

Cars and Driving in Kumamoto

By Erika Egner



Upon arrival, driving in Japan may sound like a daunting prospect. The road laws are different, the signs are all in Japanese, and for some of us, everything is flipped! For many JETs, it will be the first time to drive on the left, in a car with the steering wheel on the right.

In fact, it is not nearly as difficult to adjust to driving in Japan as one might think. Road signs are often bilingual or pictographic, and getting used to left-hand driving takes just a week or two. The biggest problem is accidentally putting on the windshield wipers instead of the blinker. Also, not everyone needs to drive. For many rural placements, it is extremely useful (though not necessary!) to have a car. In urban placements, the high cost of parking and the ready availability of public transportation can make cars burdensome rather than useful.

In this document you will find:

1. To Drive or Not to Drive
2. What to Drive
3. Leasing vs. Buying
 - Leasing a car
 - Buying a car
 - Costs of car ownership
 - Additional costs
4. Licenses
 - International Driving Permit
 - Japanese Driver's License
 - Items required to obtain a Japanese license
 - Scooter licenses
 - Renewing a Japanese license
 - Reissuing a Japanese license
5. Rules of the Road
6. Road Etiquette, Habits, and Suggestions
7. Road Signs
8. Useful Contact Information

To Drive or Not to Drive

Most rural JETs end up buying cars. While most ALTs live close to their base schools, they often have visiting schools that may be located far away. Often, there will be sparse or inconvenient buses (or none at all!) to those locations. JETs may live far from grocery stores or other conveniences, as well as far from other JETs and things to do. For these people, having a car makes a lot of sense.

On the other hand, a significant number of JETs are located in Kumamoto city or other urban areas that are serviced with frequent trains and buses. It will not be necessary to use a car to get to work, although it can still be nice to have one for the added freedom it gives to explore Kyushu and Kumamoto.

That said, in rare cases JETs don't have a choice. Some COs have rules on driving, so discussing that with your CO and other area JETs will be your first step. Some places don't allow driving to work, but allow you to have a car for private purposes. Others may give you a car, but limit it to work-related driving. Others may allow driving to work, but request that you use public transportation to go to business trips such as the Skill Development Conference. Chances are any rules will be written in your contract, so read it thoroughly and be sure to clarify any questions that you may have.

What to Drive

Most driving JETs will drive cars, but it is not the only option. Also, there seem to be hundreds of types of cars! What the heck is a “white plate”? Or a “kei car”? The following chart gives an introduction to the most common options.

Scooter (原付, <i>gentsuki</i>)	Under 50cc	Slow, but good for short trips and in urban areas. Cannot be driven with an international driving permit, but it is easy to get a license, as you don't need to take a course.
Small motorcycles	50cc to 125cc	More expensive than scooters. International permits don't cover motorcycles, and an automobile or motorcycle licensing course is required. If you take the test on a motorcycle this size you cannot drive a standard sized motorcycle.
Motorcycles	126cc and over	More expensive than scooters. International permits don't cover motorcycles. Requires an automobile or motorcycle licensing course.
Light car (軽自動車, <i>kejidousha</i>), commonly known as yellow plates or kei cars.	Engine displacement under 660cc	Less powerful than an average car, so can be slow on steep hills or when carrying a heavy load. Gas, taxes and tolls are cheaper than for white plate cars. Footprint is small, so easy to maneuver.
Normal car (普通自動車, <i>futsujidosha</i>), commonly known as white plates.	Average sized car, vans, etc.	Easier to handle on hills and mountains or when loaded with things or people. Can be bulky and hard to maneuver on narrow country roads, but are sturdier and safer. Taxes can get expensive.

For a cheaper option, many JETs go with kei cars. White plate cars are safer, roomier, and more powerful but significantly more expensive, both when initially buying and when

time comes in April to pay the yearly tax. They are also faster, but given the generally low speed limits in Japan kei cars can usually keep up easily.

