

HOKKAIDO

Free drive with a rental car

Must-have Handbook for Driving in Hokkaido

Examples of actual problems experienced during driving trips were mainly sourced from a survey of tourists from other countries.

What do you do in such a situation?

- How can I refuel a car at gas stations?
- How can I get on expressways?
- I don't know Japanese traffic rules.
- What should I do in the event of an accident?
- How do I rent a car?
- Others

To help you have a safe, comfortable and pleasant car trip in Hokkaido.

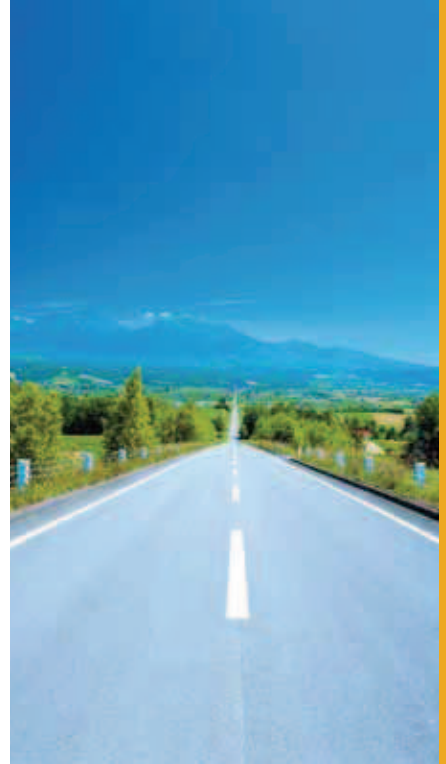
Hokkaido is blessed with natural landscapes and the roads are wide, so you can enjoy pleasant drive. In such surroundings, however, it is easy to pick up speed and there have been many incidents of car accidents. It is true that a rental car is the most appropriate means of transportation to fully enjoy Hokkaido's attractions. If you leave the cities and busy traffic to drive along the roads where tour buses do not go you can experience the "beautiful nature" and "lifestyle" unique to Hokkaido. A free and easy car trip will make your stay in Hokkaido more enjoyable.

Be sure to bring a copy of the "Must-have Handbook for Driving in Hokkaido" when driving in Hokkaido!

Features of this handbook and user's guide

Features

- This guide book has been developed to assist foreign drivers who travel Hokkaido by rental cars to sightsee safely, easily and comfortably.
- In view of the above, all necessary information has been organized in Chapter 1 to Chapter 4.
- When driving in Hokkaido, if you need more detailed information please see the websites of other organizations offering the existing information that are listed in this guide book.



For your pleasant car trip in Hokkaido



How to use this handbook?

As the contents are based on data collected through actual interviews, this is a book that will certainly help you when you are in trouble and wondering, "What should I do in a situation like this?" It can also be used for point and speak.

	<p>Descriptions of troubles that foreign visitors in Hokkaido actually encountered based on the findings of a survey completed by the foreign visitors are denoted.</p>
	<p>Introduces the last resort when you have tried everything and nothing worked.</p>
	<p>Introduces supplementary information such as description of terms.</p>
	<p>Introduces little information unique to the area that will work to your advantage.</p>
	<p>Helpful pointers offered by a master car traveler that will make your Hokkaido trip enjoyable.</p>
	<p>When you are in a bind wondering what to do, you can point at the appropriate phrases listed in this book to communicate with other person. Brief comments are listed.</p>

Before you leave for a Hokkaido tour by car



Two months before the trip	One month before the trip	One week before the trip	Departure!!	Arrival in Hokkaido!!
<p>Collect information on Hokkaido tours by car</p> <p>Make up a list of places you like to visit, roads you like to take, and other related items and it will be easier to decide on the route.</p> <p>➔ P.04 See Chapter 1 Let's drive in Hokkaido!</p>	<p>Decide on the route</p> <p>Decide on the locations to rent and return a rental car. Decide on the number of days and budget for the trip.</p> <p>Make arrangements for air tickets/lodging.</p> <p>Choosing where you stay is a key consideration point when traveling by car. Keep the driving distance within 150 km between the departing location and where your lodging is for the day. If the place you plan to stay for the night is too far, you may end up doing nothing but driving all day.</p> <p>Making arrangements for a rental car</p> <p>A rental car, which is an essential item for your driving trip in Hokkaido, can be booked online. Choose a most appropriate plan based on the number of days, people and the route.</p> <p>➔ P.20 See Chapter 2 Reservation of rental cars</p>	<p>Collect detailed information and obtain necessary items before you leave</p> <p>What you need to have collected!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Driving map of Hokkaido ● Traffic rules and manners <p>➔ P.24 See Chapter 3 Traffic rules and quick tips</p> <p>➔ P.22 See Chapter 2 Reservation of rental cars</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How to use a car navigation system ● Websites for information gathering <p>➔ P.48 See Information Telephone numbers and websites of related organizations</p>	<p>What you absolutely cannot forget</p> <p>The trip itself will not happen unless you have these. When you are going through a procedure to rent a car in Japan, car rental companies occasionally refuse to rent out a car unless you have your passport and international driver's license. So be careful. You will also need these items when you are asked to show the police your driver's license if you are involved in an accident or traffic violation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Passport ● International driver's license issued by a Geneva Convention member country ● A copy of the reservation slip for the rental car <p>*Please check the expiry date of your international driver's license.</p> <p>➔ P.21 See Chapter 2 Reservation of rental cars</p>	<p>Start driving</p> <p>When you have arrived at the airport, go to the car rental booth. From there you will be taken to the office of the car rental company by bus. Be careful since airport offices of car rental companies in Hokkaido are located a little far from the airport. Consult the points of caution for driving in Hokkaido and have a safe and enjoyable drive!</p> <p>➔ P.24 See Chapter 3 Traffic rules and quick tips</p> <p>Points of caution about winter roads</p> <p>If you drive a rental car in winter, information is available on Page 37.</p> <p>➔ P.37 See Chapter 3 3-5. Be careful on snowy roads!</p>

Contents

Introduction – To our foreign visitors –	1	Chapter 4 What should you do in a situation like this?	39
Before you leave for a Hokkaido tour by car	2	4-1. If you are in a car accident or have committed a traffic violation	40
Chapter 1 Let's drive in Hokkaido!	3	4-2. If you have an injury or illness	41
1-1. Vastness of Hokkaido	4	4-3. If you have weather-related trouble	42
1-2. Seasonal charms of Hokkaido	6	4-4. If your car breaks down	43
1-3. Regional charms of Hokkaido	11	4-5. If your car is hit by a wild animal	44
1-4. Useful pieces of knowledge for comfortable driving	16	Information	45
1-5. Observe rules and local customs!	17	(1) Phrases to use (by pointing) in an emergency	46
Information on useful Web sites	18	(2) Telephone numbers and websites of related organizations	48
Chapter 2 Reservation of rental cars	19	(3) Helpful information	51
2-1. Basic information on rental car services	20	In closing	52
2-2. How to use car navigation systems	22		
Chapter 3 Traffic rules and quick tips	23		
3-1. Before driving in Hokkaido	24		
3-2. Traffic rules in Japan you need to know	25		
3-3. Use expressways!	33		
3-4. How to use gas stations	35		
3-5. Be careful on snowy roads!	37		



Chapter 1 Let's drive in Hokkaido!

1-1. Vastness of Hokkaido.....	04
1-2. Seasonal charms of Hokkaido.....	06
1-3. Regional charms of Hokkaido.....	11
1-4. Useful pieces of knowledge for comfortable driving.....	16
1-5. Observe rules and local customs!.....	17
Information on useful Web sites.....	18

1-1. Vastness of Hokkaido

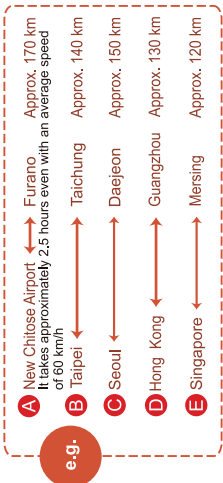
Hokkaido boasts an incredibly large land area, with horizons that stretch as far as the eye can see and very long straight roads. It is a place where travelers can fully enjoy the vastness of nature. However, underestimation of how big it is has led to difficulties in the past so you must plan your trip keeping this in mind.

Distance and travel time

While the distance may seem to be short on a map, it might actually be far away in real terms. Since speed limits may change according to climate-influenced conditions on some roads, it is important to plan your driving trip in vast Hokkaido free from time constraints.

The total area of Hokkaido is approximately 83,000 km²
 (South Korea: 98,000 km², Taiwan: 36,000 km²,
 Hong Kong 1,000 km², Singapore: 700 km²)

The maps below are on the same scale so that readers can fully understand the vastness of Hokkaido in comparison with Taiwan and South Korea.



How to use the Northern Road Navi system (confirm the distance and the expected driving time)

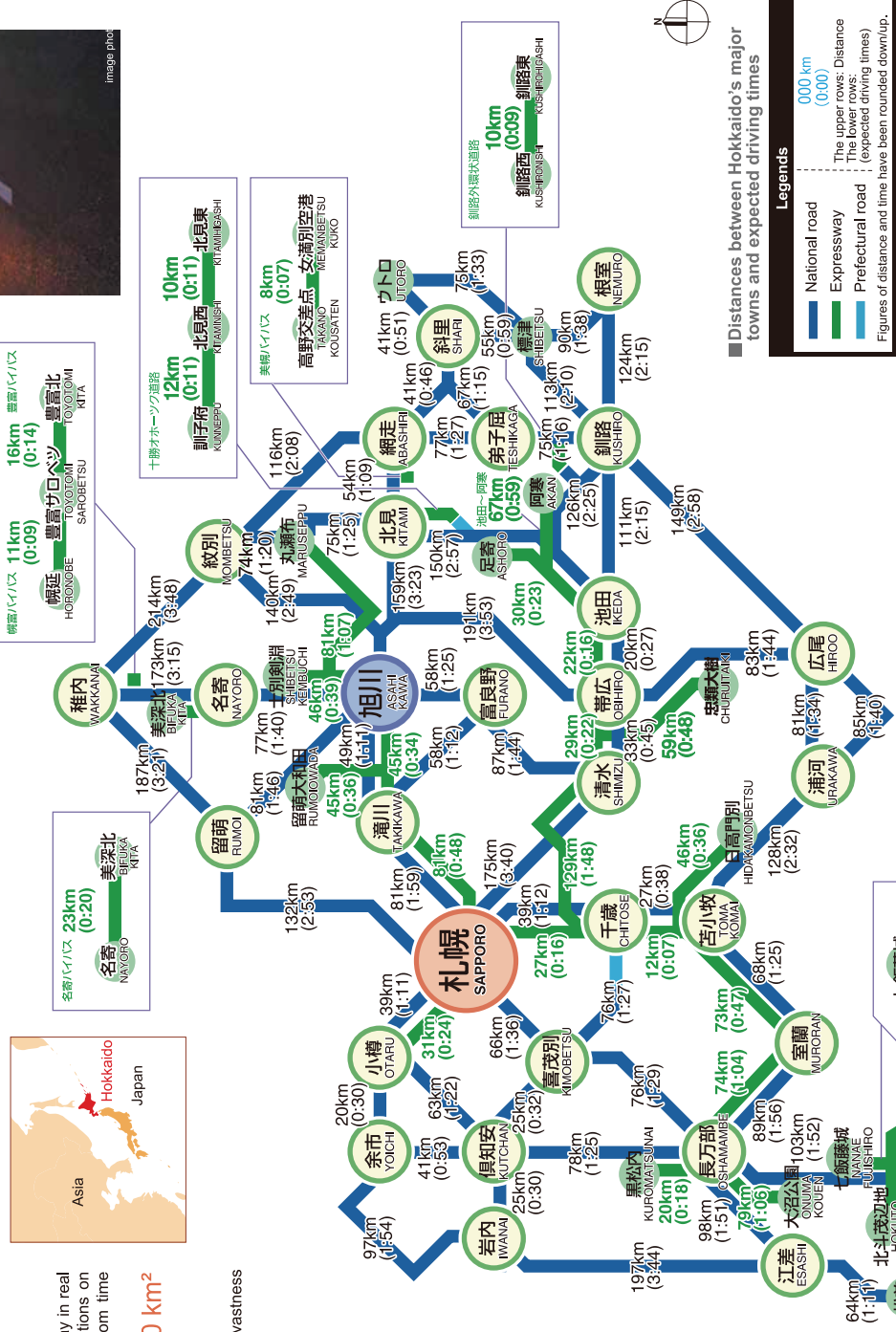
1. Select the departure place and destination by using the tabs for cities and tourist attractions.
 2. Determine the conditions such as "usage of expressways" and "priority of time"
 3. Search starts
- Civil Engineering Research Institute for Cold Region's Northern Road Navi System <http://northern-road.jp/navi/eng/>

Quick Tip
 "Michi-no-eki" are facilities where travelers can relax safely and allows them to take a comfortable break during long-distance drives. The facility also serves as an information centre offering information on sightseeing spots and roads in each area among other things. Since Hokkaido has more than 100 Michi-no-eki, please utilize them when driving. Michi-no-eki in Hokkaido (Web site of the Ministry of Land's Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Hokkaido Regional Development Bureau) http://www.hkd.mlit.go.jp/zigyokai/z_doro/station/index.html (Japanese)



Arrive at the hotel before sunset.

Roads at night are extremely dark in Hokkaido. The number of streetlights decreases the further you travel from an urban area. Roads in the mountains are pitch-black. In darkness, travelers may lose their way due to not being able to see signposts and landmarks. Avoid driving at night and make sure you reach the place where you will stay before sunset. Remember that sunset in Hokkaido in winter is early, around 4:00 p.m.



Distances between Hokkaido's major towns and expected driving times

Legends

- National road (Blue line)
- Expressway (Green line)
- Prefectural road (Red line)

The upper rows: Distance (000 km)
 The lower rows: (expected driving times)
 Figures of distance and time have been rounded down/up.

Tiredness caused by long-distance driving is one of the key factors in traffic accidents.
 Since there are long distances between the major cities, it is important to plan your driving trip in vast Hokkaido free from time constraints.

Introduction of model course
 Recommended Courses in Spring (3 courses)
 Recommended Courses in Summer (2 courses)
 Recommended Courses in Autumn (4 courses)
 Recommended Courses in Winter (3 courses)
 Hokkaido Tourism Organization
<http://en.visit-hokkaido.jp/playourtrip/modelcourse/>



1-2. Seasonal charms of Hokkaido

One of the reasons why Hokkaido is so popular with international drivers is that the four seasons are clearly defined in Hokkaido and visitors can enjoy each season's natural wonders. Enjoy your trip to Hokkaido even more with a little knowledge of the charms of each season. It is also important to know what influences seasonal weather conditions such as snow storms and icy roads can have on driving.



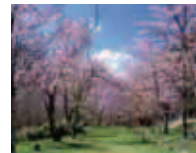
Spring – Hokkaido's charm in spring – Period: April to June

The first signs of spring are found in Hokkaido in April. Butterbur sprouts come up despite the remaining snow, and visitors can enjoy sunshine while watching rivers swollen with water by the melting of the snow. Spring finally arrives in towns despite snow still on the mountains. Cherry blossoms and ume (plum) blossoms are all in bloom together in early May, and after that, lustrous fresh green leaves start to sprout.

Scenery

Cherry blossoms bloom between late April and mid May. Go to see cherry blossoms in full bloom by checking the flowering-time information on the Web site.

Schedule of the cherry-blossom season	April	May		
	late	early	middle	late
Central Hokkaido		←————→		
Southern Hokkaido	←————→			
Northern Hokkaido		←————→		
Eastern Hokkaido		←————→		



Cherry blossoms



Moss phlox

●Japan Weather Association (Japanese only)

<http://www.tenki.jp/sakura/expectation.html>

Experience

The appeal of spring skiing in Hokkaido, which can be enjoyed until early May in Niseko, and Mt. Kurodake in the Taisetsu mountains is the abundance of prime quality snow. Sunglasses need to be worn as Hokkaido's sunshine in May is strong. Thrilling rafting during the snow thawing season is also fun. In spring, the volume of water due to meltwater flows increases dramatically. Rafting is available from April to late May.



