



Tsukuba!

No. 5

June 2025

English

Topic: Rules for riding bicycles and e-scooters

【自転車と電動キックボードの乗り方とルールについて】

Note: All of the two-dimensional codes in this Tips lead to pages in Japanese. To view the pages in other languages, please use the automatic translation function.

Let's ride bicycles and e-scooters safely!

In Tsukuba City, many people rely on bicycles and other forms of transportation. These are essential for daily life, such as commuting to work or school, shopping, and more. However, bicycles and e-scooters are subject to traffic rules just like automobiles. Failure to follow these rules can lead to accidents. In this Tips, we clearly explain the basic rules for riding a bicycle, how to properly dispose of a bicycle, and how to safely use an e-scooter. Take a true or false quiz to check your understanding!

Are you using your bicycle or e-scooter correctly?
- How many of these rules do you know? -

Before you ride a bicycle

Q1: I should have insurance for riding a bicycle. → True or false

The answer is... True. **You should have bicycle insurance.**

If you injure someone or damage property while riding a bicycle, you may be required to pay a large amount in compensation. Therefore, it is a good idea to have bicycle insurance. Tsukuba City recommends that all bicycle riders have insurance. Bicycle insurance may already be included in automobile insurance, fire insurance, or insurance provided by schools or workplaces.

https://www.city.tsukuba.lg.jp/cycle/safety_use/22511.html



Tsukuba City
Official Website



◆ If you become the owner of a bicycle, register it for theft prevention.

When you buy a bicycle or receive one from someone, you should register it to help prevent theft. Registration makes it easier to recover your bicycle if it is stolen and increases the chances that it will be returned to you. The fee for theft prevention registration is 800 yen.

When disposing of a bicycle that has been registered, you should cancel the registration at a bicycle shop or police station. If you are giving the bicycle to someone else, be sure to cancel your registration and prepare a certificate of transfer to properly document the change of ownership.

<https://www.ibaraki-bicycleunion.jp/main102.html>



Ibaraki Pref. Bicycle
and Motorcycle Dealers
Association Website

Rules for riding a bicycle

Q2:I don't need to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle. → True or false

The answer is... False **You should wear a helmet.**

Head injuries are the leading cause of death in bicycle accidents, accounting for more than half of all fatalities. Not wearing a helmet significantly increases your risk of serious injury. To protect yourself, it is important to wear a helmet with a recognized safety certification, such as the SG mark, and to use it properly by fastening the chinstrap securely.

◆ Follow the traffic rules.

Bicycles are classified as vehicles in Japan. This means you must follow the Road Traffic Law when riding, just like drivers of cars.

Obey all traffic signals and signs, and ride safely.

If you repeatedly violate traffic laws, you will be required to attend

a bicycle rider training course. <https://www.keishicho.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/kotsu/jikoboshi/bicycle/koshu.html>



Metropolitan
Police
Department
Website



Ride on the left side of the road.



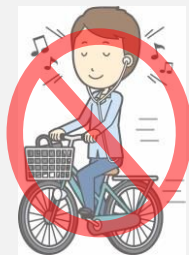
Stop at a stop sign.



Obey traffic signals.



Ride in a single file.



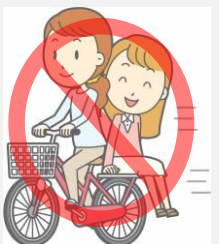
Do not use earphones or headphones while riding.



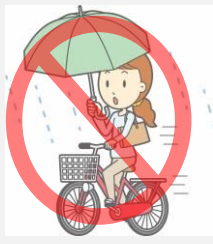
Turn on your bicycle light when it gets dark.



Park your bicycle in a designated area.



Riding with two or more people on one scooter..



Do not use an umbrella while riding.



Penalties for cycling while using a phone or under the influence of alcohol

Cycling under the influence of alcohol:

Up to 3 years of imprisonment or a fine of up to 500,000 yen

Using a phone while riding:

Up to 6 months of imprisonment or a fine of up to 100,000 yen

You may only ride your bicycle on the sidewalk if:

- The sidewalk has a sign or mark like the ones shown on the right
- You are under 13 years old, over 70 years old, or have a physical disability
- The roadway is too dangerous to use, such as when the left side is blocked due to construction, or if the road is narrow and has heavy traffic



△ Pedestrians have priority on sidewalks. When riding on the sidewalk, always go slowly and at a speed that allows you to stop immediately. Keep to the side of the sidewalk closest to the road, and do not obstruct pedestrians on the sidewalk.

When you no longer need a bicycle

Q3: I can leave my bicycle somewhere if I no longer need it. → True or false

The answer is ... **False. Be careful when moving or returning to your home country!**

In Japan, you cannot leave unwanted items, such as bicycles, on the street or in front of your house. When you move or leave Japan, you must properly dispose of your bicycle by following the correct procedures. For example, you can give it to a friend, sell it to a second-hand store, or dispose of it as oversized garbage through the city services. Please do not leave your bicycle abandoned; take responsibility for its final disposal using one of these methods.

◆ Bicycles are collected as oversized garbage.

When disposing of bicycles in Tsukuba City, you have two options; schedule a pick-up with the Oversized Garbage Collection Center (粗大ごみ受付センター *Sodaigomi Uketsuke Center*) or bring it to Sustaina Square (サステナスクエア), the city's waste disposal facility. There is a fee for both methods.

○ Schedule a pick-up with the Oversized Garbage Collection Center to have your bicycle collected at a designated location

1. You can schedule a pick-up of for oversized garbage collection by phone or online.

We accept calls in English and Chinese, but only Japanese available on the web.