In the city, a scooter might be useful and is much, much cheaper than a car. There are JETs who prefer to use scooters even in rural areas. You will often see high school students coming home from school with them, since the driving age for scooters is 16, two years earlier than for cars. There's further information about motorcycles vs. scooters here:

<http://www.nic-nagoya.or.jp/en/e/archives/4524>.

Leasing vs. Buying

Leasing a car

There are advantages and disadvantages both to leasing and buying a car. Leasing can be cheaper if you plan to stay only one year (especially for kei cars), and are advantageous in that the leasing company will pay for taxes, insurance, *shaken*, and repairs. (*Shaken* will be discussed later.) If you get into an accident, the company will provide a lot of help.

Payments are on a monthly basis. Unlike when buying, you will never have to make a big payment all at once (such as when buying a car and paying the yearly tax). However, if you stay more than one year it will most likely be cheaper in the long run to buy a car, assuming you don't get into large crashes too frequently. Leasing a kei car will cost around 15,000 to 35,000 yen a month. This includes insurance, and likely includes (check to be sure!) reparations, *shaken*, and taxes. For a white place, costs might be between 80,000 to 150,000 yen a month.

There are only a few places to lease a car in Kumamoto. Most people do it through Muraoka-san, located in Yatsushiro. There may be other options, so ask your CO for help.

Buying a car

The first step when buying a car is, of course, finding one. Often predecessors or other area JETs will have a car that they will leave or sell to you for relatively cheap. This is the easiest way to find a car, the fastest, and likely one of the cheapest. On the other hand, your predecessor may not have had a car, or it may have been old and riddled with problems. Don't feel obliged to buy a car if it looks awful, and be sure to test drive. If you do buy from your predecessor, ask about *shaken* – if it is due within the next few months the cost should be much cheaper than if they just had it done.

Even at a dealer, don't buy something just because it's cheap. You can probably manage until your first paycheck by pawning rides off friends and co-workers and using a bicycle. When buying a car, bring someone who knows cars to check that it runs as it should. Be sure that it has working air conditioning and heating. Temperatures get extremely high in summer, and while winter is warmer than much of Japan, an unheated car will be torturous. In mountainous, snowy areas, you will need snow tires for winter.

If your predecessor didn't have a car, moved elsewhere in Japan and kept it, or had one despite it being a death trap, there are lots of ways to find cars. The majority of you will want a used car, which can be found for pretty cheap. Ask your CO to look for cars, or at least where to find used car dealerships. Other options are:

1. The notice board at the international center (between the Kotsu center and Kumamoto castle) or the Kumamoto Facebook group/forum for people selling their cars.
2. The web for good car deals. One recommended site is: www.carciao.com
3. Monthly car magazines. Available in most convenience stores.

Costs of car ownership

1. Initial cost (assuming at least one year of *shaken*, cars without *shaken* should be this minus the *shaken* cost)

A used kei car will likely cost around 60,000 – 250,000 yen. White plates will be more expensive, starting around 100,000 for an older car and going up from there.

2. Yearly tax (April/May) (自動車税, *jidosha-zei*)

White plates: 29,500 yen (under 1,000 cc) – 111,000 yen (over 6,000 cc)

Kei cars: 7,200 yen (though inexplicably some people's tax is more like 4,000 yen)

Scooters/Motorcycles: 1,000 yen (50 cc) – 4,000 yen (over 250 cc)

3. Weight tax, paid as part of *shaken* (重量税, *juryo-zei*)

New white plate (good for 3 years): 37,800 yen – 75,600 yen according to weight

Used white plate (good for 2 years): 2/3 of the weight tax of a new automobile

New kei car (good for 3 years): 13,200 yen

Used kei car (good for 2 years): 8,800 yen

Motorcycles: the weight tax is based on engine displacement

4. Compulsory Insurance, one year's worth (自賠償保険, *jibaiseki hoken*)

White car: 16,350 yen

Kei car: 15,600 yen

Scooters: 7,280 yen

5. Voluntary Insurance (任意保険, *nin'i hoken*)

In general, compulsory insurance covers the car, while optional insurance covers injuries and damages. GET THIS. It's "voluntary" but you will want it, and all drivers are expected to have it. Being in an accident can be very expensive and if you cause any injuries will lead to a long, complicated process. Even if you did not cause the accident, just being on the road means you have to take part of the blame for the accident. The insurance company will help you if this happens.

