



JAPAN CYCLING HANDBOOK



CYCLING
EMBASSY

JAPAN

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JAPAN CYCLING HANDBOOK

Riding a bicycle keeps us healthy, happy and gives us unrestricted freedom to move about the city, it connects us to our community, saves us money yet contributes to the local economy. But before cycling in Japan's crowded urban environments can be enjoyed to the fullest it is important to understand not only the cycling rules, but also the local cycling culture, conventions, and yes even the dangers.

Follow the tips in this concise guide and you'll become a comfortable city cyclist in no time at all.

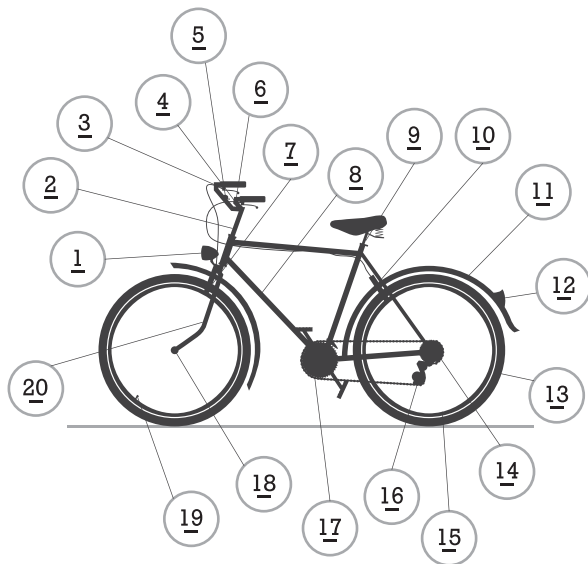
WHY CYCLE IN THE CITY?

FREEDOM	When you cycle you're not restricted by timetables, you can change course on a whim and go where you want when you want to.
SPEED	Trips by bicycle in the city are almost always faster than traveling by car or public transport.
EASY	Living in a Japanese city every conceivable convenience is just a short ride away.
HEALTH	By relying on your bicycle for transport you're exercising daily which improves your physical and mental health.
WISDOM	When you explore the city by bicycle you become part of the environment not just a mere observer.
FUN	No other form of transport will make you smile like you do when you ride bicycle.

BICYCLE VOCABULARY

Bicycle Anatomy

PART 1



VOCABULARY CHART

1.	Head Lamp
2.	Stem
3.	Brake Levers
4.	Handlebars
5.	Bell
6.	Shifters
7.	Front Brakes
8.	Down Tube
9.	Seatpost
10.	Rear Brakes
11.	Fender
12.	Rear Light
13.	Tire
14.	Cog Set
15.	Rim
16.	Rear Derailleur
17.	Chain Rings
18.	Hub
19.	Valve
20.	Fork



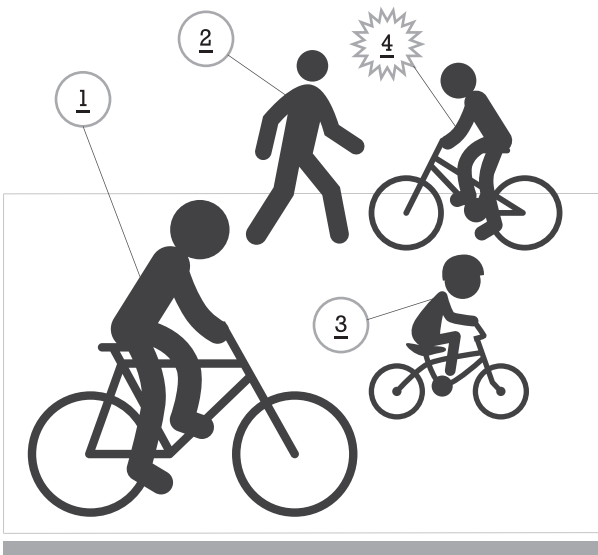
WHERE TO RIDE?



