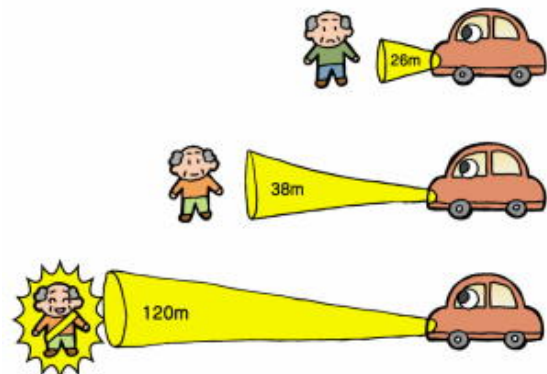
<5. Safety in Bad Weather or at Night>

- ① In bad weather such as rain, the field of vision is reduced, and road surfaces become slippery, causing vehicle stopping distances to increase. Because of this, you should never attempt difficult crossings, or run out into the road.
- ② Choose raincoats and umbrellas in colours that stand out and can easily be seen by drivers. Do not hold umbrellas in a way that restricts your forward vision.
- ③ At night, try to wear light clothes that stand out and can easily be seen by drivers. Wear reflective materials.



The Glare Effect

At night, headlights from both directions mean drivers cannot see pedestrians



Many accidents involving pedestrians happen at night

<6. Other: When Carrying Children in Cars>

Children under 6 must use a child seat of appropriate size.
It is safest to put child seats in the back seat.



Baby Seat



Child Seat



School Child Seat

II Bicycles

<1. Bicycle Inspection>

- ① Handlebars Are they fixed to the front wheel at a right angle?
- ② Bell Does it ring properly?
- ③ Brakes Do both the front and back brakes work properly?
- ④ Light Does the bulb work? Is it bright enough?
- ⑤ Tyres Are they filled properly? Are there any leaks?
- ⑥ Saddle Is it firmly attached?
- ⑦ Chain Is it tight enough?
- ⑧ Pedals Are they bent? Do they slip?
- ⑨ Reflectors Are they attached properly? Can they be seen from the front and sides?
- ⑩ Frame Is it damaged or twisted?



<2. Safely Riding a Bicycle>

- ① Choosing a bicycle that fits:
 - Both toes should be able touch the ground when you sit on the saddle.
 - You should be slightly bent over the handlebars when you grip them.
- ② Setting off correctly:
 - Mount the bicycle on the left edge of the road, from the left hand side.
 - Check carefully to see if it is safe in front and behind, then set off.
- ③ Stopping correctly:
 - Check that it is safe in front and behind, then slow down and stop on the left hand side of the road.
 - Put your left foot on the ground, and dismount on the left hand side of the bicycle.

- ④ Signalling correctly:

- Turning Right
Right arm held straight out to the side, with the palm facing down.
- Turning Left
Right arm held out to the side and straight up at the elbow.
- Stopping
Right arm held out to the side and diagonally down.



<3. Riding a Bicycle> ※ Bicycles are Vehicles!

- ① When riding a bicycle, follow the left hand side of the road.
- ② Bicycles may use pedestrian zones. However, this is forbidden if doing so would obstruct pedestrian traffic or where there are double yellow lines.

※Pedestrian zones are areas marked out on roads with no pavement/sidewalk.

- ③ Bicycles may, in the following cases, use pedestrian roads.
However, they must use normal roads if available, and must not obstruct pedestrian traffic.
 - If there is a “Bicycles and Pedestrians Only” sign
 - When the cyclist is aged under 13 or over 70, or has physical disabilities.
 - In circumstances where there is obviously no choice, due to e.g. roadworks or a line of parked cars.



- ④ When crossing roads, use bicycle crossing points if available.
※Bicycle crossing points are sections of the road specially set up for bicycles to use when crossing.



- ⑤ Bicycles may use pedestrian traffic lights to cross at junctions.
- ⑥ When using pedestrian crossings, dismount and walk your bicycle across if there is a risk of obstructing pedestrian traffic.

<4. Crossing at Junctions>

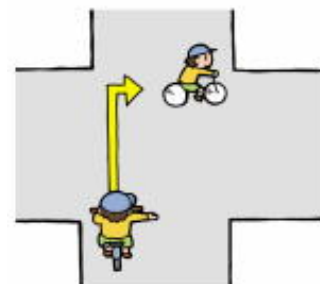
- ① Obey traffic lights at junctions which have them.
- ② When there are no traffic lights:
 - If there is a stop sign: stop, confirm it is safe, then proceed.
 - If there is no stop sign: do not rush out even when there is little traffic. Confirm it is safe, then proceed slowly.
When visibility is restricted, confirm it is safe before proceeding.



- ③ Turning left at a junction:
Confirm it is safe behind, then turn. Follow the left hand side of the road, slow down, and take care not to obstruct crossing pedestrians.



- ④ Turning right at a junction
 - Where there are traffic lights, first cross straight ahead and wait. Then turn to the right, and cross when the next light turns green.
 - Where there are no traffic lights, check it is safe behind you cross straight ahead on the left hand side, slow down, then cross to the right.



<5. Actions that are Illegal on a Bicycle>

- ① Riding double, or riding side by side.
- ② Riding while using an umbrella or holding objects in your hand(s).
- ③ Riding while talking on a cellular phone or looking at its display.
- ④ Riding in a way that prevents you from hearing traffic sounds and voices which are necessary for traffic safety (e.g. listening to the radio with headphones).
- ⑤ Racing, or zigzagging.
- ⑥ Riding between cars in heavy traffic.
- ⑦ Riding after drinking alcohol.
- ⑧ Other
 - Riding a bicycle with broken brakes or other problems.
 - Riding while hanging objects on the handlebars.
 - Riding while leading a dog.
 - Riding while wearing sandals, slippers or high-heeled shoes.



<6. Things to Remember>

- ① Be careful of cars turning left at junctions.
- ② Wear a helmet.
- ③ Always use your light at night and in tunnels.
- ④ Take care to wear bright clothes, and attach reflectors to your bicycle.
- ⑤ At railway crossings, stop, check that it is safe, and push your bicycle across.
- ⑥ Slow down or stop when approaching children, the disabled or the elderly.
- ⑦ When parking your bicycle, make sure it does not obstruct any pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Use bicycle parking areas if they are available nearby.



III Road Signs



Road Closed



Road Closed
to All Vehicles



No Entry



Closed to Pedestrians



Stop



Slow Down



Pedestrians Only



Bicycles and
Pedestrians Only



Pedestrian Crossings



Bicycle Crossing



One Way



Only Designated Directions Permitted



Speed Limit



No Parking



Traffic Lights



Railway Crossing



Construction



School/Nursery

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First Published: March 2007

Revised Edition: July 2008

Revised Edition: July 2009

Edited by: Traffic Planning Division,
Gifu Prefectural Police Headquarters

With the International Affairs Division,
cooperation of: Gifu Prefectural Government

Compiled & Environment and Citizen Support
published by: Policy Division,
Gifu Prefectural Government