If you were found to be the main cause of blame (for example, if you rear-end someone), you will likely have to pay for their repairs as well as your own. This is what voluntary insurance covers. Depending on your insurance plan, they may cover only the repairs to the other person's car, but not your own. In other cases, if the other driver has no insurance, you may have to cover the cost to your car yourself. This can happen under ridiculous circumstances – for example, one JET's car was hit by a drunk driver while it was parked and the JET was in their apartment asleep. Even though she wasn't even driving at the time, the JET's insurance company had to cover the cost and their insurance rate went up just because the drunk driver didn't have insurance.

The cost of this insurance will depend on the plan and the car. All cover the other car, some cover yours as well, and some cover your car if your friends drive it. Talk with the insurance agent to see which is the best choice, but remember that more protection is better.

6. Vehicle inspection (車検, *shaken*)

Finally we've gotten to *shaken*. Cars (and motorcycles with an engine displacement over 250cc) must undergo a vehicle inspection periodically. This can be done at a dealer or repair shop. For a new car, *shaken* is good for three years. After that, it lasts for two years.

It takes about a week for *shaken* to be completed. If you need to drive during that time, ask your dealer or repair shop to lend you a substitute vehicle, or *daisha* (代車). In addition to the weight tax (listed above), you will have to pay an inspection fee as well as for any repairs. A kei car may cost around 60,000 – 80,000 yen. White plates will be

110,000 – 160,000 yen.

After a certain point, shaken costs more than the car is worth. This is why old cars and clunkers are rarely seen on the roads in Japan. When a car reaches that point, you will have to pay someone to take it off your hands.

7. Car ownership transfer cost

Keep in mind that there is some paperwork and cost associated with changing a car's ownership. If you buy from a dealer, they should do this for you. If you buy from a predecessor, get your CO to help you. This paperwork includes:

1. Parking Certification (車庫証明, *shako shomei*)

This certificate, submitted to the local police, proves that you have somewhere to park your car. If your house or apartment doesn't have a parking space, you will have to rent one. The price will vary depending on how urban you are. If you live somewhere very rural, this may not be necessary.

2. Vehicle Registration (車両登録, *sharyo toroku*)

All vehicles must be registered, and you must have the registration certificate in your car at all times. You will need to update the registration if you change your name or address, if your vehicle is out of service, or if you leave the country for good. You can likely get your CO to help you with this.

For more information on transferring car ownership, go to

<http://www.kumamotojet.com/Driving--and--Cars.php#transfer> .

Additional Costs

1. Parking

In rural areas, most places will have parking available for free. This is not the case in the city. Kumamoto City has a variety of short term parking areas. Only some are 24 hours. Either you get a ticket and pay when you return, or the tires are locked and you enter your number bay into a vending machine to check the cost. The cheapest (24 hour) parking spots in the city are:

- パスート (Pasuuto, about a 2 - 5 min walk away from the entrance of Kamitori / Shimotori. The parking lot is situated along route 3, very close to the big intersection where route 3 and Densha Dori cross. It is a big yellowish building). There is also another Pasuuto near the Kotsu Center, but that one is more expensive (although still cheap).
- ぱーくすりー (PARK THREE, yep, this time written in ひらがな instead of カタカナ) The second cheapest parking in the city and it is situated right beside Pasuuto.
- パスート (Near the Kotsu Center, and recognizable from a distance by the big P-sign).

In Pasuuto the costs for parking can depend on the floor you park on. Parking on the first floor is more expensive than when you park on the roof. Sometimes in the evenings parking is priced the same for each floor and that's when it gets really cheap/less expensive to park in this parking.