Sidewalk Cycling

PART 2

By law bicycles are required to use the road, but can use the sidewalk when it is marked for shared use, or when the road is too dangerous or impassible.



SIDEWALK CYCLING

1. Position

It is recommended that cyclists ride on the roadside of the sidewalk.

2. Shared use

Pedestrians have right of way on all sidewalks. Use a bell to politely warn pedestrians of your approach. Pedestrians will almost always instinctively move to the left, so pass them on their right.

3. Children

Children under 13 years are allowed to cycle on any sidewalk.

4. Liability

In the event of an accident between a bicycle and pedestrian, the cyclist bears the bulk of the responsibility depending on the the circumstances of the accident. Ride safely, respect pedestrians.

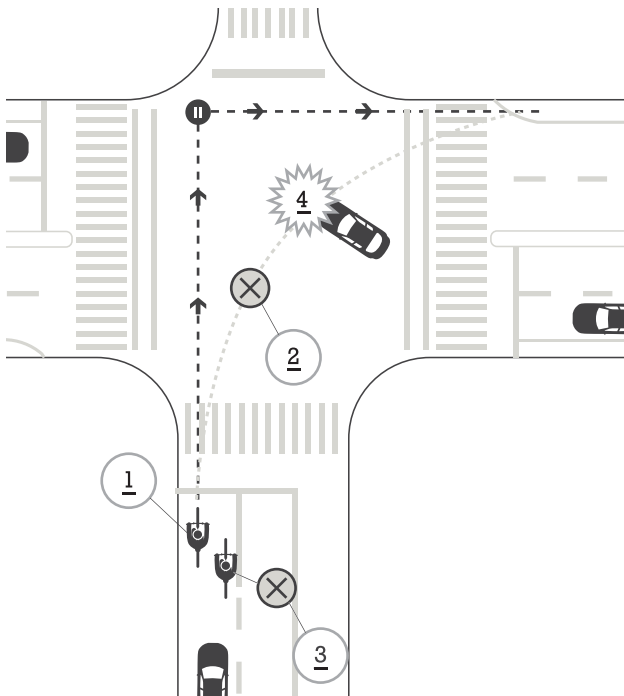
WHERE TO RIDE?

Road Cycling

PART 2



When cycling on the road observe the same rules as motor vehicles where possible.



ROAD CYCLING

1. Cycle on the LEFT

Just do it, don't argue.

2. Turning Right

At large intersections cyclists are forbidden to make right hand turns. Instead they must make a two point turn by first cycling through the intersection, and turning 90 degrees and waiting for the light to turn green in order to continue in their desired direction.

3. Don't ride 2 abreast

Riding two abreast on the road or sidewalk is forbidden.

4. Liability

In the event of an accident between a car and bicycle the car bears the bulk of the responsibility depending on the the circumstances of the accident. Just because the car is almost always deemed at fault is no excuse to ride dangerously.

WHERE TO RIDE?

Road Cycling

PART 2



When cycling on the road, pay attention!

DOORINGS

Don't cycle too close to parked cars to prevent getting doored.

The left hand rear door of taxis open automatically, another source of danger for cyclists. Wherever possible safely pass taxis on the right hand side.



CARS PULLING IN & OUT

Delivery vehicles and taxis abound in Japanese cities and both are prone to suddenly pulling into the side of the road. Thus cycling through an entertainment district at night can be surprisingly dangerous.



TRAFFIC LIGHTS

When your light turns green be sure to check left and right before proceeding. Taxi drivers in particular are prone to running orange and "just turned red" lights.

TRAINLINES

Be careful not to slip on or get your tire caught in train or tram lines.



MANHOLES

Drain covers and painted markings can be surprisingly slippery in the rain, so please exercise caution.

BICYCLE PARKING



General Security

PART 3

Parking on the street as you duck into a shop generally OK, but for longer stays use paid parking spaces.