Rafting



Spring skiing

Food

With the melting of the snow, Hokkaido's delicious seafood and gifts from the land begin to be available and served up on the table. Asparagus and horsehair crab are typical foods that herald the arrival of spring in Hokkaido. Asparagus is delicious when fried as tempura or with a knob of butter. Horsehair crab is popular for its delicious brown miso.

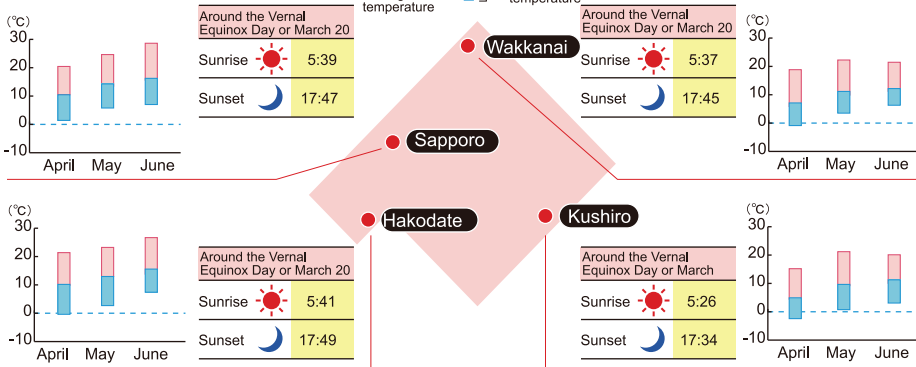


Hairy crab



Asparagus

Basic information on spring



April

Snow starts to melt and skunk cabbages bloom in the wetlands. A coat or jacket is necessary.

May

Although the sunshine is warm, the wind is still cold. Climate is similar to that of Tokyo in April. It is advisable to bring jackets.

June

A series of fine weather days are experienced, and many kinds of flowers begin to bloom all together. Although short-sleeved shirts can be worn occasionally, long-sleeved shirts should also be brought for trips at night.



Important points regarding driving trips in spring

- 1 A number of winter-season road closures are applied on some roads until late April.
- 2 Roads may be frozen up around mountain passes until early May.
- 3 Roads may be frozen near the entrance of tunnels and on bridges.
- 4 Be sure to arrive at the places you plan to stay overnight before sunset.



Summer – Hokkaido's charm in summer – Period: July to August

Hokkaido's summers are short but, because they are dry and not so humid, provide a popular retreat from the heat of other parts of Japan, and are ideal for driving trips.

Scenery

In summer, Hokkaido hosts flowers of red, yellow, pink, purple and other hues all blooming together and painting the vast land with their beautiful colors. All scenery spots of Hokkaido in summer become photo spots.



Koshimizu-gensei-kaen



Sunflowers



Blue Pond

Experience

Many local and unique events are offered in the regions all over Hokkaido to take full advantage of its short summer. Active outdoor programs are recommended to enjoy the vast nature.



Sapporo Summer Festival



Sea kayak



Auto-camping

Food

Shrimps, crabs and sea urchins are Hokkaido's finest products. It is the season of mouth-watering delicacies, with the sweetest melons, watermelons and sweet-corn freshly harvested from the fields.



Unidon (rice topped with sea urchin)

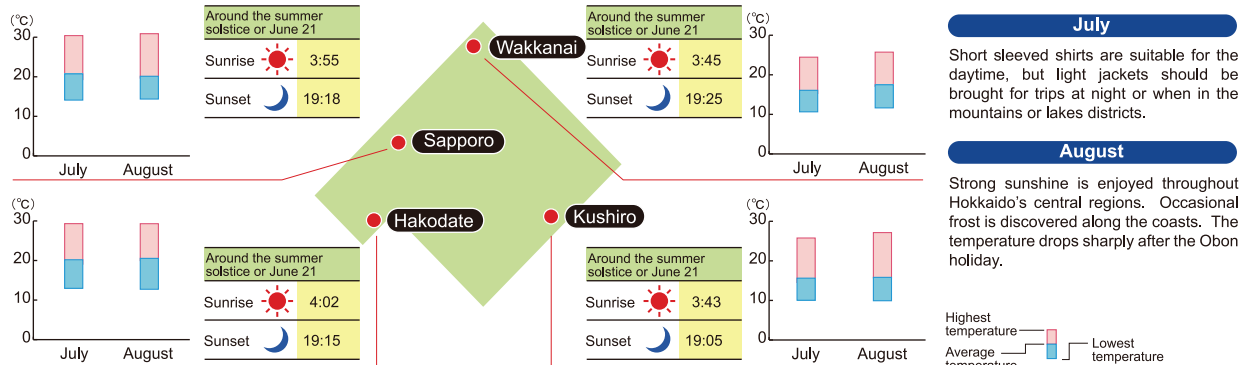


Melon



Corn

Basic information on summer



Important points regarding driving trips in summer

- During the Obon holiday, many people go back to their hometowns and also many tourists visit Hokkaido, and so immigration and departure procedures may take longer than usual. Since sightseeing spots are crowded, it is important to plan your driving trip free from time constraints.
- Roads may be closed (especially when road traffic regulations are introduced) and trains and airplanes can be delayed or cancelled due to natural disasters such as typhoons.
⇒ Refer to Chapter 4.
- Parking lots at sightseeing spots may be crowded, causing traffic jams on the roads nearby. It is important to plan your driving trip in Hokkaido free from time constraints.



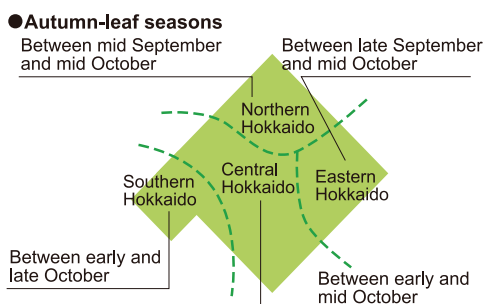
Autumn – Hokkaido's charm in autumn – Period: September to November

Hokkaido in autumn has colorful autumn leaves and is a treasure house of food with a bountiful harvest being produced from the mountains and seas. Visitors can enjoy Hokkaido's seasonal products including potatoes, onions salmon, saury, apples and grapes. Festivals are held throughout Hokkaido, providing excellent opportunities to taste local specialties. Trying the in-season delicacies is highly recommended while you are there.

Scenery

Since the best season for autumn leaves differs by area as well as depending on the climate that year, it is essential to do some research on the Web.

● Japan Weather Association (Japanese only)
<https://tenki.jp/kouyou/>



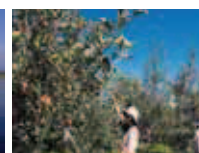
Autumn leaves



Cosmos in Takikawa and Shibetsu



Canoeing



Hands-on harvest (Apple picking)

Experience

Mashike, Yoichi and Niki towns among other areas are famous as places where fruit-picking programs are available, with apples and grapes the main fruits to be harvested. Among other outdoor events, going canoeing on the beautiful lakes is also recommended.

Food

The autumn harvest season is when farm produce such as potatoes and buckwheat are most delicious. What's more, autumn to winter is one of the best seasons for delicious seafood such as Pacific saury and salmon.

Ingredients	Harvesting areas	September			October		
		early	middle	late	early	middle	late
Pacific saury	Eastern Hokkaido	○	○	○	○	○	○
Salmon	Every area in Hokkaido	○	○	○	○	○	○
Aika mackerel	Eastern Hokkaido	○	○	○	○	○	○
Smelt	Mukawa				○	○	○
Japanese Flying Squid	Hakodate	○	○	○			
Hokkai shrimp	Notsuke Bay				○	○	○
Oyster	Akkeshi	○	○	○	○	○	○
Potato	Every area in Hokkaido	○	○	○	○	○	○
New soba noodles	Shintoku, Horokanai	○	○	○			
New rice	Central Hokkaido				○	○	○
Apples	Western part of Central Hokkaido				○	○	○



Sushi



Apple

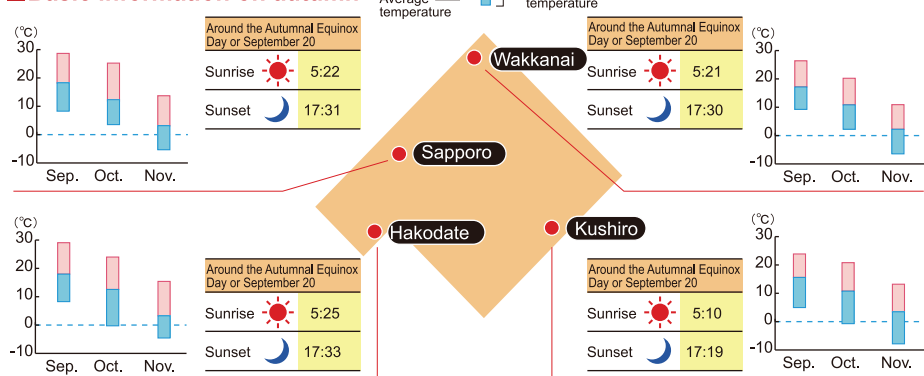


Seafood



Hot buttered potatoes

Basic information on autumn



September
 It becomes chilly in the morning and evening around mid September, and the autumn season begins late in the month.

October, November
 Mid-October is the best season for autumn leaves on the plains, just as the first snow falls in the mountains. Your breath turns white, and sweaters and coats are necessary.



Important points regarding driving trips in autumn

- 1 Sunset happens early. Be careful to know the time for sunset between autumn and winter
- 2 Take care not to slip in the first snows from mid to late October in Northern Hokkaido, in late October in Central and Eastern Hokkaido and early November in Southern Hokkaido.
- 3 The first snow falls on the mountain passes in early October, which is earlier than down on the plains, and some roads are closed for the winter after early November.



Winter – Hokkaido's charm in winter – Period: December to March

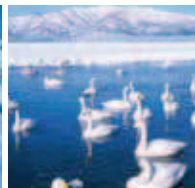
In December, not only mountain regions but also urban areas are covered with snow. Although it is the beginning of a long and cold winter, travelers have the chance to enjoy driving in winter while visiting a lot of local events that are held only in winter.

Scenery

Silvery landscapes of beautiful pure-white snow makes travelers feel as if they have come to another dimension, well beyond the ordinary experience. Mysterious and romantic silvery landscapes attract visitors.



Ice floe



Flying swans

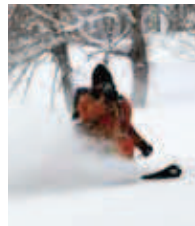


Flying Japanese red-crowned cranes

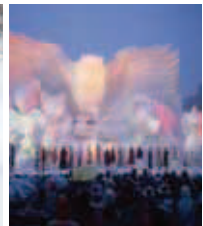
Experience

The most popular winter activities in Hokkaido include skiing and snowboarding amid the highest-quality powder snow. In eastern Hokkaido, "Drift Ice Watching" can also be enjoyed from boats. Various winter events such as the Sapporo Snow Festival are provided in each region in Hokkaido. It may be fun to plan to visit these events during your trip by referring to the Web sites.

Name of events	Approx. seasons	Contents	Places
Sapporo Snow Festival	Early Feb.	Around 300 large- and mid-size snow and ice statues, International Snow statue Contest, etc.	Sapporo Odori Park venue, Susukino venue, etc.
Asahikawa Winter Festival	Early Feb.	The world's largest snow and ice statues as well as <i>objets d'art</i> of lights are created. Various events including nightly fireworks and winter activities are provided.	Riverfront of the Ishikari River and Asahi Bridge in Asahikawa, Tokiwa Park, Heiwa Avenue Kaimono Park, Nana-jo Ryokudo
Winter Circus	Early Feb.	Various landmarks are created using snow and these showcase the Taisetsu-Furano Route of Scenic Byway Hokkaido program in winter.	Along the Taisetsu-Furano Route of Scenic Byway Hokkaido program (Asahikawa City, parking areas along expressways, etc.)



Skiing



Sapporo Snow Festival

Food

Winter is the season of delicious seafood in Hokkaido. Shellfish such as oysters and scallops, as well as red king crabs and herrings are highly recommended.

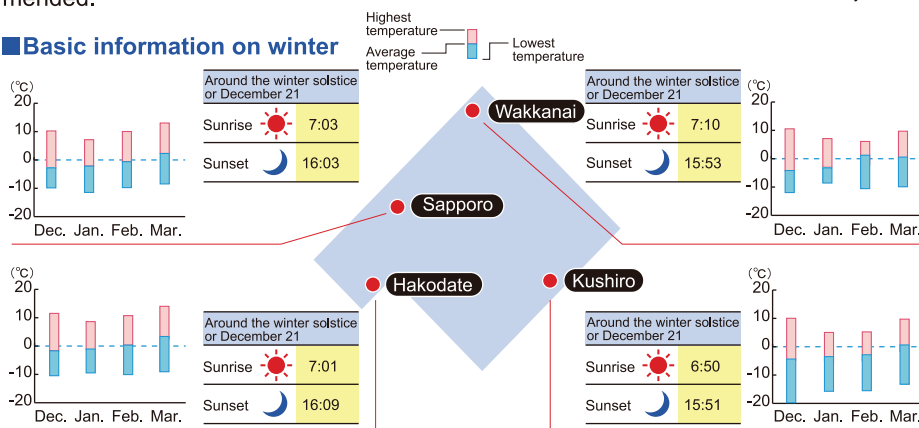


Oyster



Red king crab, horsehair crab, hanasaki crab

Basic information on winter



December

From late in this month, snow stays throughout the season. Overcoats, mittens and winter or nonslip shoes are necessary.

January

The period with the heaviest snowfalls. Snow accumulates significantly in central Hokkaido and the Taisetsu region. Temperatures in Tokachi and eastern and northern Hokkaido regions are particularly low.

February

This is the last month of the coldest season. The clothes you will need are the same as those in December and January.

March

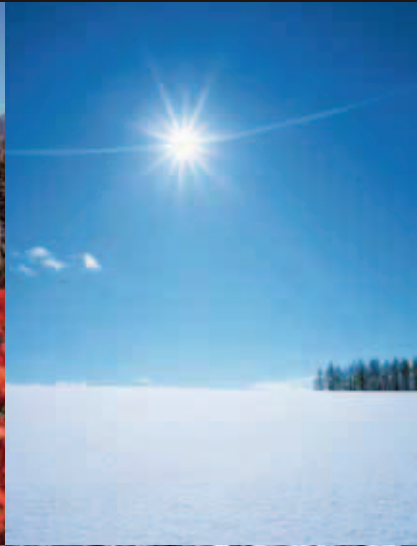
Snow begins to melt, and white arm blooms in the wetlands. At night, the same clothes as those worn in winter are recommended.



