

Traffic violations will cost you more than you think!



You will have to pay a penalty or fine for traffic violations. You will be punished for even comparatively minor infractions, and pleading ignorance because you are a foreigner will not work. This section introduces some of the most common traffic violations along with the penalties or fines you will have to pay for these.

Not stopping at a designated stop sign or at a railway crossing



You are required by law to stop at stop signs or in front of railway crossings. Japan takes a tough stance against those who fail to obey stop signs, as they risk causing a serious accident. Also, make sure to stop in front of railway crossings, even if there is no sign of a train approaching.

Stop sign violation

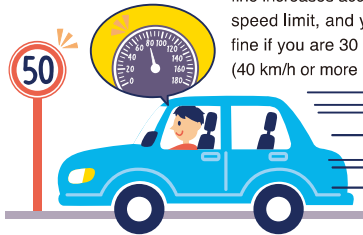
¥ 7,000

Failure to stop at a railway crossing

¥ 9,000

Speeding

The speed limit on regular roads without signs is 60 km/h; on expressways, it is 100 km/h. The size of the fine increases according to the extent you are over the speed limit, and you will be hit with an even heavier fine if you are 30 km/h or more above the speed limit (40 km/h or more in the case of expressways).



Regular roads/expressways

Under 15 km/h:
¥ 9,000

Expressways^{*1}

Between 30 km/h and less than 35 km/h:
¥ 25,000

Between 35 km/h and less than 40 km/h:
¥ 35,000

40 km/h or more:
Speeding fine may cost you as much as
¥ 100,000!

^{*1}The stated fine amounts are for standard size cars. Different fines apply for large vehicles, motorcycles, small motor vehicles, etc.

Parking violation



In Japan, parking violations are monitored stringently, especially in tourist areas or areas where many people park illegally. Here, police or civilian parking inspectors monitor vehicles and issue yellow parking tickets to offenders. Even stopping only for a few minutes to buy something at a convenience store or take photos, for example, will not be overlooked. When you leave your vehicle, make sure to use a parking space.

Parking violations

¥ 10,000 or more



▲ Parking Violation Notice

Using a smartphone, earphones or headset while driving

It is against the law to drive while talking on the phone, sending messages or looking at your smartphone. Never do such acts, as these are considered extremely dangerous. If you really need to use your phone, please pull over in a safe place where parking is not prohibited. The use of headsets or earphones is also a violation in some prefectures. Driving while listening to music at a loud volume is also an offense.



Using a smartphone

¥ 6,000

Using a headset or earphones^{*}

¥ 5,000

^{*}2 Differs by prefecture. Prohibited in Kumamoto Prefecture. Use at a loud volume regarded as a traffic violation in Fukuoka Prefecture.

Not wearing a seatbelt

When driving, everyone in the car, including the driver and all passengers, is required to wear a seatbelt. Failure to ensure this could result in punishment.



Seatbelt violation

There is no fine for not wearing a seatbelt, but you will receive a violation ticket. In the case of some car rental companies, you will no longer be covered by insurance in the event you are involved in an accident without wearing a seatbelt.

Drinking and driving

Drinking and driving is a crime throughout the world. Japan is particularly strict, where even driving after having consumed a little alcohol is prohibited. Furthermore, passengers who encourage the driver to drink or let the driver drive knowing that he or she has been drinking also face punishment.



Driving under the influence

A fine of as much as
¥500,000!

Drunk driving

A fine of as much as
¥1,000,000!

Penalties for passengers/those who serve alcohol to the driver and encourage its consumption

Driving under the influence

A fine of as much as
¥300,000!

Drunk driving

A fine of as much as
¥500,000!



Deal with tickets for traffic violations promptly. Return home without paying and face an even larger fine!

If you are issued with a ticket for traffic violations, contact your car rental company straightaway and follow the instructions given. You will have to pay a fine, so please follow the set procedures and pay by the stipulated date. If you fail to pay by the deadline, you will have to pay an overdue fee, which will make your fine even higher.

If you are involved in an accident while driving under the influence or without a license, you will not be covered by insurance. Never drink and drive, or drive without a license!



In case of emergency, call the police and your car rental company's accident assistance hotline.

It is illegal to continue driving without doing so, and you will no longer be covered by insurance.