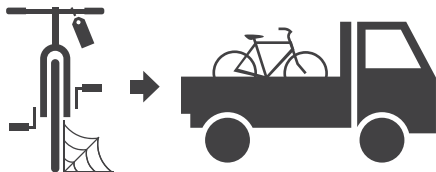
PARKING ADVICE

If you do park on the street, do not obstruct the sidewalk.

Illegally parked bicycles are tagged for removal. After some time (hours, days, or weeks it differs by location) tagged bicycles are collected and impounded.

In order to retrieve a bike that has been impounded a ¥3,000 ~ ¥5,000 fee must be paid.

Impounded bicycles are eventually scrapped, but some may be recycled and resold, so reclaim yours as soon as possible.



BICYCLE ACCESSORIES



Required Add-ons

PART 4

THINGS YOU SHOULD HAVE



Japan is relatively safe and many people do not lock their bicycles. We recommend that you lock your bicycle to a stationary object.



When cycling at night all cyclists are required to have a working front light. Rear lights are not required by law, but are highly recommended




Bicycle bells are a legal requirement in some prefectures. Regardless, if you find yourself frequently cycling among pedestrians a bell will come in quite handy.




Children under 13 years of age are required to wear a helmet. There is no such requirement for adults and the majority of people in Japan cycle without helmets. It's up to you.






PASSENGERS & CARGO		
Quaxing Information	PART 5	









CHILD PASSENGERS	
	It is against the law to cycle with a passenger in Japan, with the exception of children under 6 years old.
	Children travelling as passengers must be in a Bicycle Association approved child seat, and wear a helmet.
	In cases where the childseat has a seatbelt, please do use it.
	Cycling with 2 children, one on the front and one on the back, is acceptable and perfectly safe if done so responsibly.


LAWS / FINES		
Rules For Cyclists	PART 6	

DON'T DO THESE THINGS	
	Hold an umbrella
	Cycle while intoxicated
	Without brakes
	Passengers
	Anything else deemed "dangerous"

BICYCLE REGISTRATION	
Registration is compulsory, but there is no punishment for not doing so. Bicycle registration must be transferred to the new owner when a bicycle is sold.	

SEASONS & CLOTHING		
Looking Good!	PART 7	

SEASONS		
Summer	°C	Clothes
Hot and humid, making cycling a sweaty affair. Stay hydrated and carry a towel.	30° - 34°	
Autumn		
Temperatures that make you feel you could cycle forever.	13° - 26°	
Winter		
Cold, but reasonably dry and you can cycle everyday. Avoid cycling in snow unless you're experienced.	1° - 9°	
Spring		
Bright sunny days which makes for perfect cycling weather. Wonderful season for bicycle touring.	2° - 17°	
Wet Season		
Hot, wet and humid. Rainwear recommended	21° - 30°	

TYPES OF BIKES		
All Shapes & Sizes	PART 8	
Roads in Tokyo are generally well maintained and thus suitable to be ridden by any style of bicycle.		



Mamachari
ママチャリ



Tall Bike
トルバイク



Stretch Cruiser
ストレッチクルーザー



Tandem*
タンデム自転車



Road Bike
ロードバイク



Fat Bike
ファットバイク



Longtail
ロングテール自転車



Cargo*
カーゴバイク

*Might not be legal - check your local ordinances

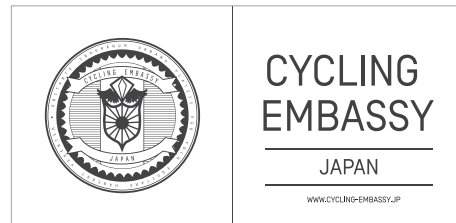
FINAL NOTE

Cycling in Japan is easy. Ride safely and use common sense. Observe those around you and go with the flow.

People are accommodating as long as you're not causing an inconvenience, or cycling dangerously.

Above all have fun.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



NOTICE

This handbook does not contain all the rules and regulations according to Japanese law. While we strive to adhere to the spirit of the law, we strongly advise you to

CHECK YOUR LOCAL ORDINANCES

for a more comprehensive understanding of how the authorities view certain cycling activities.



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