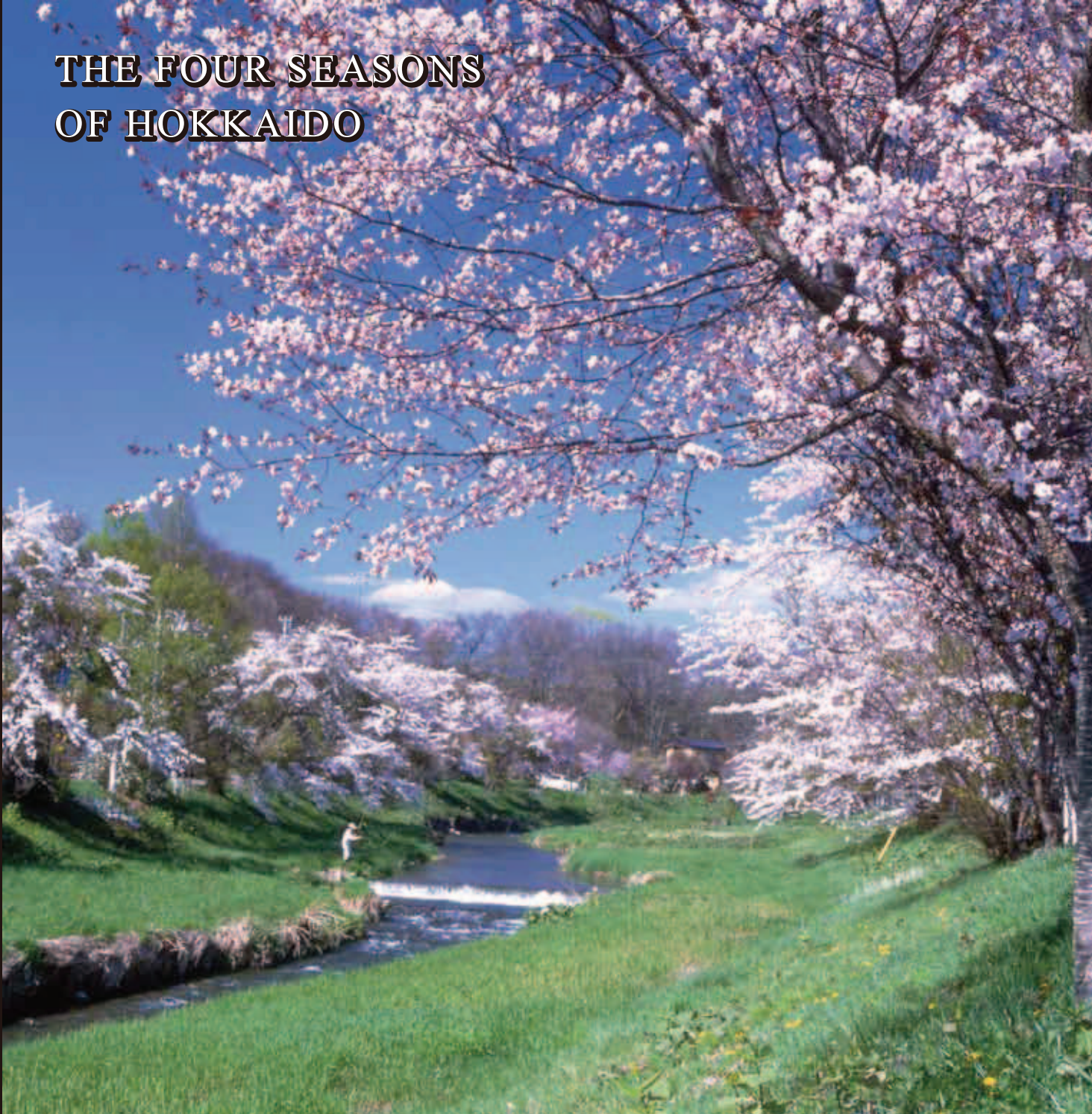
Important points regarding driving trips in winter

- During the Snow Festival season, immigration and departure procedures at airports may take longer than usual. It is important to plan your trip free from time constraints, especially on days of departure and arrival.
- Road conditions are bad due to compacted snow and ice that looks black on the roads (black ice). Since the traffic moves slowly in urban regions due to traffic jams, it is important to plan your driving trip free from time constraints.
- Public traffic facilities may be at a complete standstill because of closed expressways due to heavy snow, severe snowstorms, drifting snow, etc. and with aircraft delay and/or cancellation of flights and trains as well. Local streets are also crowded.

⇒Refer to Chapter 4



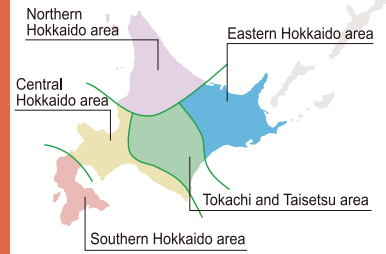
**THE FOUR SEASONS
OF HOKKAIDO**



1-3. Regional charms of Hokkaido

Hokkaido is divided up into five areas; Central, Northern, Southern and Eastern Hokkaido as well as the Tokachi/Taisetsu region. The best and most efficient way to plan your driving trip is to decide the main areas you wish to visit. We hope that by choosing target areas based on local major sightseeing spots, you will be able to fully enjoy your holiday in Hokkaido.

Five areas of Hokkaido

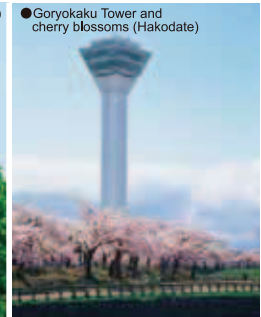


Charms of Southern Hokkaido and important things to know

Southern Hokkaido area – Experiencing the frontier spirit –



● Onuma Quasi National Park, Tsukimi Bridge (Nanae Town)



● Goryokaku (Hakodate)



Quick Tip

There is limited admission for cars between late April and mid October on Mt. Hakodate and roads are closed between 17:00 and 22:00.

Hakodate

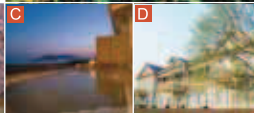
The night views visible from Mt. Hakodate are said to be one of the world's three best night views, and it is famous as a sightseeing spot. There are popular fresh seafood restaurants at the Hakodate Morning Market located next to Hakodate Station.

A Hakodate Night View (Mount Hakodate Ropeway) ☎ 86 041 003

B Goryokaku Park in Hakodate where cherry blossoms are in full bloom in spring ☎ 86 165 027

C Yunokawa Hot Spring Resort in Hakodate

D Scenery in Motomachi Town at the foot of Mt. Hakodate



Hokuto

The Trappist Butter and cookies, butter candies and jam produced here are famous as souvenirs representative of Hokkaido.

☎ 951 248 298

Trappist Monastery



Matsumae

The town has a place in history as the northernmost domain of the shogunate system during the late Edo period. Matsumae Castle and Teramachi Town are designated as Hokkaido Heritage sites. There are beautiful gardens and various old trees which change with the seasons. Matsumae is covered with cherry blossoms in spring, hydrangeas in early summer, verdure in summer and autumn leaves in autumn. ☎ 862 058 224



Matsumae Castle

Esashi

Esashi Town located in the southwest area of Hokkaido is said to be the birthplace of Hokkaido culture. The Japanese battleship Kaiyo Maru from the Edo period is being restored. ☎ 1108 104 617

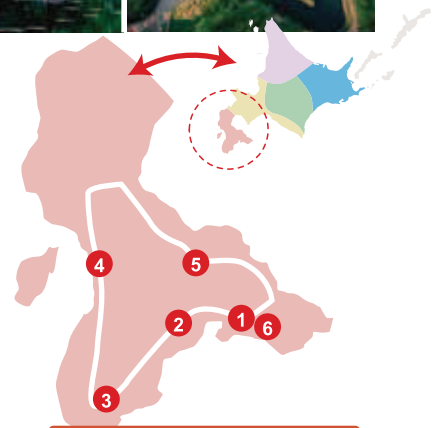
Kaiyo Maru



Onuma Park

Beautiful seasonal scenery can be admired at Onuma Park located one-hour away from Hakodate by car.

Various activities such as ice fishing in winter on ponds (for smelt) are available ☎ 86 815 474



New Chitose Airport → Hakodate Airport

First day **1** Leave Hakodate

☎ approx. 15 km
🚗 approx. 20 min.

Second day **2** Leave Hokuto

☎ approx. 80 km
🚗 approx. 1 hr. 40 min.

3 Leave Matsumae

☎ approx. 60 km
🚗 approx. 1 hr. 10 min.

Third day **4** Leave Esashi

☎ approx. 70 km
🚗 approx. 1 hr. 20 min.

Fourth day **5** Leave Onuma Park

☎ approx. 30 km
🚗 approx. 30 min.

6 Leave Hakodate

☎ approx. 10 km
🚗 approx. 10 min.

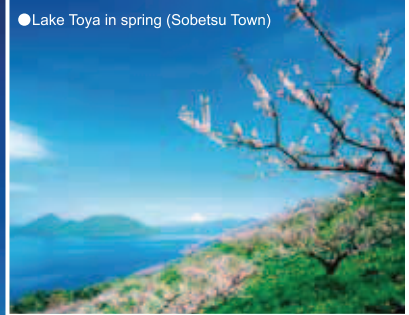
To Hakodate Airport 🛩️

Central Hokkaido area

– A trip to enjoy resorts set in stunning natural environments –



●Mt. Yotei, wheat field (Niseko Town)



●Lake Toya in spring (Sobetsu Town)



●Sapporo Nijo Fish Market



●Odori Park (Sapporo)



Quick Tip

Driving in Sapporo takes concentration due to lots of complicated traffic situations such as one-way traffic.

Lake Toya

This area provided the venue for the Lake Toya G8 Summit in 2008. Visitors can enjoy hot springs and rides on ferries on the lake. ☎ 321 518 499



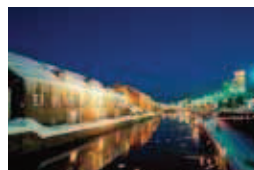
Niseko

This area has one of the most popular resorts in the country, sprawling at the foot of beautiful Mt. Yotei. Hands-on outdoor sports programs such as mountain climbing, canoeing and rafting in summer are provided. Winter sports at ski fields boasting world-class quality snow are also popular, and the region has various hot springs.



Otaru

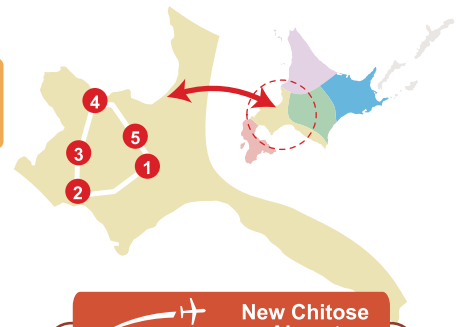
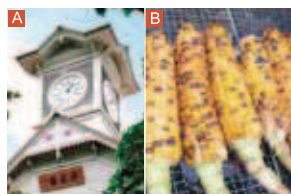
The port town of Otaru is famous as the location site for the film "Love Letter." Otaru's famous symbol, the Otaru Canal, creates a romantic atmosphere as it is illuminated at night. ☎ 493 690 648



Sapporo

A One of Sapporo's famous symbols, the Sapporo Clock Tower, is also beautifully illuminated at night. ☎ 9 522 204

B Odori Park divides the central area of Sapporo into south and north. Hot corn cobs are sold in summer, and their savory smell entices visitors to buy them. ☎ 9 492 819



New Chitose Airport

First day **1** Leave New Chitose Airport
 approx. 120 km
 approx. 1 hr. 30 min.

Second day **2** Leave Toyako-onsen
 approx. 60 km
 approx. 1 hr. 20 min.

Third day **3** Leave Niseko
 approx. 90 km
 approx. 2 hrs.

Fourth day **4** Leave Otaru
 approx. 40 km
 approx. 50 min.

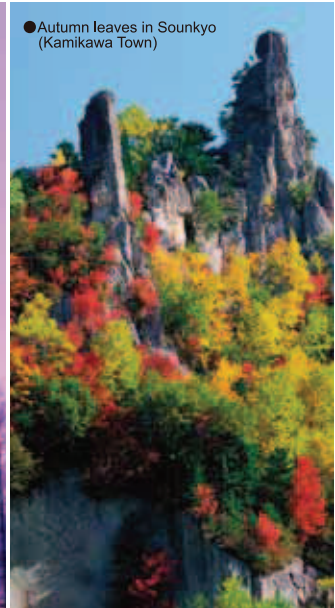
5 Leave Sapporo
 approx. 50 km
 approx. 50 min.
 To New Chitose Airport

*Map Code is the registered brand of Denso, Inc.

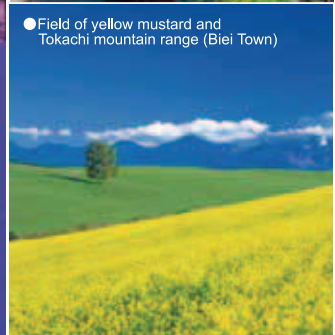
Taisetsu/Tokachi area – A trip to experience the bounty of nature –



●Setting sun in a snowfield (Biei Town)



●Autumn leaves in Sounkyo (Kamikawa Town)



●Field of yellow mustard and Tokachi mountain range (Biei Town)



Quick Tip

The Tokachi area is famous for its long, straight roads. Be careful not to exceed speed limits or have a traffic accident on these roads that command amazing views of the Tokachi Plains.

Asahikawa

A Asahikawa ramen which is served with thin noodles is as famous as Sapporo ramen.

B The nation's northernmost zoo, which has become famous for showcasing animals' unique behavior ☎ 79 358 791



Biei, Furano

In Biei, located next to Furano, enormous farming fields developed by man have created beautiful scenery. In winter, the silvery landscape can make a deep impression on visitors to this snow country. Also, the lavender season that is very popular with visitors from East Asia produces a landscape of lavender, covering the fields just like a purple carpet.



Near Obihiro

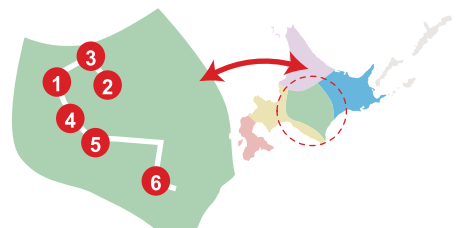
Various seasonal outdoor sports are provided in the Tokachi area. You can travel down the river in a relaxed fashion or you can enjoy the excitement of being pulled on a sleigh by a snowmobile in snow-rafting.

A Obihiro is famous for its confectionary, represented by Rokkatei

B Kamishihoro Town, Naitai Heights Stock farm ☎ 679 103 688

C Shintoku soba noodles

D Rafting



New Chitose Airport → Asahikawa Airport

First day 1 Leave Asahikawa

approx. 85 km
approx. 1 hr. 30 min.

2 Leave Sounkyo

approx. 25 km
approx. 30 min.

Second day 3 Leave Kamikawa

approx. 70 km
approx. 1 hr. 20 min.

4 Leave Biei

approx. 35 km
approx. 50 min.

Third day 5 Leave Furano

approx. 120 km
approx. 2 hrs.

Fourth day 6 Leave Obihiro

approx. 30 km
approx. 40 min.
To Obihiro Airport

*Map Code is the registered brand of Denso, Inc

Eastern Hokkaido Area – A trip to the mysterious Shiretoko –



Ice floes in Masuura Port (Abashiri)



Ezo deer (Shari Town)



Setting sun in Utoro (Shari Town)



Quick Tip

Since the distances between cities in Eastern Hokkaido are large, it is important not to get tired while driving so make sure you take occasional rest stops. Also you should check the level of your fuel before you depart to drive from one city to another. Remember that the Shiretoko Pass from Utoro to Rausu is closed in winter.



Abashiri

- A** Commanding the Shiretoko Peninsula from the Tentozan Flower Garden
 - B** Koshimizu Natural Flower Garden
- ☎ 958 079 596



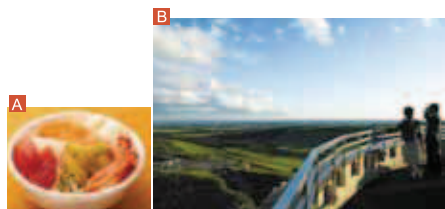
Shiretoko

- A** The Shiretoko Five Lakes are one of the most famous sights in Shiretoko. It takes approximately one hour to drive around all five lakes. However, it takes approximately 30 minutes to drive around just the first and second lakes.
- B** Ice floes in Shiretoko
- C** The Oshinkoshin falls located at the entrance of Utoro on the way to Shiretoko welcome tourists. ☎ 894 727 045
- D** The Shiretoko Peninsula can be viewed from the sea on the Shiretoko Cruiser.
- E** Rausu, an area blessed with nature's wonders, is the only area where tourists can enjoy fish taken from nutrient-rich sea water



Kushiro, Nakashibetsu

- A** Nobody knows who named the "Katte-don" in the Kushiro Washo Market ☎ 149 256 390
- B** Scenery from Kaiyodai in Nakashibetsu Town ☎ 658 060 753



New Chitose Airport → Memambetsu Airport

First day 1 Leave Abashiri

☎ approx. 40 km
🚗 approx. 50 min.

Second day 2 Leave Koshimizu

☎ approx. 60 km
🚗 approx. 1 hr. 10 min.

3 Leave Utoro

☎ approx. 25 km
🚗 approx. 30 min.
Notes: Refer to Quick Tip

Third day 4 Leave Rausu

☎ approx. 70 km
🚗 approx. 1 hr. 30 min.

