


# Basics / V. Transportation / 1. Public transportation

## ●Buses●

Buses in Sendai include Sendai City buses and Miyagi Kotsu buses.


### How to ride the bus

a)  In Sendai, you board the bus from the middle and get off from the front door. When paying by cash, please take a ticket from ① as shown on the left. When using IC cards, such as icsca, please tap your card in the location as shown by ②.



b) When you hear the name of the bus stop you would like to get off at, please push one of the buttons inside of the bus.



c)  Pay your bus fee when you get off the bus. When paying with cash, first put the ticket and then the displayed amount into ③. If you need change, put money in ④ before you disembark. The change dispenser only accepts 1,000 yen notes, 500, 100, and 50 yen coins.



When using IC cards, please touch your card on ⑤.

※ If the funds on your IC card is low, you can recharge your card on the bus. Please ask the bus driver (you will not receive change)



●Subway●

There are two Sendai Subway lines (Namboku Line and Tozai Line).

●Purchasing commuter passes (tickets which allow someone to get on and off at designated areas for as many times as needed, within a specific time period) and icasca cards●

You can purchase a commuter pass at places such as ticket machines inside subway stations. At counters selling commuter passes you can also purchase one-day passes, which can be used to get on and off of buses and the subway for as many times as needed within a day.

icasca cards can also be purchased at subway station ticket machines.

For details, please call the Transportation Bureau Information Center.

<b>Sendai City Buses and Subway</b>	Transportation Bureau Information Center TEL: 022-222-2256 (J) <a href="https://www.kotsu.city.sendai.jp/">https://www.kotsu.city.sendai.jp/</a> (J, E)	
	Miyagi Kotsu Headquarters	TEL: 022-771-5310
<b>Miyagi Kotsu Buses</b>	North-bound: Tomiya Office	TEL: 022-358-9031 (Lost and found)
	South-bound: Sendai Office	TEL: 022-243-2131 (Lost and found)
<b>JR East</b>	Sendai Station Lost and Found Center	TEL: 022-227-0255
	JR East Info Line (E, C, K)	TEL: 050-2016-1603

●JR trains●

JR train tickets can be purchased at travel agencies as well as train stations.

●Long-distance buses●

Long-distance buses run between Sendai and other cities. For example, there is a bus from Sendai to Tokyo that takes about 5 hours and 30 minutes. Reservations are required. For details, please contact the respective bus companies.

●Taxis●

Most taxis can seat 5, including the driver. If the light on the passenger side of the windshield reads 空車 (kuusha/empty car), raise your hand to stop the taxi. The back door on the left-hand side opens automatically, so you just need to wait until it opens.

Make sure to check the base fare, which is displayed on the side window on the left (same side as where you board the taxi). The fare rises in proportion to the time and distance, so it will increase even when the taxi is stopped in front of a traffic light or stuck in a traffic jam. There is a surcharge between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m.

If you cannot speak Japanese, give the driver a note with your destination written on it.

**\*Sendai Multicultural Center Interpretation Support Hotline (TEL: 022-224-1919)\***

## Basics / V. Transportation / 2. Cars, motorcycles and bicycles

### ●Driving a car or motorcycle in Japan●

You must have a Japanese driver's license or an International Driver's Permit. There are two ways to obtain a Japanese license:

- Convert a driver's license from a foreign country
- Take a written test (J, E, C, V), an aptitude test, and a driving test

### ●Converting a foreign license●

Prior reservation (calling beforehand) is required before the application process (reviewing documents) can begin.

**Driver's License Center** TEL: 022-373-3601 (ext. 275) / Weekdays 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

<b>Converting a foreign license</b>	<b>Conditions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You must have lived in the country that issued your license for at least three months after it was issued.</li> <li>※ Your passport will be used to check your period of stay in the country that issued your passport after your driver's license issuance. If the exit/entry stamp or other information cannot be used to check when you departed the country, other evidence will be required (graduation certificate, certificate of employment, tax payment certificates, etc.).</li> <li>• Your foreign license must not be expired.</li> <li>• Your current address must be in Miyagi Prefecture.</li> </ul>
	<b>What you will need</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application form for driver's license (available at the Driver's License Center)</li> <li>• One 3 x 2.4 cm, black-and-white or color photograph of your face. You must not be wearing a hat, the photo must have a plain background, and your teeth must not be showing.</li> <li>• A copy of your resident record (issued at ward offices)</li> <li>※ This must include your nationality (not required for those with a Japanese license.) You can obtain this at your ward office. For more information on resident records, see page 6.</li> <li>• Your foreign driver's license</li> <li>• Your passport (all passports if you have old ones)</li> <li>• Your Japanese driver's license (if you have one)</li> <li>• A Japanese translation of your foreign driver's license (*1)</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>		Depending on the country that issued your license, you might only need to take the aptitude test (eye exam, etc.), or you might need to also take a written test (available in multiple languages) and a driving test. You must pay the test fee even if you do not pass. If you are unable to speak Japanese you must bring an interpreter along with you when taking the test.

(\*1) Some countries offer translation services at their embassies or consulates. You can also contact **JAF** which offers paid translation service. For details, either refer to the JAF website or

inquire via the following number (TEL: 022-783-2826; weekdays 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.)

**●Registering your car or motorcycle●**

If you own a car or motorcycle, you must register it. Contact the store where you bought the vehicle or one of the organizations below.

