

# Changing a foreign driver's license to a Japanese driver's license



## 1. Conditions to change to Japanese driver's license

Those who fulfill the following conditions can change their foreign driver's license to a Japanese one at the Aichi Driver's License Center (Hirabari) or the Higashi Mikawa Driver's License Center.

**a. Having a valid foreign driver's license**

**b. Certificate of residence (jyuminhyo) must be submitted**

**(Except diplomats or others)**

**c. Having stayed in the country issuing the foreign driver's license for a total of 3 months or more after obtaining the license**

*We will verify whether you stayed in the issuing country for a total of 3 months or more using your passport, foreign license, and other documents. In some cases, you must also provide immigration certificates, old passports, and foreign driver's license, or the driving record for your foreign license.*

## 2. Time and place for application

In Driver's License Center (Hirabari) and Higashi-Mikawa Driver's License Center, applications for changing a foreign driver's license to a Japanese driver's license need to be booked online in advance. Please access the website below, select the date (from Monday to Friday, except on public holidays) and place which you would like to apply and enter the necessary information to reserve.

*People who cannot speak or understand Japanese should come with an interpreter.*

### **a. Aichi Driver's License Center (Hirabari)**

People who finish the document screening before 11:45 a.m. can take the senses test and knowledge test on the same day. The practical skills test is held on another date.

If you have a driver's license from 29 countries and regions that are exempt from knowledge and practical skill verification, you can also make a reservation every Thursday by selecting the following dedicated time slot on the internet.

### **b. Higashi-Mikawa Driver's License Center**

At the Higashi-Mikawa Driver's License Center, we have two-stage document screenings.

Please book the first document screening on the internet. The first document screening is conducted from Monday to Friday, except on public holidays. In addition, the available reservation days vary depending on the country that issued the driver's license. The date for the second document screening will be designated after the completion of the first screening. Therefore, no reservation is required.

## Website for reservations

【 Aichi-Electronic Application System (Aichi Prefectural Police)】  
(<https://ttzk.graffer.jp/pref-aichi-police>)



## 3. Required documents

### a. Foreign driver's license

**b. Japanese translation of foreign driver's license** (translation must be issued by a government office of the country of the foreign driver's license or by the embassy or consulate in Japan of that country or the Japan Automobile Federation (JAF) or ZIPLUS Co., Ltd. or Automobile License Assistance and Driving Documentation in Nippon (ALADDIN). Translation by an individual or by companies other than above offices will not be accepted.)

**c. Passport** (Those who have multiple passport should submit all of them.)

### d. Residence card

**e. Certificate of residence (jyuminhyo)** \*Photocopies are not accepted.

For Japanese nationals : Certificate of residence with mention of registered domicile (honseki)

For foreign nationals : Certificate of residence with mention of all information except the individual number (My Number)

**f. Japanese driver's license if you have one.**

**g. An identification photograph for the license application taken within the last 6 months** (no hat, facing forward, head and shoulders only, plain background, 3 cm x 2.4 cm)

*Depending on the country, you may need to submit additional documents.*

## 4. Senses, knowledge and a practical skills test

You will be issued a driver's license if you pass the document screening, the senses test, the knowledge test, and the practical skills test.

*Those who had a Japanese driver's license in the past may be exempt from the knowledge and practical skills test, so please submit your nullified Japanese license or driving history certificate.*

#### **a. Senses test**

The senses test includes a test of eyesight, hearing, color recognition, and physical ability test. Make sure to bring your glasses, contact lenses, or hearing aid if you use them.

#### **b. Knowledge test**

In the knowledge test, you are asked about basic Japanese traffic rules. You can choose the language of the test from among 21 languages including Japanese, English, Korean, Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish, Persian, Vietnamese, Russian, Thai, Urdu, Arabic, Indonesian, Ukrainian, Khmer, Sinhalese, Tagalog, Nepali, Hindi, Burmese, and Mongolian

In order to get a Japanese license, you must know Japanese traffic rules, otherwise you will fail the knowledge test. You can prepare for the knowledge test by studying a foreign language version of "Rules of the road" which is available at Japan Automobile Federation (JAF). Questions are true or false and you will pass the test if you answer 45 out of 50 correctly. Those who pass the knowledge test will be designated the date and time for the practical skills test.

#### **c. Practical skills test**

This test not only checks your basic driving ability but also evaluates your knowledge of traffic rules, vehicle operation, and driving posture from the time you get in the vehicle until you get out, and the results will determine whether you pass or fail. For example, in Japan, in order to turn left, after turning on the left signal, check for safety on the left side by looking in the rearview mirror and directly with your own eyes, and then you must move to the left side of the road in advance. To pass the practical skills test, you need to fully understand traffic rules in Japan. Study Japanese traffic rules thoroughly before taking the test.

If you fail the test, the examiner will give you some advice. Though the advice is in Japanese, it can be very useful for the next test. The application procedure for the next practical skills test will be easier and smoother if you understand this advice in Japanese, so we recommend that you come with someone who can understand Japanese if you don't understand Japanese.

For the practical skills test, you need to bring an admission ticket, a driver's license application form, Japanese driver's license if you have one, your residence card, foreign driver's license of your country, and a ticket for using the test car. In addition, if you need a pair of glasses as a required condition, make sure to bring them. You cannot take the test if you are wearing clothes or shoes not suitable for driving such as sandals. Examinees for a two-wheeled vehicle license should wear a helmet, gloves, boots, a long sleeve shirt, and trousers. If you pass the practical skills test and do the paperwork, you will be issued a driver's license on the same day.

## **5. If you need to retake the practical test**

If you pass the document screening, senses test, and knowledge test, you can reapply for the practical skill test for the next six months. However, applications for the practical skills test are increasing and there is sometimes an overflow because there is a growing number of people applying to change foreign licenses to Japanese licenses.

There are many people who cannot pass the practical skills test within six months and have to retake all the tests from document screening. Before taking the practical skills test, please study traffic rules in Japan and practice driving skills in driving practice facilities in order to pass the test. Even after getting your Japanese driver's license, be sure to drive safely to avoid becoming the cause or victim of an accident.