

A light blue map of Japan is visible in the background, showing the four main islands: Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu. The map is centered on the Japanese archipelago.

Obtaining a Japanese Driver's License

**International Exchange Office,
Kumamoto Prefectural Office**

JET Participants Driving in Japan

- JET participants do not need permission from the CO to own a vehicle or drive in their free time or to work (GIH, p. 150-51)
- Things JETs should keep in mind:
 - ① As local public servants, JETs have a responsibility to society
 - ② JETs who drive should be aware of traffic laws and the insurance system

International Driving Permit

■ Term of Validity:

- One year from the initial date of entry (in Japan) or until the expiration date on the permit, whichever comes first
- To continue driving in Japan after one year, JETs must obtain a Japanese license.

When to Begin the Process

- The Menkyo (License) Center will take reservations up to two months before the international driving permit expires.
- **Reservations are necessary**, and it is recommended that reservations be made at least one month in advance.
- Due to the amount of time taken in the license issuing and evaluation process, the Menkyo Center is only able to assist **2-3 applicants per day!**

What do I Need to do to Obtain a Japanese License?

- You must possess a valid overseas license.
- You must have resided in the country that issued the license for at least three months after the license was issued. You will need to provide documentation that proves this.
「College Transcripts」 work well
- ✘ However, your school/BOE will need to stamp and validate (called 原本証明 *genpon shoumei*) this documentation.

Other documentation that can be used to prove 3-month residency

- Proof of Employment for 3-month period
- Passport
 - ✘ Only if stamped with date of departure of license issuing country
- Stamped Mail
 - At least 3 pieces of mail that prove a residency of at least 3 months (The address may be different on each piece of mail)
- Tax receipts, hospital bills, etc

Other things to be aware of:

- ◆ **Prepare documentation well in advance ! !**
Some of the necessary documents take time to get. Make sure to get these documents well in advance of your international driving permit's expiration date.
- ◆ **Official translation of your foreign license**
JAF provides official translations at a cost of about 3000 yen. www.jaf.or.jp
- ◆ **International driving permits do not allow you to drive 50cc motor scooters.** You will need a Japanese license or scooter license for this.

How difficult is the driving test?

- ✦ Most people fail more than once.

The test is quite different than driving tests in other countries.

It is not acceptable to continue to drive once your international driving permit has expired. This is the case even if you are currently in the process of obtaining a Japanese license.

Please do not drive without a valid license.

- ✦ There are facilities where you can practice for the driving test.

Toyofuku Driving School near Park Dome

豊福自動車学校

TEL 388-0509

Driving Tests are Required for:

※Number of JET participants in Kumamoto Prefecture in 2010

Driving Test Required		
US	America	84
SA	South Africa	7
IN	Jamaica	2
YS	Singapore	2
CH	China	1
JM	India	1
		97

Driving Test NOT Required		
CN	Canada	12
UK	England	12
NZ	New Zealand	4
AU	Australia	2
IR	Ireland	3
KN	Netherlands	2
FR	France	1
GR	Germany	1