<b>Regular cars</b>	Tohoku District Transport Bureau Miyagi Transportation Branch Office	TEL: 050-5540-2011
<b>Light automobile/Kei cars</b>	Light Motor Vehicle Inspection Organization Miyagi Office	TEL: 050-3816-1830
<b>Motorcycles 126cc and above</b>	Tohoku District Transport Bureau Miyagi Transportation Branch Office	TEL: 050-5540-2011
<b>Motorcycles 125cc and below</b>	Taxation and Accounting Section of the ward office/ Taxation and Resident Registration Section of the general branch where the motorcycle’s primary parking space is located.	

**●Bicycles●**

- Register your bicycle to prevent theft, and be sure to get it inspected and keep it well maintained.
- Do not park your bicycle on the street—use a designated bicycle parking area. If you park in an area where parking is prohibited, your bicycle may be confiscated, and you will have to pay a fee in order to get your bicycle back.

※ **For a map of bicycle parking areas, see:**

<https://www.city.sendai.jp/jitenshataisaku/kurashi/machi/kotsu/jitensha/churinjo/map.html> (J, E)

**●Please obey Japanese traffic regulations●**

- Bicycles and all other vehicles use the left side of the road. Pedestrians (people walking) are to walk on the right side of the road.
- Bicycles may be ridden on pedestrian pathways if the path is signposted/marked as shown below.
- You should not drive a vehicle, including bicycles, after consuming alcohol.
- In “Sendai City’s Ordinance on Bicycle Safety,” the city defines the rules that bicycle users must abide by. For detailed information, check the Sendai City website:

<https://www.city.sendai.jp/jitensha/foreign.html> (J, E, C, K, V, N)

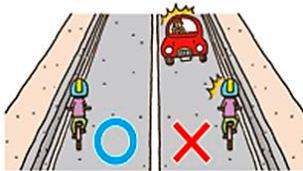


Image source:  
“Do you know the traffic rules for cycling? Are you following them?”  
(Public Relations Office – Government of Japan)



Road marking



Traffic sign (designated for bicycles and pedestrians)

**[Bicycles]**

- When riding on the sidewalk, pedestrians are prioritized, and cyclists must stay close to the

road and cycle slowly.

- It is against regulations to use your mobile phone for phone calls or otherwise, to use an umbrella, or to hang things on your handlebars, while riding a bicycle.
- You must not wear headphones or earphones while riding a bicycle.
- You must not ride side by side or have two people ride on the same bicycle at once.
- Be sure to wear a helmet and protect your head.
- You must turn on the light of the bicycle when it is dark.
- ※ Those who have been caught violating regulations two or more times by the police within a three year period must attend a training course.



**【Cars】**

- You must wear a seatbelt regardless of which seat you sit in.
- Children under the age of 6 must use a booster seat in the car.

**【Motorcycles】**

- You must wear a helmet.

**「Traffic safety guide for pedestrians and cyclists in Japan」**

[https://www.npa.go.jp/koutsuu/kikaku/trafficsafety/traffic\\_safety\\_english.pdf](https://www.npa.go.jp/koutsuu/kikaku/trafficsafety/traffic_safety_english.pdf) (E)

[https://www.npa.go.jp/english/bureau/traffic/document/06\\_traffic\\_safety\\_cn.pdf](https://www.npa.go.jp/english/bureau/traffic/document/06_traffic_safety_cn.pdf) (C)

[https://www.npa.go.jp/english/bureau/traffic/document/07\\_traffic\\_safety\\_kr.pdf](https://www.npa.go.jp/english/bureau/traffic/document/07_traffic_safety_kr.pdf) (K)

[https://www.npa.go.jp/english/bureau/traffic/document/05\\_traffic\\_safety\\_pt.pdf](https://www.npa.go.jp/english/bureau/traffic/document/05_traffic_safety_pt.pdf) (Portuguese)

You can purchase a book about Japanese traffic rules (E, C).

For details, please contact: **JAF** (TEL: 022-783-2826)

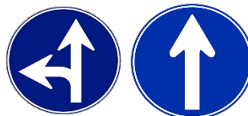
**Road signs**



Dead end



No entry



Only designated directions permitted



No overtaking



No stopping  
or parking



No parking



Speed limit  
(50km/h)



Bicycles only



Bicycles and  
pedestrians only



Pedestrians  
only



Two-step turn  
required for  
mopeds



Stop



No crossing



School/  
kindergarten/  
nursery

### Multilingual Traffic Safety DVD

Provides simple explanations on how to ride bicycles safely, what to do if you get into an accident and more, in 5 different languages.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MurfsFk8CZ4>

(J, E, C, V, N)



### ●Signing up for insurance●

If you injure someone after causing a traffic accident, you may be required to pay a large sum of money.

If you own a car or motorcycle, you must sign up for liability insurance. Buying optional insurance is also highly recommended. If you bought or were gifted a car, you must check whether it is insured. You can apply at the dealership where you bought the car or directly with an insurance company. You must also enter into a bicycle liability insurance if you intend to ride a bicycle. Insuring your bicycle is also useful if you were involved in an accident. There are a few kinds of bicycle insurance, including a TS sticker that you can receive if you purchased insurance when having your bicycle inspected and fixed at a bicycle shop (for a fee). Bicycle liability insurance can also be purchased on the internet or at convenience stores. You can also have it added on as an additional insurance policy clause through automobile insurance or fire insurance.