2. Tolls

All expressways are toll roads, and they are costly. It can be very expensive over a long distance, but if you carpool with a couple of friends, it will cut the costs and will probably be cheaper and faster than trains. Toll costs depend on the kind of car and the time of day. For example, from Kumamoto to Fukuoka it costs 2,250 yen in a kei car and 2,800 in a white plate. There is a very helpful toll calculator located at

<http://www2.kumagaku.ac.jp/teacher/~masden/tolls/>.

ETC (Electronic Toll Collection) readers are useful but may be difficult to get, as

they have to be linked to a Japanese credit card. With an ETC card reader, the Fukuoka trip will in a kei car can cost between 1,150 and 1,600 yen depending on time of day.

3. Gas/Petrol

Obviously to operate a car you will need frequent trips to the gas station, known as “gas stands” in Japanese. There are two types of gas stations – self service and full service. Full service stations cost slightly more but offer services such as window cleaning and trash collection. If they offer you a towel, it is used to wipe the inside of the windows. Self service stations are indicated by the word セルフ.

Indicated prices are by the liter. In self service stations, you prepay and get your change when you are done. In full service, they will tell you the price after filling up. A very useful word to know is 満タン, or *mantan*, which means “full tank.” Otherwise you can buy specific amounts of gas; for example 2,000 yen worth.

Many gas companies have rewards programs where you can use their card to get slightly cheaper gas and also get points. Typically this is 1 point per 100 yen, but on certain days a week they might give 2 or 3 points per 100. Find out which days they are for the station closest to your house. You can use these points to get discounts later. Some cards can be used at multiple stores. For example, the T-point card can be used at Tsutaya (movie and music rentals slash bookstore), Family Mart (convenience store), Eneos (gas station), as well as any number of other companies.

Licenses

If you got an International Driving Permit before coming to Japan, you are all set for a year (unless you plan on driving a motorcycle or scooter). It is valid for 1 year from the date that you arrive in Japan. If you stay for over a year, you will have to get a Japanese license.

International Driving Permit

Note that there are some countries, such as France, Germany, and Switzerland, that issue international permits that are not recognized by Japan. If you have a license from one of those countries, it is possible to drive for one year with an official Japanese translation of your license. You can apply for this at the Japan Automobile Federation (JAF). Information can be found here: <http://www.jaf.or.jp/e/switch.htm>.

If you want to drive in Japan but did not get an International Driving Permit before arrival, it is possible to get it in Japan using your foreign license. Go to the Kumamoto Prefectural Driver's License Center with your driver's license, a 5x4 cm photo (which you can take at the center), inkan, passport, and resident card. It costs 2,650 yen.

Japanese Driver's License

If you are in Japan for over a year, you will need to get one. Your international permit runs out exactly one year after arriving in Japan. If you don't have a license from your home country or cannot prove that you were in that country for at least three months after getting the license, you will need to take driving courses here in Japan. These can be time consuming and are very expensive. Luckily, most people will be able to transfer a foreign license into a Japanese one.

Some countries, such as Ireland, the UK, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada, have agreements with Japan that make it very easy to get a Japanese license. All you have to do is go to the Driver's License Center with your documents, take an eye test, and fill out some paperwork.

If you don't have a license from one of these countries, the process is a bit more complicated. In addition to all of the same documents, you will need to take a written test and a practical driving test. The written test, which is offered in English, Japanese, and Chinese, is very easy. It consists of ten true or false questions. The driving test is more difficult and often

takes multiple tries to pass. It is a good idea to begin this process a few months before your International Permit expires, to accommodate waiting time for the JAF translation and crowded times at the Driver's License Center as many other recontracting ALTs also try to get their licenses.

Many people go to their local driving school and take a course (usually around 3,500 yen an hour) that teaches the exact skills needed to pass the course. The proctors are very particular about certain things, like how close to the curb you are and how soon you turn on your blinker. Even if you are an experienced driver who has never been in an accident, the skills needed for the driving test are rather different from the skills needed for actual driving. Taking a course may be well worth the money, as it might help you pass the test the first or second time so that you can avoid using all of your vacation days on it. Most people have to take the test three or four times before passing. Some people think that proctors do not want people to pass the first time, and deliberately fail people even if they should have passed. There are people who do pass the first time, so it is possible. Just count on failing at least once and make sure you have a few extra vacation days budgeted.