5 Leave Nakashibetsu

☎ approx. 100 km
🚗 approx. 1 hr. 50 min.

Fourth day 6 Leave Kushiro

☎ approx. 25 km
🚗 approx. 40 min.
To Kushiro Airport

*Map Code is the registered brand of Denso, Inc.

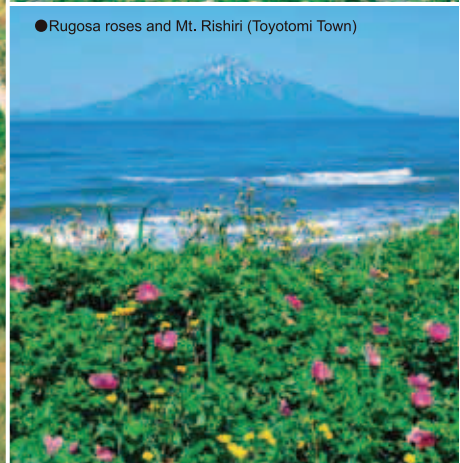
Northern Hokkaido Area – A trip to the northernmost region and its naturally beautiful islands –



● The Sea of Japan Ororon Line (Obira Town)



● Rebus Island (Rebus Town)



● Rugosa roses and Mt. Rishiri (Toyotomi Town)



Quick Tip

When taking your car on a ferry, all necessary procedures must be completed 40 minutes before departure. Please complete the process well in advance.

Wakkanai

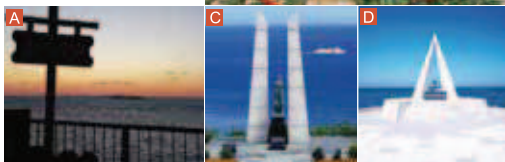
Mt. Rishiri and Rebus Island can be observed from the peninsula protruding into the northwest-most Soya Channel at Wakkanai. At sunset, the sea becomes drenched with orange and the silhouette of Mt. Rishiri can be seen.

A Cape Noshappu ☎ 964 092 564

B In Wakkanai, taste fresh king crabs boiled immediately after they have been caught

C Wakkanai Park, Hyosetsu no Mon ☎ 964 005 198

D The nation's northernmost Cape Soya ☎ 998 067 385



Rishiri, Rebus

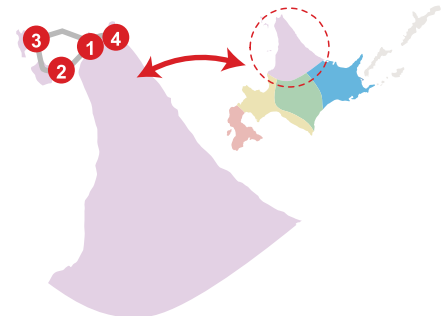
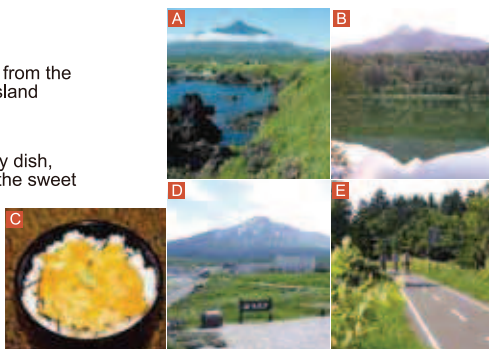
A Rishirifuji and flowers can be seen from the Momiwa observatory on Rebus Island

B Rishiri Island, Himenuma

C Rishiri and Rebus islands' specialty dish, rice topped with sea urchins uses the sweet Ezo green sea urchin.

D Kutsugata-misaki Park and Rishirifuji

E Cycling along the Rishiri Cycling Road is refreshing.



New Chitose Airport → Wakkanai Airport

First day 1 Leave Wakkanai

Ferry landing approx. 15 km approx. 20 min.

Second day 2 Leave Rishiri Island

Ferry landing approx. 30 km approx. 40 min.

Third day 3 Leave Rebus Island

Ferry landing approx. 25 km approx. 30 min.

Fourth day 4 Leave Cape Soya

approx. 25 km approx. 30 min. To Wakkanai Airport

*Map Code is the registered brand of Denso, Inc.

1-4. Useful pieces of knowledge for comfortable driving

There are some things that travelers should know in order to be able to drive comfortably across the vastness of Hokkaido. Learning how to utilize the information centers across Hokkaido as well as how to shop for your daily requirements is essential.

Practical use of Michi-no-eki (information stations)



There are more than 100 Michi-no-eki facilities alongside national highways throughout Hokkaido. At each facility, there are lavatories, and local specialty products are sold. In addition, computerized information resources are provided so you can get road information in real time. More and more Michi-no-eki facilities are installing PCs with free Internet access and wireless LAN (Wi-Fi). By using Michi-no-eki wisely, you can double the pleasure of your driving trip.



Practical use of convenience stores

A lack of availability of food and drink is one of the difficulties faced during the long distances between urban regions on a driving trip in Hokkaido.

Since convenience stores exist everywhere in Hokkaido and provide toilet facilities to their customers, they really are convenient for long-distance travelers! In addition, they offer various prepared lunches and meals which travelers can buy when they do not have enough time to stop somewhere to eat.



Main convenience stores in Hokkaido

– Hokkaido has its own chains as well so look out for the logos.



Seven-Eleven



Sunkus



Lawson



Family Mart



Seicomart



Hasegawa Store (local convenience store chain in Hakodate)

Column

Let's take the chance to learn about life in Hokkaido!

Why don't you visit supermarkets and markets frequented by Hokkaido residents. The vegetable and fish sections will be interesting and travelers might be surprised by the unique fish on display such as Atka mackerel fish, scallops, salmon, and cod and salmon roe. You don't need to buy as it is fun just to go and look. And if you do want to try something to eat, boxes of sushi and other kinds of lunchboxes are available.



Bite-sized information for your enjoyment

If you are serious about trying sushi though, why don't you try going to a sushi restaurant? It is fantastic to go to a local sushi bar and watch the chefs making sushi while you sit at the counter, and it is also fun to go to conveyor-belt sushi bars and choose your favorite sushi as it comes past.



Quick Tip

•Hokkaido District Transport Bureau "Sushi Guidebook" (English, Traditional Chinese and Korean)
http://www.twb.mlit.go.jp/hokkaido/bunyabetsu/kankou/gaikokuzin/sushiguide/index_sushiguide_eigo.html

1-5. Observe rules and local customs!

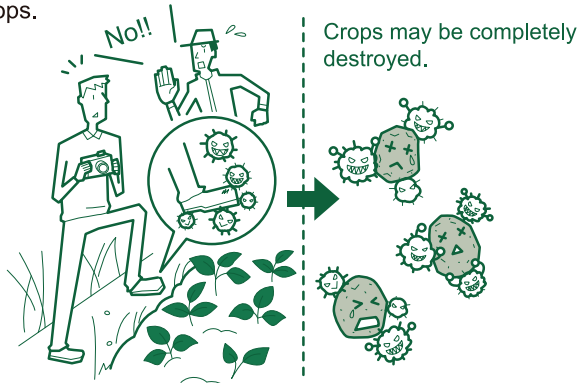
Information to help you avoid trouble in local regions

Hokkaido with its cool climate is very popular with people from subtropical countries and Hokkaido residents want to heartily welcome fans of Hokkaido. However, international travelers to Hokkaido must remember that your behavior will form people's impression of your country. Please enjoy your trip in Hokkaido while paying attention to the points shown below so that you, as a representative of your home country, establish a good relationship.

Do not enter farmland

Hokkaido farmers take much care in producing their farm products.

Do not enter farms (unless invited) as there is the possibility that disease-bearing soil on the soles of your shoes may lead to the complete destruction of crops.



Be careful with wild animals

There are a lot of wild animals inhabiting Hokkaido. Since wild animals live in their own fragile ecosystem, interference by human beings may affect their ability to survive, and also cause them to threaten our way of living. Wild animals should be seen from a distance so do not get near wild animals and definitely do not feed them.

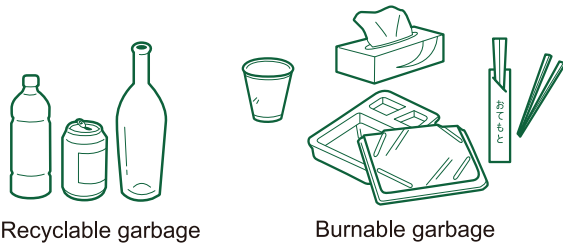


No littering

Sightseeing spots are everyone's assets. Garbage should be thrown away in trash cans. If there are no garbage cans, take your rubbish with you until you can dispose of it.

●Rules regarding sorting rubbish

Garbage should be sorted, and local rules followed regarding its disposal. Empty cans and bottles as well as plastic bottles should be separated.



How to use toilets

Since toilets are public facilities, you must keep them clean for the next user. Toilets in convenience stores are provided for customers. There are various signs for toilets.

e.g.: Powder room, lavatory, WC, Toilet, etc.



Quick Tip

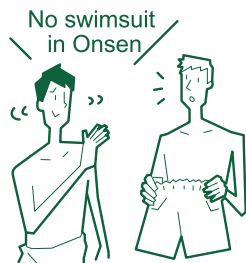
■A leaflet published by East Nippon Expressway Company (English, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese and Korean)

The leaflet provides instructions on how to use public toilets in English, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, and Korean. It includes diagrams of a toilet and a person using it.

How to take a hot spring bath

As many local people bathe together and relax in public baths at hot springs, please observe the following etiquette and usage rules.

Rule 1 Bathing suits are prohibited



Rule 2 Don't put face or bath towels in the water.



Rule 3 Don't wash yourself in the bath (wash first, in the shower area).



Information on useful Web sites

(Examples of multilingual Web sites are introduced here.)

●Portal sites of Hokkaido tourism information

Hokkaido Tourism Organization

<http://en.visit-hokkaido.jp/>

●Drive route

Civil Engineering Research Institute for Cold Region, "Kita-no-michi Navi. (Northern Road Navi)" (search for distance and time)

<http://northern-road.jp/navi/eng/>

Scenic Byway Hokkaido

<http://www.scenicbyway.jp/>

●Web site on Hokkaido's local tourism information

City of Sapporo (Welcome to Sapporo)

<http://www.welcome.city.sapporo.jp/?lang=en>

Taisetsu Sightseeing Navigation

<http://www.asahikawa-daisetsu.jp/>

Sapporo Tourist Association

<http://www.sta.or.jp/english/>

Kamifurano Tokachidake Tourism Association

<http://www.kamifurano.jp/exlang/>

Chitose Tourist Association

<http://1000sai-chitose.or.jp/en/>

Furano Tourist Association

<http://www.furanotourism.com/en/>

Niseko Resort Tourist Association

<http://www.niseko-ta.jp/en/>

East Hokkaido Sightseeing Development Council

<http://www.easthokkaido.com/english/>

Niseko Promotion Board

<http://www.nisekotourism.com/>

Kitami Tourist Association

<http://kitamikanko.jp/en/index.html>

Niseko Town

<http://www.town.niseko.lg.jp/english/>

Abashiri City

<http://abashiri.jp/tabinavi/en/>

Kutchan Town

<http://www.town.kutchan.hokkaido.jp/>

*There are other various multilingual Web sites provided by each region and local tourist associations.



Quick Tip

The following Tourist Information Centres have staff who can speak foreign languages

●Japan National Tourist Organization (JNTO) "Tourist Information offices"

<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/arrange/travel/guide/voffice.php>



Chapter 2 Reservation of rental cars

2-1. Basic information on rental car services	20
2-2. How to use car navigation systems	22

2-1. Basic information on rental car services

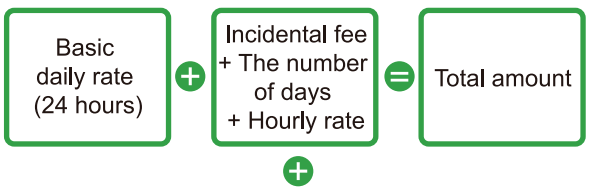
Rental cars are necessary for Hokkaido driving trips. Please remember the basics of renting a car in Japan. In particular, you should make sure you clearly understand the insurance and compensation system as well as what you will be financially liable for in the event of an accident.

How to make a reservation

Reservations can be made online. Some car reservation centers have staff who speak foreign languages so please confirm which ones do via their web sites. Some rental car companies also have English web sites so that travelers from other countries can make reservations via the Internet.
⇒ See "Car Rentals" on P. 50

How to calculate the rate

Obviously rates differ from company to company and depend on which model and class you request, however rates can be basically calculated as follows; Select a type of vehicle suitable for the size and amount of your luggage.



Fees for optional extras such as not returning the car to the same location (drop-off charges) or child seats are added to the above.

Car insurance is included!

Japanese major rental car companies always include automobile liability insurance and automobile damage insurance in the basic contract charges. In the event of a car accident or damage to another car or people, insurance companies will pay the compensation up to the limit of liability. Insurance coverage should be confirmed before making a reservation.

Memo

What is the excess fee system?

All insurance has a set excess amount for which the customer (the rental car user) is responsible for paying. Car rental companies offer Collision Damage Waiver (CDW), a system that covers deductibles charged to customers in the event of an accident, so you are advised to opt for it! However, CDW is only applicable to the first accident should multiple accidents occur during the same rental period. The CDW status cannot be changed after picking-up the vehicle, so please opt in or out of the system when picking up the vehicle.

What is NOC? (Non operation charge)

In the event of a car accident, compensation for any third party is automatically covered by insurance. However, if a car needs to be repaired and/or cleaned due to damage to a car, the following fee will be charged to recompense the rental car company for business lost during the time of repairing/cleaning. If the car can still be driven, the charge is roughly 20,000 yen, but if the car is so damaged it cannot move, the charge will be around 50,000 yen. Rental car users need to know this rule.

Memo

Things you need to communicate to make a reservation?

- 1 Your Name
- 2 Contact phone number
- 3 Departure date/ Pick up location
- 4 Return date/ Return location
- 5 Desired car model (class/ model name)
- 6 The number of passengers
- 7 Desired option(s) (4WD, Child seat, ETC card, etc.)

Memo

One-way charges (Drop-off charges)

Rental car users are basically asked to return their car to one of the following eight cities; Hakodate, Sapporo/Chitose, Asahikawa, Wakkanai, Obihiro, Kushiro, Kitami, Nakashibetsu/Nemuro, in Hokkaido. Returning cars to shops outside these cities will incur a one-way (drop-off) charge of 1,000 yen to 9,000 yen for passenger cars.

The following limits of liability are often standard. **Compensation up to the limit of liability of an insurance company (example)**

Bodily injury	Unlimited per person (including automobile liability insurance)
Property damage	Unlimited per accident (after the initial excess fee of 50,000 yen is paid)
Car damage	Up to the actual value per accident (after the initial excess fee of 50,000 yen is paid)
Personal injury	Compensation of up to 30 million yen per person is paid for injuries (including death and permanent disability) to (a) passenger(s) resulting from a car accident.



In the event of traffic accidents

e.g.: In the event of minor accidents in which your and the other person's cars are damaged, insurance will cover any damage to property and cars (in case that the rental car is not returned by its own ability). The user will be liable for a charge of up to 150,000 yen, constituting of the amount of excess for both cars (50,000 yen each), and 50,000 yen as NOC (loss of business charge).



① Car rental booth
(New Chitose Airport)



② Shuttle bus



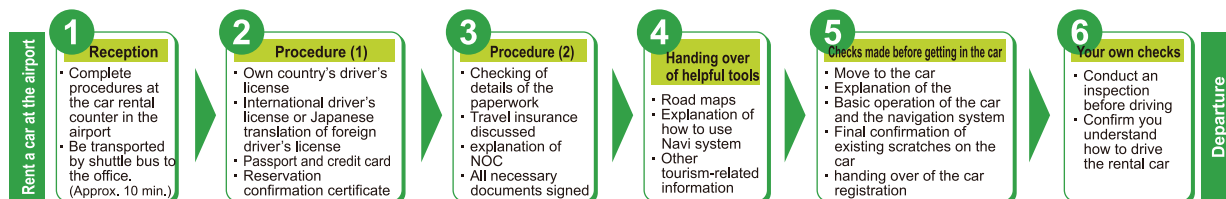
③ Rental car office building



④ Car rental booth

System for picking up a car

Let's look at the standard process for renting a car at a rental car office at the airport and setting out on a driving trip. Many rental car office sites are a distance from the airport. As a result, customers are usually driven by shuttle bus to the office after completing procedures at the car rental counter at the airport.