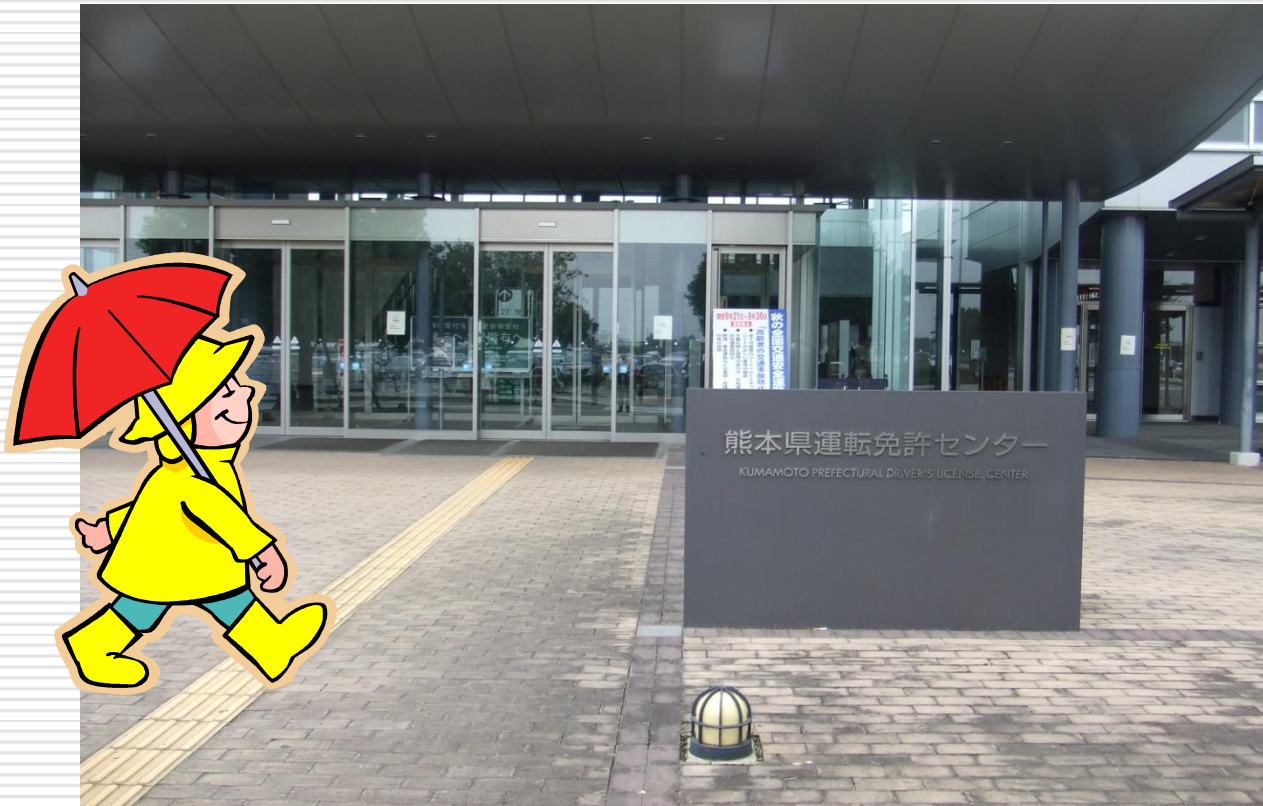
37

How difficult is the written test?

- ✦ The written test can be taken in English and is very easy to pass.
- ✦ It is recommended that JETs study up on traffic rules for the written test by reading JAF's Rules of the Road.



At the Menkyo Center...



Be on Time!!

- ❑ First, take the escalator to the 2nd floor
- ❑ Walk to your left and go in the doorway next to the window counters.
- ❑ Walk all the way down this hallway.



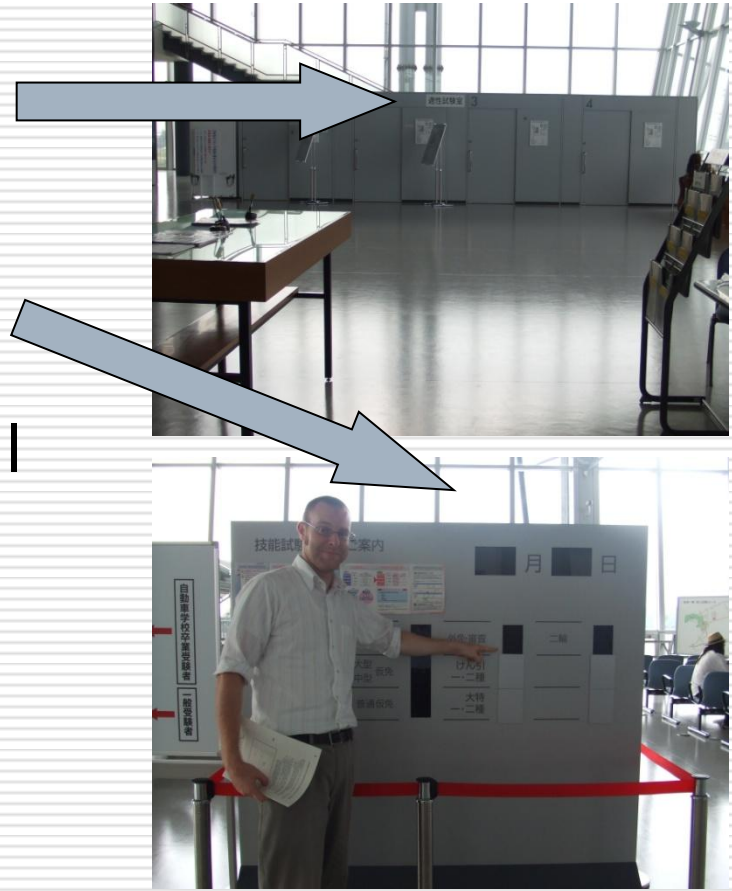
① Interview and Examination of Documents