Items required to obtain a Japanese driver's license

- Original driver's license and certificate of the issue date (if it is not shown)
- Official Japanese translation of original driver's license by the Japan Automobile Federation <http://www.jaf.or.jp/e/switch.htm>.
- An official document showing that you have been in the country that you received your driver's license from for at least three months after issuance. This can be a college transcript (with a stamp from your CO making it official), a driving record from your country, etc.
- International Driving Permit (if you have one, to prove that you didn't drive to the center without a license)
- Residency certificate (住民票, *jumin-hyo*), available from your local city/town hall for 300 yen
- Residence card
- Two photographs (3cm x 2.4 cm), which can be taken at the license center
- Passport
- Inkan
- Fee (2,200 yen application fee + 2,050 yen issuance fee + 700 yen photo booth fee + extra just in case. You will have to pay the application fee every time you take the test, but the issuance fee only when you pass)
- Japanese speaker (If needed. Chances are no one at the center will be willing to translate for you.)

Further information can be found here: <http://www.japandriverslicense.com/>.

Scooter licenses (From the Kumamoto website)

Your International Driver's Permit does not entitle you to drive a scooter in Japan. You MUST obtain a special scooter certification. If you have a Japanese automobile license, you can use that. To get a scooter certification, please follow these steps:

1. Go to the Licensing Center (*menkyo sentaa* 免許センター) in Kumamoto City between 8:30 and 9 a.m. on the day you wish to take the scooter course.
 - No appointment is necessary.
 - If you are late they will make you come back another day.
2. Register for the day's scooter course. You will have to fill out a bit of paperwork (in Japanese) for this.
3. Take a written exam, in English (poorly translated, but it's understandable), consisting of 10 questions. It's very easy.
4. Take an "aptitude" test. This is nothing more than a vision test. Bring your glasses if you wear them for driving.

5. Bring with you these items:

- Resident Card
- Resident Record, available at your municipal hall.
- A passport-sized photo (3cm x 2.4cm). If you can't get one beforehand, or forget, there's an instant photo booth at the Menkyo Center where you can get these done for ¥700.
- Something to write with. There are, apparently, no pens or pencils at the center, so bring your own.
- Money. The total costs of the course, registration, tests, etc. will be roughly ¥10,000. Best to shoot a little higher in case a few extra fees pop up.
- Glasses (if you wear them).
- It is recommended that you bring someone to translate if your Japanese isn't very good.

Renewing a Driver's License

Depending on how long you stay in Japan, you may need to renew your license. You can do this within a month before or after the expiration date (your birthday). You will be sent a reminder 30 days before your birthday. When you go to renew it, your driving record will be checked. If it is clean, a renewed license will be valid for five years. If you have caused an accident or been caught breaking traffic rules, a renewed license will be valid for three years.

When you go to renew your license, you will need the renewal notification you received, your driver's license, and inkan. It will cost around 3,000 yen if nothing is on your record. You will be required to take an eye test and watch a road safety video (in Japanese).

If you don't renew it within the renewal period, you can still renew it if you take an aptitude test and attend a traffic rule lecture within 6 months.

Reissuing a driver's license

If your license is lost or damaged, you must go to the Driver's License Center to have it reissued. You will need 3,350 yen, plus a 3cm x 2.4cm photograph and inkan. If it was lost, you will need a report issued by your local police station. If it was damaged, just bring the license.