Memo

Regarding the driver's license

Visitors from South Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong have to bring the standard international driver's license (as set out by the Geneva Convention) and tourists from Taiwan must bring their Taiwanese drivers' license with an appropriate translation. A translated version of their Taiwanese license can be issued at the translation administrative office in Taiwan by completing an application form for a Japanese translation of the driver's license.

Memo

Confirm how to drive a rental car

Put the bags in the car, and confirm you know how to drive the car. Users who are driving a Japanese car for the first time or themselves own left-hand-drive cars should take care to ensure they understand how to handle the car. As the positions for the wipers and wipers are the opposite to normal for drivers used to driving left-hand-drive cars, you will need to be especially careful. In addition, it is a good idea to check whether your gas tank is on the right or left hand side.



Quick Tip Business hours of rental car companies

Make sure to ask the business hours of your rental car company. In the event of emergencies, such as traffic accidents and when you are delayed returning the car, it is handy to know the company's office hours in order to be able to telephone them. In addition, keep the telephone number noted somewhere easy to access so you can find it quickly.

Car return procedures

Users should return the cars to the shop as originally planned and give their contract to the staff at the rental car office. Procedures are over after the user has paid any time-extension charges and the car has been checked for scratches and dents. Offices situated at airports will then take you to the airport by shuttle bus.

Memo

Is the tank full?

Users should fill the tank when returning the car. If the user forgets to fill the tank, a fee for gas will need to be paid based on the cost per liter as determined by the rental car company. Some car rental companies have their own refueling facilities.



Quick Tip Allow enough time for returning a rental car at the airport

When a user returns a rental car to offices at airports, the office staff will take the user to the airport by shuttle bus. You must therefore keep in mind how much time it will take to get to the airport and return the rental car with plenty of time to spare.



Totally lost? Help is here!

●Sapporo Rental Car Association (Japanese, English)

<http://sapporo-renta.com/english/>

(How to make reservations etc.)



2-2. How to use car navigation systems

If you get lost, not only will you lose time but you are more likely to speed to reach your destination before sundown and this can be dangerous. Before anything else, you, should confirm your present location on a map, and use the car navigation system (GPS) in the car. Although a GPS system is included as standard equipment in rental cars, renters should make sure it's provided at the time of the reservation. These systems are very useful devices, but they are not infallible. Users should not put too much confidence in these devices and understand their limits.

The way to utilize car navigation systems differs according to the manufacturer and the model, but the basic functions of most systems are almost always the same. The standard operating method for these systems is explained below.

Basic functions

Car navigation systems has functions other than guiding you towards your destination. 1. Map display, vicinity map, information to guide you to your destination 2. FM/ AM radio 3. Music CD player

The function of "Information to guide you to your destination" is focused on here.

Ways to input your destination

You can input the telephone number of the place you are planning to visit (restaurant/hotel/ tourist spot) by touching the **telephone number** button.



① Touch the telephone number button ② Input the telephone number including the area code ③ Select a route and the navigation will begin.

You can input a six- to ten-digit number created for each tourist destination through the **"Map Code"** button



① Touch the "Map Code" button ② Input the numbers of the Map Code ③ Select a route and the navigation will begin.

How are telephone numbers organized?

Area codes are established by area (e.g.) Sapporo 011

Area code - local telephone exchange code - four-digit number

011-222-1234

Area code of Sapporo

Memo

What is a Map Code? 123 456 789

Map Codes are the six- to ten-digit numbers (in case of standard Map Codes) created to help people search for destinations across Japan using car navigation systems. Some car rental companies provide a list of map codes. *Map Code is the registered brand of Denso, Inc.



Don't put too much confidence in car navigation systems.



When utilizing the device, you may find that it can only take you to roughly the right location when using the telephone numbers function and it does not take you exactly to your destination. Also, if you set the wrong destination, the system may take you in a completely different direction. Users may not realize their mistake for some time and end up somewhere many kilometers away from their destination. This can mean that they end up having to check-in to a hotel in the middle of the night and other bad situations. As stated earlier, these systems are very useful, but they are not infallible. Users should not put too much confidence in these devices and understand their limits. Users must use them in conjunction with maps. It is also recommended to check your present location on the system against the names of towns you go through and route numbers you pass as you are driving.



Totally lost? Help is here!

Get maps!

■ Road maps published by rental car companies [English, traditional Chinese]

Distribution places: Rental car companies' offices and shops



Column

Useful function

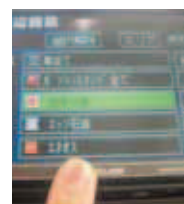
1. Indication of distance to be travelled is useful

By setting the destination, the GPS will show the distance to your destination, which allows users to calculate the time required to reach the destination. When calculated at an average speed of 30-40 km/h, it will take approx. 2 minutes to drive a distance of 1 kilometer. However, the speedometer is not always reliable because it does not take into account stops at traffic signals and the amount of traffic. It is better to calculate your traveling time on the basis that one kilometer will take 2 minutes plus a bit extra.



2. Search the surrounding facilities

"Surrounding facilities" function can be useful to search for the nearest facilities along with searching for your destination. E.g. If you want to know the location of the nearest gas station, touch: (1) "Destination" button (2) "Surrounding facilities" button (3) "Car" button (4) "All gas stations" button (5) "Select among several proposed gas stations" button



3. Listen to CD

Users can listen to CDs with the car navigation system. Many people question where the insertion slot is as it is very hard to see. (1) Push "Tilt" or "Eject" buttons (2) Insertion slots will appear behind the screen (3) Insert a CD into the player (4) Operate using the CD operation screen. Some systems allow the use of portable audio devices including iPods.



Two months
before the trip

One month
before the trip

One week
before the trip

Departure!!

Arrival
in Hokkaido!!



Chapter 3 Traffic rules and quick tips

3-1. Before driving in Hokkaido	24
3-2. Traffic rules in Japan you need to know	25
3-3. Use expressways!	33
3-4. How to use gas stations	35
3-5. Be careful on snowy roads!	37

3-1. Before driving in Hokkaido

In the event of a car accident, where you injure a third party or damage property, the duty and responsibility for this incident rests on your shoulders. A driver's responsibility is heavy, and in some cases he or she may face criminal charges such as manslaughter due to reckless driving and/or involuntary vehicular manslaughter. Appropriate knowledge and orderly behavior are essential to avoid causing traffic accidents.

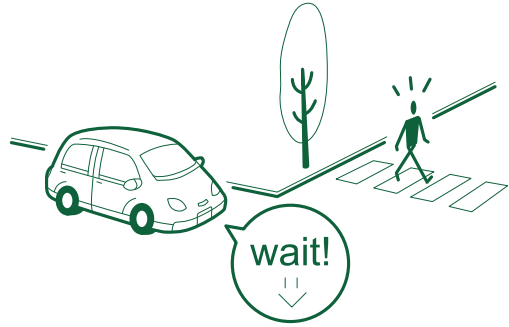


Quick Tip

Understand the important points of Japanese traffic rules.

Yield to pedestrians

In Japan, a driver must pay careful attention to pedestrians when driving a car. If a pedestrian is injured, the driver is primarily at fault for not avoiding the danger. When turning at intersections, drivers must stop to allow pedestrians to cross before going ahead.

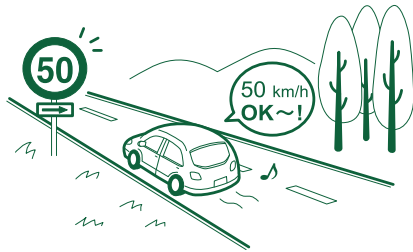


Quick Tip

Learn carefully about driving conditions unique to Hokkaido.

The number of deaths due to traffic accidents is high in Hokkaido!

Hokkaido's long, straight and wide roads seem to invite high speed but, as fatal accidents such as those involving vehicles that veer from the road, and head-on collisions occur, particularly on roads with less traffic, speeding is strictly prohibited. Additionally, make plans that allow plenty of time and take regular breaks when driving long distances, as drowsiness during long, inter-city trips is also the cause of accidents.



Skills are required for driving on snowy roads! (November – April)

Hokkaido is one of the world's top-class snow-covered regions. It is difficult to drive on winter roads because they are slippery, covered with snow and there can be near-whiteout conditions. You must acquire the appropriate knowledge and take the necessary measures to prevent traffic accidents. Useful ideas are also introduced in this handbook. (For further information, refer to page 37)



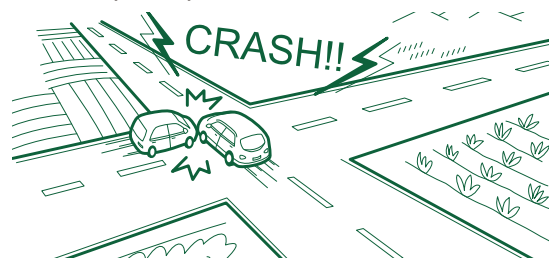
Be careful when driving a car at night!

Roads far from towns have few streetlights and are very dark. In the darkness, it may take you longer to see pedestrians and bicycles, and also the number of wild animals near the roads is much higher. Special care is required for drivers who are used to only driving on well-lit roads in towns. Since the sun sets earlier during autumn and winter, plan your driving trip as far as possible free from time constraints.



Lots of accidents in the countryside!

Hokkaido witnesses many traffic accidents at intersections where there are no traffic lights. Accidents in the countryside most often become fatal accidents. Maintain the speed limits and make sure you check both right and left before crossing at any intersections to make sure you stay safe.



3-2. Traffic rules in Japan you need to know

Although travelers from South Korea and Taiwan may be afraid of driving on the left in Japan at first, they will gradually get used to doing so when driving on ordinary roads. However, the driver may slip back into their normal habit at a critical moment, so it is important to remain calm but cautious while driving.

- 1 Left-hand traffic!**
Japan basically has a left-hand traffic system.
 - 2 Right-turning cars must wait!**
Oncoming cars driving straight and turning left have right of way in principle. Right-turning cars must wait for oncoming vehicles to go through/past before turning.
 - 3 Never fail to stop when a traffic light is red.**
When a traffic signal is red, not only cars going straight but also ones turning left must stop.
 - 4 Obey arrow traffic lights.**
Although a traffic light is red, cars which are turning in the direction of a green arrow traffic signal may make a turn.
- 26**
-
- 5 Always pay attention to speed limits! Legal speed limit is 60 km/h!**
Speed limits on roads without traffic signs are 60 km/h on public roads and 100 km/h on expressways.
 - 6 Pay attention to no-overtaking zones!**
Do not overtake in the no-overtaking zones.
 - 7 Bring your car to a complete stop at stop signs and in front of train crossings!**
In Japan, you must stop your car at stop signs, and it is a traffic violation not to stop completely. Drivers must also stop in front of train crossings.
- 27**
-
- 8 Watch the traffic light in front carefully, and do not start to move before the traffic light turns green!**
There are traffic lights on busy streets, which stay green for longer than usual. In addition, there are a number of unique intersections which are set up so that pedestrians and vehicles are never crossing at the same time as the traffic signals for pedestrians only come on when all vehicles are stopped.
 - 9 Never drink and drive!**
Not drinking and driving is obvious but please note that sober passengers who travel with a driver who has been drinking, and who may have encouraged the driver to drink will also be punished.
- 28**

The basic points for driving in Japan are introduced here. Exclamation marks have been used for points which may differ greatly from the rules in travelers' own countries.

① Left-hand traffic!

Roads in Japan use a left-hand traffic system. Since right-turning cars may be waiting in the right hand lane of a two-lane road, keep driving in the left lane if you do not intend to turn right. Don't forget to use your indicators when changing lanes so that cars behind know your intentions.

Pay attention to the differences from your own country.



Taiwan



South Korea

② Right-turning cars must wait!

Drivers are asked to give way to oncoming vehicles in principle when the driver intends to turn right. Make right turns after oncoming cars have traveled past or turned left. Priority is given to left turns in Japan. There are no rules regarding giving way to right-turning cars

Pay attention to the differences from your own country.

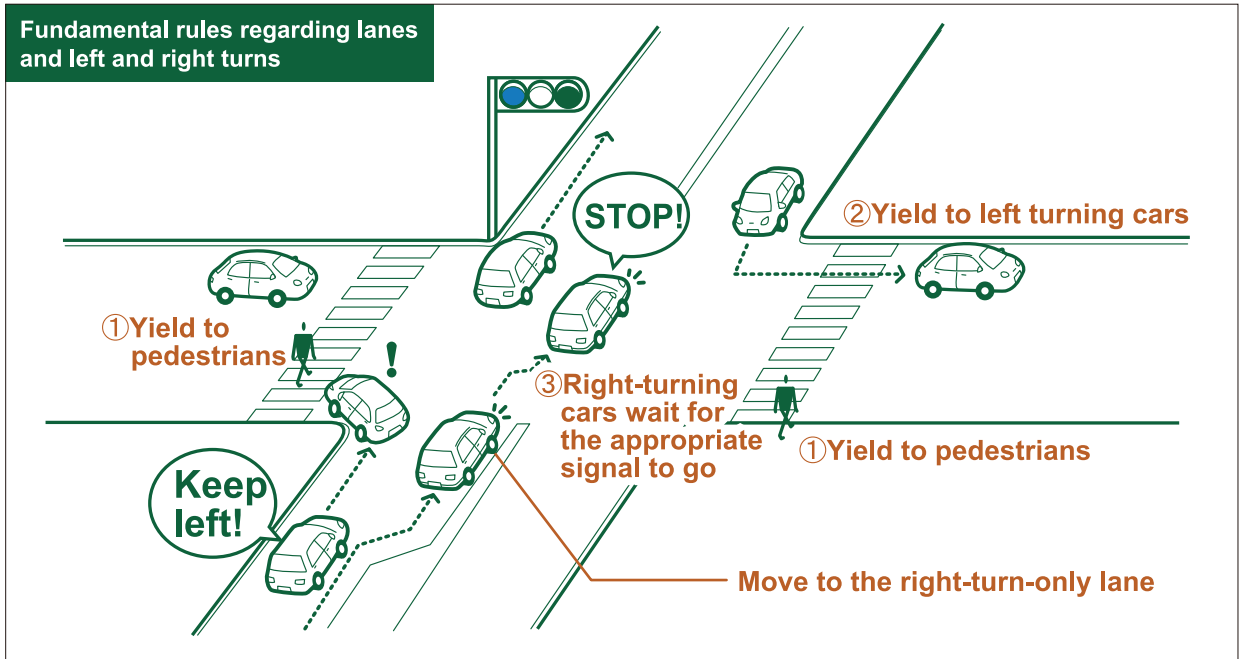


Singapore



Taiwan

Fundamental rules regarding lanes and left and right turns



③ Never fail to stop when a traffic light is red.

In Hokkaido there are no roads or junctions where you "filter" left when the traffic lights in front of you are red. When the traffic light turns red, not only cars going straight but also left-turning cars have to stop. Wait until the traffic light becomes green.



Red light

Green light

Pay attention to the differences from your own country.



Hong Kong



South Korea

④ Obey arrow traffic lights.

When the traffic light is red, all cars must in principle stop. However, where there are arrow traffic lights provided below or at the side of the traffic lights, you may turn in the direction the arrow points when it is green. Right-turn arrow traffic lights are the most prevalent. When a right-turning arrow is shown, turn quickly while paying full attention to oncoming vehicles. Many intersections where this type of traffic light is provided have right-turn-only lanes.



Arrow traffic light

Pay attention to the differences from your own country.