- ❑ This is where the interview and examination happen.
- ❑ Those who don't speak Japanese should bring an interpreter.
- ❑ The written test follows this portion of the screening.



② Aptitude Test (vision test)

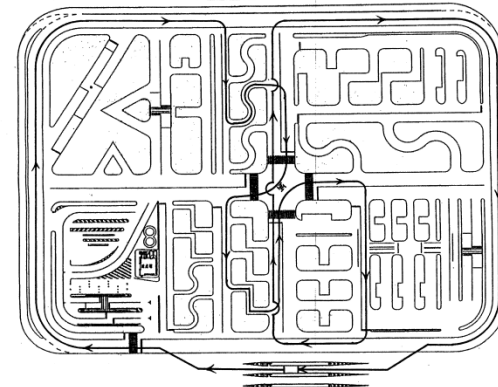
- ❑ The aptitude test is held in the booth on the left.
- ❑ After the aptitude test, check the display board on the 2nd floor to see which course (1 or 2) will be used for the driving test.
- ❑ You can walk the course during the lunch break.



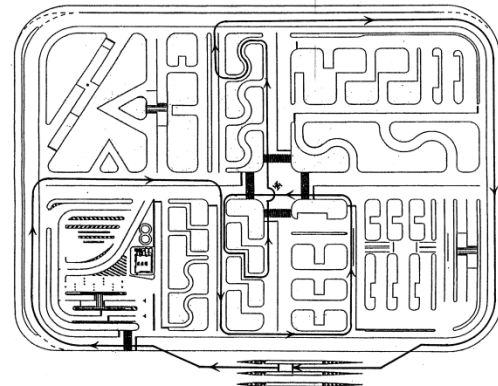
Driving Test Courses

- ❑ No “hill start”
- ❑ No parking
- ❑ *Be prepared for “S” and 90 degree turns.*
- ❑ The examiner will not inform you of the test criteria. We recommend you practice at a driving school.

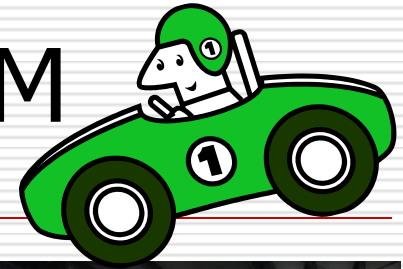
外免普一, 1コース



外免普一, 2コース



③ Driving Test at 1:00 PM



- Meet at the test waiting area on the 2nd floor next to the course entrance.
- When called on, follow the examiner through the glass doors.
- The examiner will drive through the course once for you.

Drive Relaxed!!



- ❑ Make sure to constantly check for bikes and motorcycles.



If you don't pass...

- You will need to retake the driving test (not the rest of the examination). No reservations are necessary for your next visit.
 - The results of your written test are valid for 6 months.
 - For a retest, arrive at the Menkyo Center by 11:30 on a weekday.
-

After the test...

- ❑ Inform your BOE/school of the test results.
- ❑ If you passed, your BOE/school may ask to take a copy of your license.

*If you fail...it is NOT
OKAY TO DRIVE
WITHOUT A LICENSE!!*

Penalties for driving w/out a license

- **Fine of up to ¥300,000**
- **Possible jail time**
- **Also, there will be very bad consequences if you are in an accident while driving without a valid license**