Rules of the Road

As with any country, it is a good idea to become familiar with the rules of the road before you begin driving. You can obtain English language books to help you learn driving rules. A good one is "Rules of the Road" by JAF (1,000 yen). Here are some important things to know:

- Drive on the left!
- Keep left if driving slowly; faster cars will overtake you on the right. According to the law, the right lane on an expressway should only be used for passing and should remain open at all other times. People have been pulled over for driving too long on the right. This may or may not result in a ticket.
- When making a right turn onto a multiple-lane road, turn into the far left lane. This is counter intuitive but it's the law. It's because the right lanes are only supposed to be used as passing lanes.
- No left turns on red! This is different from the US and Canada, which allow right turns even if the light is red.
- Pedestrians have right of way, always. Be sure to check for pedestrians before pulling out from a driveway or making a right turn. Watch out for bikes, which are ridden on the sidewalk.

- Always turn on your headlights in tunnels.
- Always stop before crossing train tracks.
- Seatbelts are required for the driver and front passenger. You can get pulled over and ticketed if you are seen without a seatbelt. They are not required for the backseat and many people don't use them.
- Drivers of scooters and motorcycles are required to wear helmets.
- Scooters drive on the left side of the road, between the sidewalk and cars. It can be a pretty tight spot, especially when turning.
- Don't use your cell phone while driving. You can get ticketed and fined for this, whether it's hands-free or not.
- And last but not most important: Don't drive drunk. That deserves another mention: **DON'T DRIVE DRUNK.** Japan has a zero-tolerance attitude towards drunk driving, and consequences are very strict. Your license will be taken away, you will be fined up to 500,000 yen, and you may be fired and face jail time or deportation. Unlike in some countries where you can have one drink and still be fine, if even the slightest amount of alcohol is found on your breath, you will be charged. You can also be charged if you knowingly let someone else drive after drinking, or bicycle while drunk. Sometimes police will set up checkpoints, where they will check everyone who come by. They can stop anyone, even if you are not driving suspiciously. If you plan on drinking, take a taxi or *daiko*. Daikos are like taxi services, but they come with two people, one of whom drives your car home for you.

Road Etiquette, Habits, and Suggestions

Japan has some specific road etiquette rules that might differ from what you're used to. Drivers might also not follow some rules that you're used to. Here are some things to keep in mind.

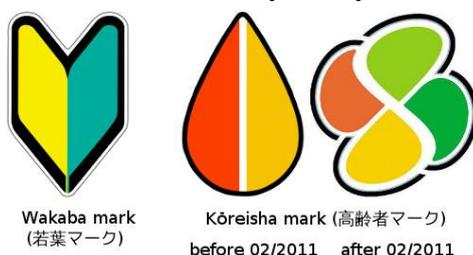
- If you feel unsure about driving at first, you can get a “new driver” magnet to put on your car. This will let people know that you might drive erratically. (You can see an example below.)
- People rarely honk here. If you hear a single, quick honk, it's most likely a “thank you” rather than a “get out of my way!”
- Flashing hazard lights can mean “thank you” or “sorry.” For example, if you let someone in on a busy road they may flash their lights in thanks, or if you cut someone off, you can flash them to say sorry.
- Flashing lights from someone coming the opposite direction means that they are letting you turn right in front of them.
- If someone is tailgating you, pull over when you get a chance to let them pass.
- Yellow lights are short. If you see a pedestrian cross light begin to flash, it might not be a bad idea to slow down, because the light will turn yellow very soon. On the other hand, many drivers use it as a cue to speed up. Many people run red lights, so be careful.
- There are a lot of blind curves. Use the mirrors on the side of the road. They help you to see if someone is coming.
- On a narrow road (or especially a narrow tunnel), people will often stop to let someone else pass from the other direction. Give them a nod in thanks.
- There are also a lot of narrow roads, which is a bigger problem because of the tendency to have deep, uncovered gutters on the sides of the roads. You do not want to drive (or bicycle or jog) into one of these. Chances are your car will be fine, but flat tires and even broken axles have been known to happen. To make matters worse, they are often hard to see because of vegetation, and when they are covered, the covers can sometimes break. These are colloquially known as *gaijin* traps.