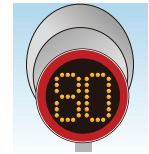
Taiwan

5 Always pay attention to speed limits! Legal speed limit is 60 km/h!

As there are many wide and long roads with few buildings lining them in Hokkaido, it is easy to lose a sense of your speed, and drivers may press down on the accelerator without thinking. Speed limits are set at 30-50km/h in urban areas and 40-60km/h in the suburbs and on major roads. The speed limit is normally set at 70-100km/h on expressways but in adverse weather conditions such as high winds and blizzards, the limit can be lowered to 50km/h. Due to the large number of long roads, there are many public roads and expressways with long distances with no signs indicating speed limits or with electric signs that are showing no speed limits. On such roads, drivers are asked to obey the legal speed limits (60 km/h for public roads, 100km/h for expressways). Focus first on making a safe driving trip while paying attention to speed limits.



Basic speed sign



Electric speed limit sign

6 Pay attention to the no-overtaking zones!

Don't pass other cars in no-overtaking zones. It is because it is dangerous to do so that the zone was established. For example, the roads may have obstructed views or sharp curves ahead. Wait until the no-overtaking zones is finished and it is safe for a driver to pass others to pass other vehicles.



Unbroken yellow center lines indicate no passing zones.



Broken white center lines signify an ordinary zone.

7 Bring your car to a complete stop at stop signs and in front of train crossings!

Bring your car to a complete stop to safety check left and right

In Japan, it is a strictly enforced rule that you must bring your car to a stop at stop signs, and halfway stops are not permitted. A "stop" means that a car completely stops and the driver looks left and right. In addition, since V-shaped signs are peculiar to Japan, remember what they mean. Usually, no "Stop" signs are located on roads which cross other roads with V-shaped signs. In other words, cars are traveling at high speeds on the road you need to cross. In the event of an accident, full responsibility is apportioned to the driver who did not stop their car. Pay full attention and make sure you stop the car completely.

Pay attention to the differences from your own country.



Taiwan



South Korea

Each country's stop sign



Japan



Taiwan



South Korea

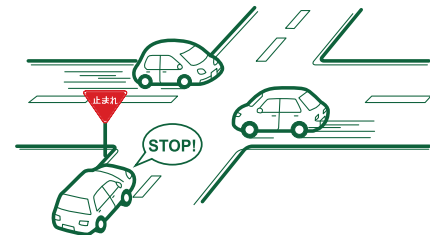


Singapore



Hong Kong

Standard layout of intersections with a stop sign



Completely stop a car in front of train crossings!

Drivers must completely stop their car in front of train crossings to confirm that no trains are coming from left and right and the car can move forward safely. If the traffic over the train crossings is backed up, the car will not be able to move over the crossing for a long time.



Diagram of cars not able to move over a train crossing

Pay attention to the differences from your own country.



Hong Kong



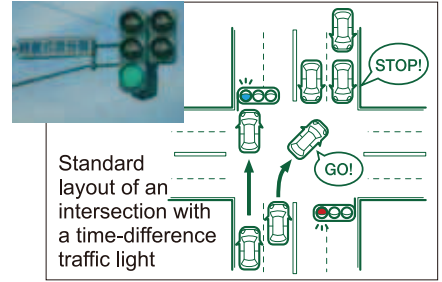
Singapore



Taiwan

8 Watch the traffic light in front carefully, and do not start to move before the traffic light turns green!

an intersection with a time-difference traffic light =>

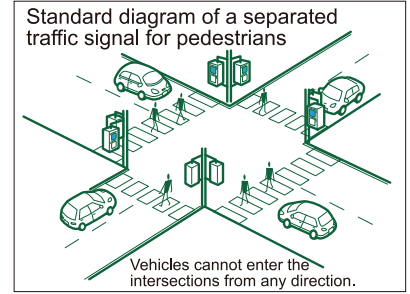


What is a time-difference traffic light?

When the traffic light for the lanes in your direction is red, the signal for the oncoming lanes is usually red, too. Time-difference traffic lights, however, are set to be green for busy lanes longer than for the other lanes.

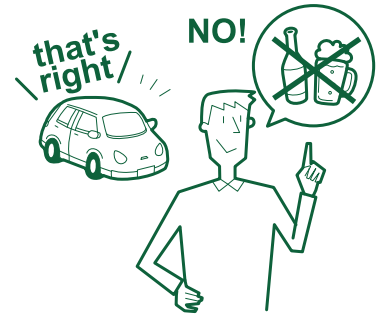
What are separate traffic signals for pedestrians?

There are separate traffic signals for pedestrians in areas where there are many pedestrians in order to be able to keep pedestrians and vehicles separate. When traffic lights for vehicles are green, all the traffic signals for pedestrians are red. Then, when all the traffic lights for vehicles turn red, the intersections are open for pedestrians to walk.



9 Never drink and drive!

All over the world it is now considered common sense not to drive a car under the influence of alcohol. It is the same in Japan, however enforcement of the law and penalties for breaking it are stricter here. If alcohol is detected by a breath test, you will be penalized with imprisonment of up to three years or a fine of up to a 500,000 yen. Even more severe penalties are imposed for driving while intoxicated. In Japan, drivers who refuse to take a breath test are also punished. Sober passengers who ride together with a drunken driver as well as those who encouraged a driver to drink will also be punished. Never drink and drive.



Column

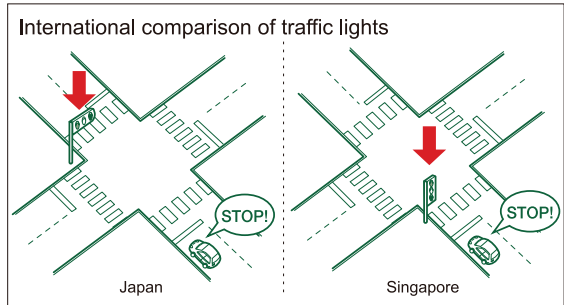
Position of traffic signals

International drivers should initially pay attention to the position where they should stop their car. Please note that traffic lights in Japan are located on the front side of intersections and you must stop your car rather far from the traffic lights.

Pay attention to the differences from your own country.



Bite-sized information for your benefit

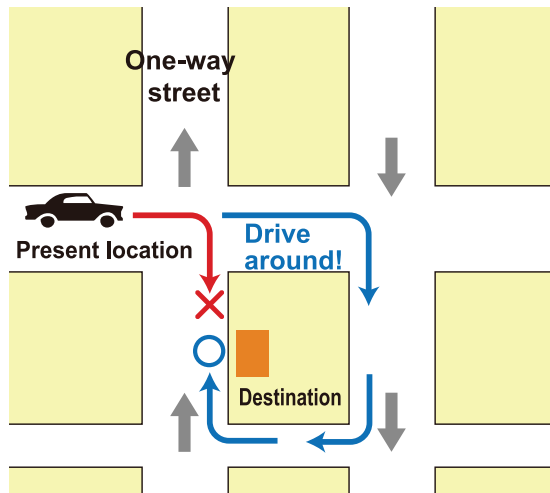


● Department of Environment and Lifestyle, Hokkaido Government
 “Basic knowledge of traffic safety”
 (Japanese, English, Traditional Chinese, Korean)
<http://www.pref.hokkaido.lg.jp/ks/dms/saftydrive/eng/index.htm>

● Sapporo Rental Car Association
 “Video Promoting Safe Driving”
 (Japanese, English, Traditional Chinese, Korean)
<http://sapporo-renta.com/movie>

What do you do if you cannot make a turn because the road you want to turn into is a one-way street?

One-way streets can be frequently found in downtown areas and on busy streets. To reach your destination, you will have to pass the one-way street and drive in a round-about way to your destination. In the central part of Sapporo, one-way streets run from south to north alternating. Drivers should learn the layout of roads at least in the central part of the city.



Column

Buckle up to save your life! Never forget.

It is the responsibility of not only the driver but also passengers to fasten their seatbelts. In 2008, passengers became legally required to fasten their seatbelts, even in the back seat. All children under 6 must be seated in child seats. Since rental car companies rent child seats at relatively low prices, make sure to reserve them in advance.



Bite-sized information for your benefit



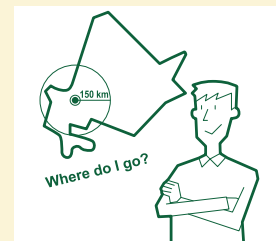
Quick Tip

For comfortable driving in Hokkaido



The total distance you cover in a driving trip should not exceed 150 kilometers per day.

That is, if a driver plans their driving routes by themselves, the total distance of the trip should not exceed 150 kilometers per day. The total number of hours spent driving should also be less than three to four hours on public roads. Even if you include time for meals and sightseeing, the total driving time should not exceed the figure above. Design the trip with spare time built in to take side trips. In addition, it is recommended to calculate the distance between the places where you intend to stay and plan with that information in mind. Careful selection of places to stay will have an important effect on your driving trips.



Avoid driving at night!

It is hard to find destinations in places you do not know at the best of times but as drivers face increased difficulties in finding landmarks in darkness after sunset, the chances of getting lost increase. Hokkaido roads in the suburbs usually have no or few street lights, and they may be darker than you imagine. Be careful especially about driving in autumn and winter when the hours of daylight get shorter.



When a penalty sticker is affixed to your car

As parking violations are stringently policed in Japan, be sure to park your car in appropriate parking areas or assigned lots when leaving your car, even for a short time. When a penalty sticker is affixed to your car, payment of a fine between 10,000 yen and 18,000 yen will have to be made (in the case of passenger cars).

When a parking fine sticker is attached to a rented car

1. Reporting to a police station

Report to the police station indicated on the parking sticker immediately.

2. Pay the fine

When you go to the police station, complete the necessary documents and you will receive a payment notice. Pay the illegal parking fine at the nearest financial institution (bank etc) and get a receipt.

3. Report to the rental car company

Present the completed forms for the penalty and your receipt. Penalties may be incurred for failing to make the required notifications.



Make a phone call to the number shown here.

Memo You must inform the rental car company of any parking fines!

When a parking fine sticker is affixed to a car, the owner is contacted and informed of the violation through the license plate (in this case, the rental car company). Go through the formalities by following the instructions of the police before returning your rented car.



Make sure you know the areas in which parking is banned

There are many people from other countries who violate the parking regulations in Japan. According to a survey by rental car companies, the arrest rate for illegal parking by people from abroad is eight times the rate of Japanese. Check the areas where parking is banned by checking traffic signs and lane markings.

The policing of on-street parking is very stringent. Where, then, should a driver park their car?

The policing of parking and penalties for violation became very stringent after revision of the law in June 2006. A driver cannot park their car just anywhere, so please park your car after checking the parking signs. When a parking fine sticker is affixed to your car, payment of a fine between 10,000 and 18,000 yen is required (in the case of passenger cars). From the start, park your car in parking lots.

Column

Bite-sized information for your benefit

Small soba noodle shops or curry-and-rice restaurants in regional towns may provide no or few parking lots. Even in these cases, never park your car on the road. As the shop may provide parking lots a little further from the shop, ask the shop staff for information.



No Parking signs

No Parking and No Stopping



This sign indicates an area where parking and stopping is prohibited. Drivers cannot park or even stop their car on roads with this sign. The upper "8 - 20" means the restriction is applicable from 8:00 to 20:00. Parking is restricted all day if the sign displays no such numbers.

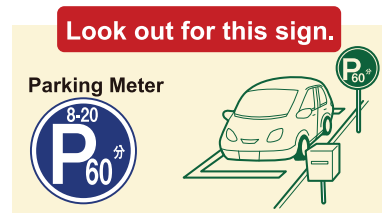
No parking zone



This sign indicates a no parking zone. On roads with this sign, a driver cannot park the car except to let off passengers or take on or drop off things. The upper "8 - 20" means the restriction is applicable from 8:00 to 20:00. Parking is restricted all day if the sign displays no such numbers.

Use pay parking meters!

If you wish to park your car temporarily, use pay parking meters. It is relatively easy to find and use pay parking meters. Parking spaces are marked with white enclosing lines drawn on the streets in the area where the sign at right is posted. The meter is operated on an advanced payment system for up to 60 minutes, after which it is considered to be illegal parking.



1 Park your car in a designated space.

2 Insert coins in the parking ticket vending machine.



3 A parking ticket will be dispensed.



4 Affix the parking ticket inside the windshield so that it is visible from outside.



5 Check the expiration time for the ticket. You need to be careful as it will be a parking violation if your car is parked more than 60 minutes.

Use both private and public parking facilities!

Parking fees vary among locations. In this handbook you will be given information on parking fees in Sapporo's city center, the hardest place to find parking in Hokkaido. The department stores and shopping malls you may visit will have contract parking lots. Be sure to check in advance if they offer free parking if you spend a certain amount of money in their shop. Fee structures vary from one parking lot to the next. Some parking lots charge a flat all-day rate (about 1,000 – 2,000 yen) whether you park for a short period (around 20 minutes) or hours.

Regarding the current going rates, fees around Sapporo Station are roughly 100 yen for 20 minutes and 300 to 400yen an hour, whereas in the Odori area, fees range from 100 yen for 15 minutes and 400 to 500 yen an hour. Needless to say, there are cheaper places to park outside the center city area.

Public Underground Parking Lots

There are three large underground parking lots in central Sapporo. They are so large and spacious that you can easily find a parking space but if you do not remember to note where you parked (such as noticing the number on the column nearest your car) you may be unable to find your car, so be careful.

Sapporo Station North Exit Underground Parking Lot

¥170 per 1/2 hr.
8:00 – 22:00



Kita Ichijo Underground Parking Lot

¥200 per 1/2 hr.
7:30 – 22:00



Sapporo Odori Underground Parking Lot

¥390 per hr.
08:00~22:00

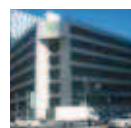


Multilevel/Tower Parking Garages

There are no large parking lots in the city center where there is a lack of space. Most parking lots are either multilevel or tower parking lots.

Multilevel Parking

Get a ticket at the entrance gate. Drive into the lot, ascend the spiral ramp and park in an available space. To exit, drive your car down the spiral ramp, insert your ticket and money in the machine.



Tower Parking

Following the attendant's instructions, cars need to be driven onto a platform that will be lifted like an elevator. To retrieve your car, give the ticket you received from the attendant when parking back to him/her and your car will be brought back down to the main level.



Self-Service Coin Parking

There are inexpensive self-service coin parking lots that allow you to park near the street. After you park your car, wheel-clamps will automatically rise into place to keep your wheels from moving. To remove your car, go to the car park pay meter, enter the stall number where you parked using the numeric keys and pay the parking fee. This will automatically release the wheel-clamps.



Other

There are, of course, the good old conventional parking lots with a pay booth at the entrance with an attendant sitting inside and you leave your car key with him/her. If you wish to obtain information on the area, it may be a good idea to use this type of parking lot so you can ask the attendant questions.





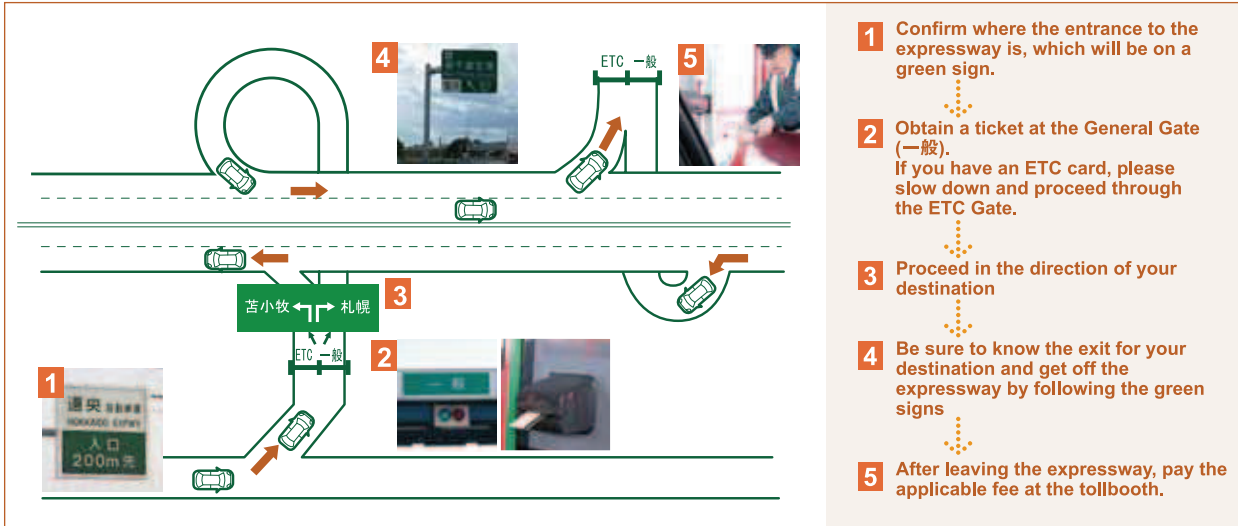
COMFORTABLE DRIVING IN HOKKAIDO



3-3. Use expressways!