Phone: 029-860-2984

WEB: <https://www.city.tsukuba.lg.jp/kurashi/recycle/gomi/1000823.html>

2. By the designated date, purchase the required number of tickets for disposing oversized garbage (粗大ごみ処理券 *Sodaigomi Shoriken*) and put the tickets on your bicycle.

3. Place your bicycle at the designated location on the collection day.



Tsukuba City
Official Website

○ Bring your bicycle to Sustaina Square

You can take your bicycle directly to Sustaina Square for disposal.

Hours: Monday-Friday (8:30-16:30), Saturday (8:30-11:30), Holidays (8:30-12:00 and 13:00-16:30)

A disposal fee of 130 yen per 10 kilograms will be charged. **Only cash payments** are accepted. Reservations are not required. Please bring your residence card or another ID with your address on it.

◆ Abandoned bicycles cause inconvenience.

An abandoned bicycle is defined as a bicycle left in a public place other than a bicycle parking lot for an extended period of time.

Abandoned bicycles will be removed by the city. They will be moved to a city's storage facility, and if unclaimed after a certain period of time, they will be disposed of. To reclaim a removed bicycle, you must pay 1,000 yen (storage fee).

<https://www.city.tsukuba.lg.jp/soshikikarasagasu/>

[kensetsubukoen_shisetsuka/gyomuunnai/4/2/1017006.html](https://www.city.tsukuba.lg.jp/kensetsubukoen_shisetsuka/gyomuunnai/4/2/1017006.html)



Tsukuba City
Official Website

Rules for using an e-scooter

Q: I am under 16 years old. Can I ride an e-scooter? → True or false

The answer is... **False. People under 16 years old are NOT allowed to ride e-scooters..**

Starting in July 2023, a new category of motorized scooters called Specified Small Motorized Bicycles (特定小型原動付自転車 *Tokutei Kogata Gendokitsuki Jitensha*) was established. You can ride e-scooters that fall into this category without a driver's license, if you are 16 years old or older.

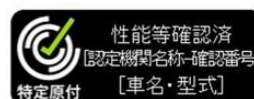
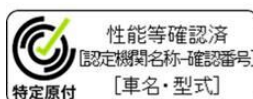
Before riding

◆ Make sure the e-scooter complies with safety standards.

E-scooters that comply with these standards have a sticker like the one shown in the upper right.

For more information, check the website of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure,

Transport and Tourism (MLIT). https://www.mlit.go.jp/jidosha/jidosha_fr7_000058.html



MLIT Website

◆ Get a license plate number.

To obtain a license plate for your e-scooter, file a light motor vehicle tax declaration at the Citizen's Tax Division on the second floor of Tsukuba City Hall. E-scooters are subject to the light vehicle tax.

When registering your e-scooter, bring the certificate of sale showing where you bought it. You are also required to complete procedures when scrapping (disposing of) your vehicle.

Check the website of the Tsukuba City Hall on the right for details.

Tax - Tsukuba City Official Website



<https://www.city.tsukuba.lg.jp/soshikikaragasu/zaimubushiminzeika/gyomuannai/4/1/20406.html>

◆ Join compulsory automobile liability insurance or mutual aid.

All drivers of automobiles, motorized bicycles (motor scooters), and e-scooters must have Compulsory Automobile Liability Insurance (CALI自賠責保険 *Jibaiseki Hoken*) or mutual aid (共済 *Kyosai*).

Driving without CALI may result in imprisonment of up to one year or a fine of up to 500,000 yen.

This insurance covers the cost of medical treatment and nursing care for individuals injured in traffic accidents.

If you cause an accident without this insurance, you will be personally responsible for all medical and other expenses incurred by the injured party. These costs can be very high and place a significant financial burden on you.

Insurance - MLIT Website



<https://www.mlit.go.jp/jidosha/jibaiseki/otherinfo/e-scooter/index.html>

Q5: I can freely ride an e-scooter on sidewalks. → True or false

The answer is... False. **You must ride on the left side of the roadway.**

However, some e-scooters are permitted to ride on sidewalks, but only when signs like the one shown right are posted.

The maximum speed for riding on sidewalks is 6 km/h. Pedestrians have priority on sidewalks. If you are obstructing pedestrian traffic, you must stop temporarily. For more information, check the "Traffic Rules" on the website of Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department (TMPD).

https://www.keishicho.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/kotsu/jikoboshi/electric_mobility/electric_kickboard.html



The following actions are prohibited and may result in fines or other penalties.



Driving under 16 years old



Drunk driving



Using a phone while riding



Riding with two or more people on one scooter.



TMPD Website
Traffic Rules

Note from Translator/翻訳者から一言

Around June in Japan, the rainy season begins. The skies are gloomy and the continuous rain can be a bit depressing. However, there is a beauty that is unique to this season in the colorful hydrangeas that bloom in the rain and the quiet sound of the rain. Reading a book in your room while listening to the sound of the rain. Such a way of spending time may be a joy only at this time of year.

日本では6月ごろになると梅雨という季節になります。空模様はどんよりして、雨がずっと少し憂鬱に感じるかもしれません。しかし、その分、雨に濡れて色鮮やかに咲く紫陽花や、静かな雨音に包まれた時間には、この季節ならではの美しさがあります。雨音を聞きながら、部屋でゆっくりと本を読む。そんな過ごし方も、この時期ならではの楽しみかもしれません。