- Speed limits seem slow, but it is a good idea to obey them. Speeding can have serious, expensive consequences. Speed limits are typically 40 in towns, 50 on bigger roads, and 80 on expressways. Most people speed between 10 and 20 km/hr over the limit, but I would err on the side of caution. As teachers, we represent our cities and schools, and it looks very bad to be caught in a traffic violation.
- In case of an accident, call the police, your insurance company, and your supervisor. (Or if your Japanese is not as good, call your supervisor and have them call the police and your insurance.) AIU is an insurance company that has good English support. It is also a good idea to make a relationship with a mechanic, and call him/her in case of an accident as well. You might get a better deal on repairs if you know the mechanic already.

Road signs

A few points to keep in mind:

- A thick white line across the road is a stop line – but not in all cases. You may be used to seeing them only in places you have to stop, but they are more common here. You only have to stop if there is a red light, stop sign or とまれ is written on the road.
- Blinking yellow stop lights mean “yield.” Blinking red should be treated as a stop sign. You may see these at night.
- Some intersections have stop lights in only one direction. These are usually always green for the main street, with buttons for pedestrians to stop traffic if they need to cross. If you are on the cross street, treat it as a stop sign.
- Green road signs indicate expressways. You will have to pay for their use, but you can generally get to your destination significantly faster than taking ordinary roads. They are always bilingual.
- The Wakaba, or Shoshinsha, mark is used to indicate new drivers. It is required to display it on your car for one year after getting a new license. This usually doesn't apply if you transfer a foreign license. The Kōreisha mark is displayed on the cars of drivers over 70. This one is not mandatory. They look like this:



- On the following page are some of the more common road signs.

ROAD SIGNS IN JAPAN

	Stop		Slow		Closed to Vehicles & Pedestrians		Closed to all Vehicles		Do Not Enter		Closed to Vehicles & Motorcycles		Road Closed to Large Sized Trucks & Special Duty Vehicles		Road Closed to All Vehicles Except Two Wheeled Vehicles		Closed to Light Vehicles Except Bicycles		Closed to Large Passenger Vehicles
--	-------------	--	-------------	--	----------------------------------	--	------------------------	--	---------------------	--	----------------------------------	--	---	--	---	--	--	--	------------------------------------

	No Right Turn		No U-Turn		No Passing		No Two Step Turns (Turn normally)		Closed to Two Wheeled Vehicles		Closed to Vehicles with Hazardous Cargo		Closed to Large Trucks Over 3 Tons		Closed to Bicycles		No Pedestrian Crossing		Closed to Pedestrians
--	---------------	--	-----------	--	------------	--	-----------------------------------	--	--------------------------------	--	---	--	------------------------------------	--	--------------------	--	------------------------	--	-----------------------

PARKING SIGNS



NO PARKING
No parking at any time, may stop for up to 5 minutes for loading and unloading provided a driver is present at all times.



No Parking or Stopping Anytime

SPEED LIMIT SIGNS



30
Minimum Speed



50
Maximum Speed

SIZE & WEIGHT LIMIT SIGNS



2.2^m
Maximum Width in Meters



5.5^t
Maximum Weight in Tons



3.3^m
Maximum Height in Meters

Useful Contact Information

Car Leasing

KURUMA NO MURAOKA:

Muraoka san

Tel: 096-539-0852

Fax: 096-539-0804

Car Rentals

Nissan Rental Car (Kumamoto Airport) 0120-00-4123

Nippon Rental Car (Kumamoto Airport) 096-232-5680

Toyota Rental Car (Kumamoto) 096-371-0100

Kumamoto Prefectural Driver's License Center (熊本免許センター)

Reception hours: weekdays (except national holidays)

8:30 AM – 11 AM and 1 PM – 4 PM

2655 Oaza Karakawa, Kikuyou-machi, Kikuchi-gun, Kumamoto-ken

Phone: 096-233-0116

JAF Kumamoto

6-30-30 Nagaminehigashi Higashi-ku, Kumamoto-shi, Kumamoto-ken

Phone: 096-380-9200

If you have any further questions, feel free to come to the driving booth at Kumamoto orientation or ask Erika Egner at any time. She can be contacted at eaegner@gmail.com or 080-6428-4270.