Since Hokkaido is big, it is often necessary to travel large distances to move from one place to the next. In particular, if your plans include driving across some large cities with many traffic lights and heavy traffic, using expressways will lead to substantial time savings. Use them wisely.

If you make sure in advance that you know: 1. Your present location, 2. The location of the entrance, and 3. The name of the exit you need to take, you will be alright.



Where is the entrance?

Enter the expressway at the entrance referred to as IC (interchanges) such as "New Chitose Airport IC." All the road signs for local streets are blue in color, however, since all the locations for interchanges are marked in green, look out for green signs while driving.



Which gate should I use?

There are general lanes, ETC lanes and dual use lanes at the entrance. If you have an ETC card, please use the blue ETC Lane. If not, please use the green General Lane.



Which way should I go?

After passing the gate, the road will split in 2 directions. You must choose the lane that will take you in the direction of where you wish to go. As the signs show the names of cities, it is a good idea to check the geographical location of the major city and IC (interchange) in advance. If, by any chance, you find yourself heading in the opposite direction from where you intended to go, stay calm, get off the expressway at the next IC and start over again.



ETC(Electronic Toll Collection)

An ETC Card is used exclusively to pay expressway tolls and other related fees. It identifies the payer and the payment is automatically charged to the user's credit card or bank account that has been registered with the ETC system.

Be careful of the ETC lanes as only cars that are set up to use the ETC Card system can use these lanes. Some rental car companies offer an ETC card rental service together with the car. If you are planning to use expressways, it's worth making inquiries.



An example of an ETC Card
高速人CARD
"E-NEXCO pass"

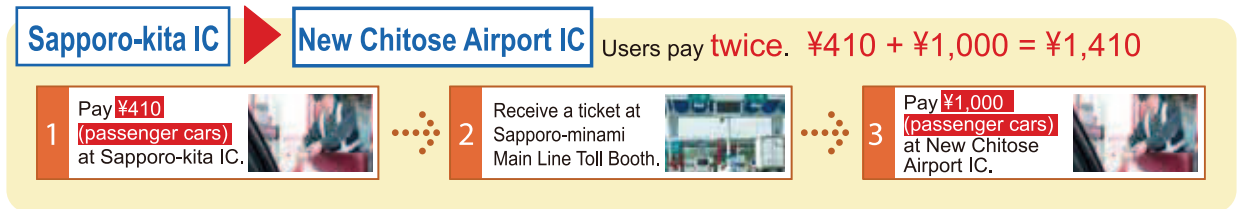
The flat rate toll used in Sapporo must be pre-paid!

At the IC entrances in Sapporo, a toll booth and not a ticket dispenser will greet you immediately. The system here calls for a prepayment of the flat fee (¥410 for passenger cars).

※ Rates of March 2017



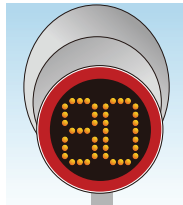
This is how the tolls in Sapporo work!



※ Rates of March 2017

Speed Limit

Speed limits are variable and will change depending on the weather and/or road conditions. If there are no signs, the speed limit is 100 km/hr. Always check the speed limit signs while driving.



Toll Booths

To use expressways, users obtain a ticket from a dispenser at the entrance gate and pay the applicable toll, which varies by the distance traveled, to an attendant at the exit. To pay, cash or the following credit cards are accepted (no need to sign the transaction slip):

JCB Card, NICOS Card, American Express Card, Diners Club Card, VISA Card and MasterCard.

Drive in the Cruising Lane (Keep Left)!

A 2-lane expressway is divided into the "cruising lane" and "passing lane." Under normal conditions, stay in the cruising lane on the left hand side (keep left). Only pass in the right-hand lane. As this road traffic (expressway) regulation is strictly enforced, it is advisable to return to the cruising lane after having passed another vehicle.



Quick Tip

With the Hokkaido Expressway Pass, enjoy unlimited use of Hokkaido's expressways, for one fixed price. When you use ETC, there's no need to come to a complete stop at toll booths. And you need not worry about communication in Japanese!

East Nippon Expressway Company ~ Hokkaido Expressway Pass.
(Japanese, English, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese and Korean)

http://www.driveplaza.com/trip/drawari/hokkaido_expass/en.html

[Standard Expressway Toll Chart]

http://www.driveplaza.com/trip/drawari/hokkaido_expass/pdf/normal_list_2015_en.pdf

3-4. How to use gas stations

gas stations are called “GA-SO-RI-N SU-TA-N-DO” in Japan. There have been problems due to confusion over the names of the various types of fuels, so learn what they are beforehand.

*The abbreviations GS for gas stations or SS for service stations will be used below.

Where are gas stations?

Gas stations can be commonly seen in urban areas or along the busy main roads, but they are rarely found once you are away from a city or along a road with very little traffic. There are more GS along highways with 2 or more lanes and other roads which large-sized vehicles such as trucks utilize. Regarding operating hours, you should be aware that while some GS are open 24 hours a day in urban areas, some gas stations in the countryside where there is little traffic may close after 18:00 during the week and may not be open at all on weekends. It is advisable to refuel frequently to prevent running out of gasoline. Keep a close eye on the amount in the tank, particularly if you are leaving an urban area.

These signs are the ones to look out for.

Signs of the major gasoline stand chains



ENEOS



IDEMITSU



SHELL



Exxon Mobile Group



COSMO

There are two types of gas stations.

There are two types of gas stations: a. “Full Service” where sales staff are always present and refuel for you and b. “Self Service” where you refuel your own car. Prices are slightly cheaper at self-service stands. At full service stands, all you have to do is to tell the staff what kind of gas you want and how much, either in liters or yen. If you want a full tank, just say “MA-N-TA-N” (full tank). The staff will refuel your car and offer services such as wiping your car’s windows. Every once in a while, you will be offered a free map or pack of tissues.

There are three types of fuel with two types of gasoline.

Fuel comes in three types including “HI OKU” (high octane), “regular” and “diesel.” Rental cars in Japan, for the most part, have gasoline engines and require “regular” gasoline. There are virtually no rental cars with diesel engines so under no circumstances should you use diesel fuel in a rental car. The car will not run if it has been filled up with diesel fuel. Additionally, gasoline sold in Japan is virtually all lead-free.

●Types of fuel (gasoline)

[Be careful not to confuse the gasoline types when refueling at a self-service stand!]

Generally speaking, “regular” means gasoline with an octane value of approximately 90, whereas, “Hi-Oku” (high octane) means gasoline with an octane value ranging between 98 and 100. Depending on the gas stations, “Hi-Oku” will have a unique product name such as “Premium,” “Super,” “F1,” “Vigo,” “Super Magnum” or “Shell Pura” that identifies the high octane gasoline as a product that improves fuel efficiency, ensures optimum engine performance and has energy and environmental qualities.



Quick Tip Identify the gasoline type by the color of the nozzle!
The nozzle of regular gasoline is RED.

The colors of gasoline stand nozzles are standardized across the country with red being “regular”, yellow being “high octane” and green being “diesel”.



English Signage	Taiwan	Hong Kong	Japan
Ultimate unleaded*	98無鉛汽油	高級汽油	ハイオク(HA-I-O-KU)
Unleaded	92無鉛汽油	普通汽油	レギュラー(RE-GYU-RA-A)
Diesel	柴油	柴油	軽油(KE-I-YU)

*Depending on the stand, “Ultimate unleaded” may be called “Plus unleaded,” “Super unleaded,” or “Premium unleaded.”

Refuel at a self-service gas station!

Here is an introduction about how to use self-service gas stations.

*Since the system may be different depending on the gas stations, we are giving you just one example here. At some gas stations, drivers pay the amount they owe for the gasoline to the staff at the register after refueling.



1

Stop your car alongside the petrol pump

Stop your car alongside the petrol pump keeping in mind which side your petrol tank is on. Make sure you know in advance which side your petrol tank is on. Park the car and turn off the engine.



2

Pay first

The fee should be paid beforehand, and cash and credit cards may be used.

(1) Cash: Insert the amount of money in the loading slot.

If a driver intends to refuel by 30 l, insert approximately 5,000 to 6,000 yen in bills. The cost is calculated by multiplying the unit costs (per liter) by the amount of gasoline (l) you used, and any change owed will be repaid into the coin return slot.

(2) Credit card: Activate the card by inserting it.

Insert your credit card into the appropriate slit and swipe it through the reader to load the data.



3

Select the gasoline type and the volume (number of liters)

Select the gasoline you wish to use by pushing the button for either premier, regular or light gasoline. Rental car users usually choose regular. The amount of petrol can be selected in two ways: choose one of 10 l, 20 l, 30 l ... 50 l options or select 1,000 yen, 2,000 yen, 3,000 yen ... 5,000 yen. If a driver wants to fill their car up, MA-N-TA-N should be selected.



4

Refueling

Open your petrol tank, pick up the nozzle for the gasoline you have selected, insert the nozzle into your tank firmly. There are usually three types of nozzles, so make sure you select the right type of petrol. Petrol types are always indicated by the same colors. Pull the lever to start refueling. When you have finished refueling, the petrol will stop automatically (The driver cannot pull the lever anymore).



5

Refueling completed.

Return the nozzle to the pump, and close the cap of your petrol tank firmly. Confirm the amount of gasoline and the charge shown on the display. Don't forget to pick up your change when you pay by cash. A receipt is printed out automatically for use of both cash and credit cards.



Quick Tip

Gasoline is dangerous!

Needless to say, fire, such as cigarettes, must be put out while you are filling your car. If gasoline catches fire, it will be very dangerous. As static electricity is also dangerous, do not forget to touch a static electricity removal sheet before starting to refuel. Use of mobile phones is also prohibited.



3-5. Be careful on snowy roads!

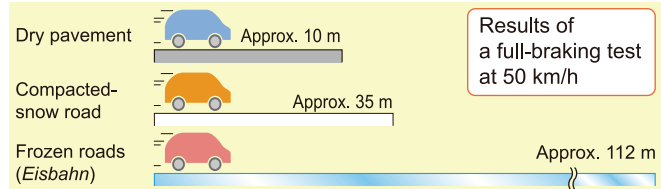
In Hokkaido, there are many winter activities, such as skiing, snowboarding and enjoying hot springs. Since the baggage required for these activities tends to be big, this is when rental cars can be very convenient. Winter roads, however, require advanced driving skills. Remember this basic knowledge to avoid serious trouble.



During the winter season, rental cars are always equipped with snow tires (for use on winter roads).

Slippery!

Compacted-snow roads are roads on which snow has fallen and then been pressed down and compacted by the movement of vehicles. Icy roads (*Eisbahn*) are those that are covered with thin ice formed by the refreezing of snow that fell and then melted on the roads, and these are especially slippery. Winter roads are very dangerous, because once a car skids, it is hard to control it.



(Extract from the website of Bureau of Lifestyle Safety, Bureau of Daily Life Safety, Daily Life Safety Promotion Division, Department of Environment and Lifestyle, Hokkaido Government)



Don't be tricked by black icy roads (*Eisbahn*)!

Black *Eisbahn* is the worst type of icy roads. The road is covered with refrozen melted snow after rain. They look a little like wet roads, however, they are the slipperiest roads. Be very careful on black shiny roads in winter!

It's impossible to see!

Strong snowstorms can obstruct your view forward and snow being blown up from the road may also lead to low visibility. In addition, your range of vision may be reduced suddenly due to powdery snow blown up by oncoming trucks. Drivers just have to slow down in such situations.



Getting stuck!

If you drive into deep snow, you may not be able to get your car out. As far as is possible, find cleared roads or drive along wheel tracks left by other cars.



Things you must not do!

"Sudden braking," "Sudden acceleration," "Abrupt steering"
Your wheels will lock up (continue to slide without your tires moving) if you brake suddenly and your car get out of control so avoid this.



Quick Tip

Rental car users who intend to drive on winter roads for the first time should ask for a car equipped with ABS* when they make their reservation.

*ABS : This Anti-lock Brake System allows drivers to maintain steering control and avoid an accident even under heavy braking. However, it can also present disadvantages including increased braking distance on slippery surfaces, such as on ice, or smooth roads. ABS should not be solely relied upon.



Quick Tip

Are brakes broken?

Drivers, who use ABS (Anti-lock Brake System) for the first time, may be surprised with how they function. When wheels lock (continue to slide without your tires moving) on frozen roads, a loud sound can be heard at the moment of braking. This is the noise caused by the actuation of the device to control the brakes automatically. Drivers need not ease up on the brakes in a hurry.



Three key points to driving in winter

Drive slowly

The basic point is not to increase your speed. Driving slowly will give you time to avoid danger should the need arise.



Keep a safe distance between cars.

Keeping a safe distance between you and the car ahead gives you enough time to react and cope with emergency situations.



Understand the traffic conditions ahead

Many winter traffic accidents are caused by a delay in drivers understanding traffic conditions ahead. Pay attention to the brake lamps of the front two cars as well as traffic conditions ahead.



Learn how to use the engine to brake!

Cars accelerate automatically on down grades. In such cases, drivers should use not brakes but the engine to brake to control the speed. Using the engine to control speed is achieved by utilizing the power of the gears and changing the mode of the automatic transmission from D (drive) to S (or 3 or 2 according to models). Be sure to change the gear slowly while slowing the car down.



Tips about winter driving

Memo

1 Windshield wipers are frozen and they don't work

Wet wipers will get stuck to the windshield when frozen. You can avoid this by lifting the wiper arms off the windshield and leaving them like that overnight.



2 It is bright on sunny days

It is very dazzling when the sun reflects off the snow in winter. It is a good idea to carry sunglasses to combat the glare.



3 Clumps of snow come crashing down onto the car roof

Before driving be sure to remove any snow that has accumulated on the car roof. Otherwise clumps of snow may slide down the windshield without warning while driving and may block your view.



4 How slippery is it?

If you test your brakes while driving at a low speed and where you know it is safe to do so, you will learn how slippery the road is that day. Don't ever do this when there are cars in front of or behind you.



5 Melted snow from the car in front is showering your car

There are times when melted snow off the car in front or splashed up by oncoming vehicles covers your windshield and reduces visibility. Be sure to maintain a sufficient amount of windshield washer fluid in your car at all times. A winter formula that provides anti-freeze protection can be purchased at auto supply shops and home centers.



6 Everywhere is white and I cannot tell where the road is

In blizzard conditions, you cannot see what is ahead. Blowing snow caused by strong winds may reduce visibility. Drifting snow blown up by oncoming trucks will also obstruct your view for a moment. In these situations, remember to reduce your speed and drive slowly.



Stay home when the weather is bad!

In winter, weather conditions can change suddenly in some areas. Also, some areas do not have reception for cell phones. If you are stranded in one of these places you will be unable to call for help and will freeze in the extreme cold. It could take hours before the rescue party arrives and your life will be at risk. If bad weather is forecast therefore, do not go out even if this means you have to change your plans.



Quick Tip

If you become stranded...

- ① Do not leave your vehicle. (Risk of getting lost)
- ② Turn on the hazard lamps. (To let others know you car is stationary)
- ③ Call the police, fire bureau and/or road service providers for help. ⇒ See P. 48
- ④ Keep exhaust pipe clear of accumulated snow. (Beware of carbon monoxide poisoning)



Totally lost?
Help is here!



For more information on things to keep in mind about winter driving

- "Basic Knowledge of Road Safety," (Available in: Japanese, English, Traditional Chinese and Korean) issued by Department of Environment and Lifestyle, Hokkaido Government

<http://www.pref.hokkaido.lg.jp/ks/dms/safydrive/eng/index.htm>



Two months
before the trip

One month
before the trip

One week
before the trip

Departure!!



**Arrival
in Hokkaido!!**



Chapter 4 What should you do in a situation like this?

4-1. If you are in a car accident or have committed a traffic violation · · ·	40
4-2. If you have an injury or illness · · · · ·	41
4-3. If you have weather-related trouble · · · · ·	42
4-4. If your car breaks down · · · · ·	43
4-5. If your car is hit by a wild animal · · · · ·	44

You never think that you will run into trouble during your vacation but that is actually what you should be concerned about most. If you know how to handle emergencies, you will be anxiety-free and able to act without panicking in extreme situations.

I don't understand Japanese. What should I do? ⇒ See Page 46

First, ask a Japanese person who is on the scene for help. He/she should be able to explain the situation at the scene to the police and fire department personnel. If there is no one nearby, call the police and tell them the "situation" and "location." Stay calm and check the car navigation system for the location.

What if I had an accident?

If you had a major accident in which you are seriously injured, you will have no choice but to wait for someone to help. The question is what you should do when you hit another car or hurt someone. It is important to deal with the situation calmly. First of all, it is essential to ensure that a second accident will not occur. You should learn the following procedure:

What to do when an accident happens

① Make the area as safe as possible

Look around you and make an assessment as to what actions are necessary to make the area safe, such as moving your car so that it is not blocking traffic, moving any injured person(s) to a safe location, and so on.

② Dial 119 to call an ambulance

Call an ambulance if someone is injured. It may be necessary to give the injured person first aid in order to stop bleeding while waiting for an ambulance.

③ Dial 110 to call the police and follow their instructions

Call the police and give a detailed description of the accident. Be sure to contact the police as you will need an accident report for compensation at a later date.

④ Contact your car rental company

Finally, call your car rental company and follow their instructions. The car rental company will make all arrangements including contacting the insurance company, moving your car, and other related matters.

Be sure to report it no matter how small the accident is

Road accidents - even if it is self-inflicted accident and the car is drivable - must be reported to the police and also the car rental company.

Do not negotiate a settlement on the scene.

In the case of a minor accident, the other party may offer to settle the matter with cash on the spot. However, you will be at a disadvantage if you are unfamiliar with the rules and regulations involved. It is safer to decline his/her offer and follow the instructions of the car rental company.

Information you should give when calling 110 and 119

See Page 46 for "Phrases to use (by pointing) in Emergency Situations". "There was an accident and 'x' number of people were injured. The location is (give location) my name is My phone number is, and cell phone number is"

Be sure to identify the other party

Give the other party your information and obtain the other party's information. Additionally, if you have a camera, it would be a good idea to take photos of the scene.

- Your name, address and phone numbers and those of the other party
- Your driver's license number and that of the other party



Quick Tip

On expressways, use the "Emergency Telephone!"

If you have an accident or if your car breaks down on an expressway, make the area safe by parking your car on the shoulder and turning on your emergency blinkers or use a triangle reflector to alert other vehicles of the emergency situation, then contact the road authorities. If you use the "Emergency Telephone" instead of your cell phone, your present location will automatically be notified to the rescue crew. "Emergency Telephones" are installed every 1 km so you will be able to find one within 500 m, either ahead of you or behind.



Status of accidents involving foreign visitors using rental cars

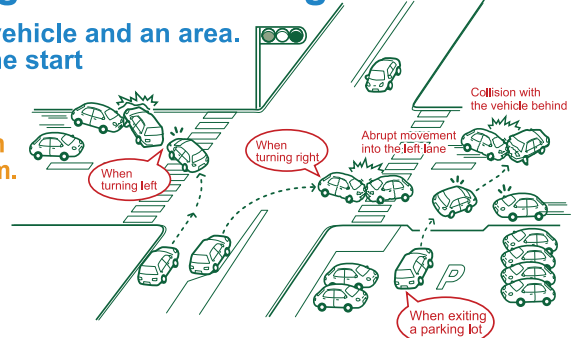
Watch out when you have become familiar with your vehicle and an area. Be more careful in the latter part of your trip than at the start

● Accidents happen when foreign visitors move into the opposite lane after making a right/left turn (due to being used to right-hand lane traffic.)

Having entered the wrong traffic lane, foreign visitors can panic and collide with oncoming cars or cars behind them.

Pay attention to the differences from your own country.

Taiwan Korea



The accident that happens most frequently in parking lots is caused by drivers not checking to see what is behind their cars.

Cars are parked very close to each other and visibility is often poor in parking lots due to dim lighting. Additionally, being in an "unfamiliar car" may contribute to errors in perception regarding the width of the vehicle. The most frequent cause of accidents is a lack of sufficient attention to things behind the car. If you park forwards, you will need to back out when you leave. This means that you will have many blind spots and it is highly possible that you will end up in an accident. If possible, park by slowly backing into a space so you can leave the parking space in a forwards direction and be able to see clearly.



Report it to the police even if it is a small accident!

Although you have insurance, it will not apply if you do not report an accident. You will become responsible for the full cost of the accident. Therefore, be sure to report any accident to the police however minor it may seem.

What should you do if you are injured or suddenly become ill while driving?

How you handle a situation where you are injured or become ill during the trip will vary depending on time, place and your symptoms.

Check your symptoms

Check your symptoms calmly and work out how to handle the situation. *If you have a pre-existing medical condition, be sure to consult with your family physician prior to the trip.

Go to the hospital

Don't continue on regardless but instead put the trip on hold and go to the nearest hospital. Generally Japanese hospitals are open to outpatients during the week.



If you are injured or ill during non-business days or after hours

Go to an emergency center or to a doctor on call

For people seeking medical care outside business hours, emergency medical facilities (emergency centers and other related facilities) or doctors on call are available in Japan. Ask the Japanese people around you and they should be able to suggest an appropriate hospital. It is also safe to ask people at a tourist bureau or stores.



Dial 119

If a serious injury or sudden illness develops, call 119 and you can get an ambulance.

You will be asked where you are and what your symptoms are, so ask a Japanese person near you for help.



Quick Tip Local residents are the best source of medical service information!

Information about medical services is an important part of local residents' lives. If you are unwell, do not hesitate to ask them for help. You should be able to communicate that you "want to go to the hospital" using signs and gestures.

To explain your symptoms, see Page 46 for "Phrase to use (by pointing) in Emergency Situations."



Quick Tip

Fire and Disaster Management Agency "A guide for ambulance services" (Japanese, English, Simplified Chinese and Korean)
http://www.fdma.go.jp/html/life/kyuukyusya_manual/pdf/2011/english.pdf



What about paying the doctor's fee?

Since the Japanese health insurance system applies only to Japanese people, you will be charged the full amount for any medical treatment received. The amount will vary depending on the symptoms, treatment and any medication that is issued. You may have to be prepared to pay in the range of tens of thousands of yen. Since virtually no hospitals yet accept credit cards, you will have no choice but to pay by cash. If you have overseas travel insurance, you should be able to claim a refund from the insurance company later. Ask the hospital to fill out the insurance claim form or to issue a medical certificate. Keep your receipt for the medical costs in a safe place.

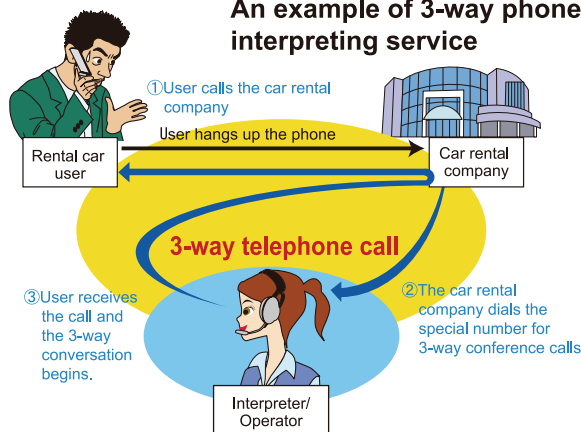


There is 3-Way Phone Interpreting Service!

Some of the major car rental companies offer a 3-way phone interpreting service! This is a 3-way simultaneous conference call system which uses an operator who can translate your conversation.

- ① User calls the car rental company. User hangs up the phone.
- ② The car rental company dials the special number for the 3-way conference call.
- ③ User receives the call and the 3-way conversation begins.

An example of 3-way phone interpreting service



Quick Tip

Get a cell phone before coming to Japan!

The number of pay phones has steadily decreased as cell phones became more popular in Japan. Be sure to carry a "cell phone" as a means of communication in case of emergencies.

Before you leave your country, check with your cell phone service provider as to whether your cell phone is set up for international roaming. Cell phones can be rented at airports and other places, if your own cell phone does not work in Hokkaido.



Using a cell phone while driving is strictly prohibited!



What should you do if the road is closed due to heavy rainfall or a blizzard?

If by any chance the road is closed, it is important to gather as much information as you can. Since weather information may be available only in Japanese, ask the Japanese people around you for help.

1 Gather information
 First of all, gather: 1. weather information, 2. road information and 3. information on the public transportation system. Be especially careful to do this if it is the last day of your trip and you have your flight home to catch. Check to see if there is any other means of transportation to make your return flight.

2 Travel by an alternative method of transportation
 Consider alternative means of travel if there is no hope of a road closure being lifted or weather conditions improving. If public transport is available, return the rental car to the nearest office and switch to public transport such as trains or airplanes. The first thing you will need to do will be to secure some reservations/tickets.

3 Make all the necessary phone calls
 Contact the car rental company if you are returning your vehicle to the nearest office. Contact the airlines that are operating your return flight and let them know beforehand your present situation, what time you expect to arrive at the airport, and that you will be delayed. Additionally, if it doesn't seem like you will make the return flight, discuss a reservation change with the airlines. If you are in transit, don't forget to contact the hotel that you have booked for that night and report your situation to them.

There are two major poor weather conditions that have a major impact on transportation systems in Hokkaido

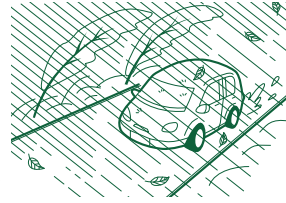
Blizzards

During the winter between December and March, the winter pressure pattern sets in and creates an atmospheric pattern of "western highs and eastern lows." When this happens, the wind will pick up and will often bring blizzard conditions. Caution is needed when this happens.



Typhoons

Typhoons are not very common in Hokkaido but there have been more incidents of them in recent years. There may be some major rainstorms and windstorms in August and September. Caution is needed and you should check traffic information for landslides during heavy rainstorms.



*Other: Although they are not common, localized snowstorms and rainstorms can occur throughout Hokkaido. Be careful since the transportation system may be paralyzed in such circumstances.

If a blizzard or typhoon is forecast, it will influence traffic conditions significantly, so be sure to check road information right away.

Take advantage of Michi-no-Eki (Road Stations)

Information terminals offering road information are available in Michi-no-Eki (Road Stations). If you have no other access to the internet, you can check road information there.



Totally lost? Help is here!

How do I find road information or details of weather/road conditions in the mountains?

In Hokkaido, there are many summits when traveling over a big mountain range and, due to the high elevation, weather conditions around the summit areas can be completely different from that on the plains. As weather conditions can change suddenly, be sure to have sufficient information at all times and be sure also to learn the names of the major summits that are included in your planned route. Information on snowfalls and gale winds are essential for winter driving and must be checked before you start a trip. Consider changing the route or plan, if necessary.

1. Weather information is available in English on the websites at right.

Japan Meteorological Agency (Japanese and English)
<http://www.jma.go.jp/jma/indexe.html>



2. Road information and summit information are available on the websites at right.

Weather information for the summit areas and road information are available in foreign languages on the website given below:
 Northern Road Navi (Japanese, English, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese and Korean)
<http://northern-road.jp/navi/eng/index.htm>



The following website is the most useful to get the latest information on road closures and other related matters.
 Hokkaido Development Bureau Hokkaido Regional Road Information (Japanese and English)
<http://info-road.hdb.hkd.mlit.go.jp/en/>



3. Information on the operating conditions for public transport is available on the website at right.

Flight information for arrivals/departures is also available.
 New Chitose Airport Terminal Building (Japanese, English, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese and Korean)
<http://www.new-chitose-airport.jp/en/>

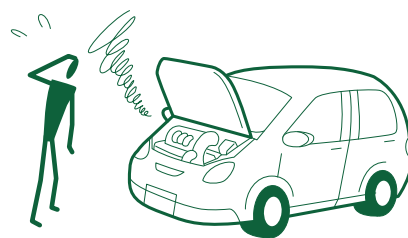


Operating conditions for the railways are available only in Japanese but it can be useful to check the headings.
 JR Hokkaido (Japanese, English, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese and Korean)
<http://www.jrhokkaido.co.jp/webunkou/>



Car problems and what to do

You may run into various car troubles including a dead battery, keys locked inside the car, driving into ditches, etc. First of all, the top priority is to contact your car rental company but please note that services to help fix these problems are not free and you will be charged.



Are there stress-free service offerings that help you deal with emergency situations?

Service plans offered by major car rental companies

Companies offer various service plans called “Stress-Free Plan” and other product names that offer roadside services, road information service, etc., so make sure you take advantage of them.

Examples of a plan offered by one of the car rental companies

1. Roadside Service

(4 free roadside services included)

- Changing your tire when you get a flat tire
- Supplying gasoline when you run out of fuel
- Jump-starting a dead battery
- Unlocking your car if you lock your keys inside

+

2. Telephone assistance service available for when you are in trouble

- Alternative means of transportation
- Lodging
- Transferring your phone call to JAF (Japan Automobile Federation)
- Finding a gasoline stand
- Highway information

+

3. Hassle-free late returns

+

4. Hassle-free early cancellations

+

5. Additional insurance coverage

Consult with the Japan Automobile Federation (JAF)

Japan Automobile Federation (JAF) is open 24 hours a day/7 days a week and offers nationwide roadside services. They will come to your location to assist with a dead battery or keys locked in free of charge if you are a JAF member. JAF also offers various services to non-members for fees.



JAF

Calling the JAF Roadside Service

There is a charge for calling **0570-00-8139** (Navi Dial)
(¥10/minute for home phones and ¥10/20 seconds for cell phones)
Alternatively, dial a speed number **#8139** (There is a charge)

If you cannot use the phone number at left,
call Hokkaido Call Center at
011-857-8139

Be sure to carry proof of your membership in the Automobile Association!

Members of any automobile club that is part of the “Global Service” of Federation Internationale de l’Automobile (FIA) have the same privileges as those of JAF members when using JAF’s road services. If you are a member of the Hong Kong Automobile Association (HKAA) or Automobile Association of Singapore (AAS), be sure to bring proof of your membership.

Global services of Federation Internationale de l’Automobile (FIA)

Automobile clubs affiliated with FIA in each country/region offer services to their mutual members under the FIA reciprocal agreement. Automobile clubs in over 80 countries worldwide are now offering various services to their members under the umbrella of FIA following the terms of the membership agreement.

*With respect to Taiwan and Korea, while they are affiliated with FIA, they are not participating in the reciprocal agreement. Hence, as a general rule, members in those countries are ineligible to receive services in Japan.



Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (Hong Kong)

Hong Kong Automobile Association (HKAA)

Tel: (+852)3583 3638
Internet: <http://www.hkaa.com.hk/>
E-mail: general@hkaa.com.hk



Singapore

Automobile Association of Singapore (AAS)

Tel: (+65)6333 8811
Internet: <http://www.aas.com.sg/>
E-mail: aasmail@aas.com.sg

What if your car hits a wild animal?

Hokkaido is rich in wildlife. Caution is needed while driving as wild animals such as foxes and raccoons may run across the road.

There are many ezo deer in Hokkaido (particularly in eastern Hokkaido.) While ezo deer may look adorable from a distance, they are actually large animals. Some of them weigh more than 100 kg and there have been fatal accidents caused by cars hitting ezo deer crossing the road. If your car hits an ezo deer, it will be an “accident” causing property damage. You



certainly should contact the police if this happens (particularly as it will be necessary to “report to the police” to have damage insurance cover the car repairs.) When making a report to the police, you can ask the police to contact the road authorities for that jurisdiction for the removal of the dead deer as it may cause additional accidents if it remains on the road.

Seasons for ezo deer sightings

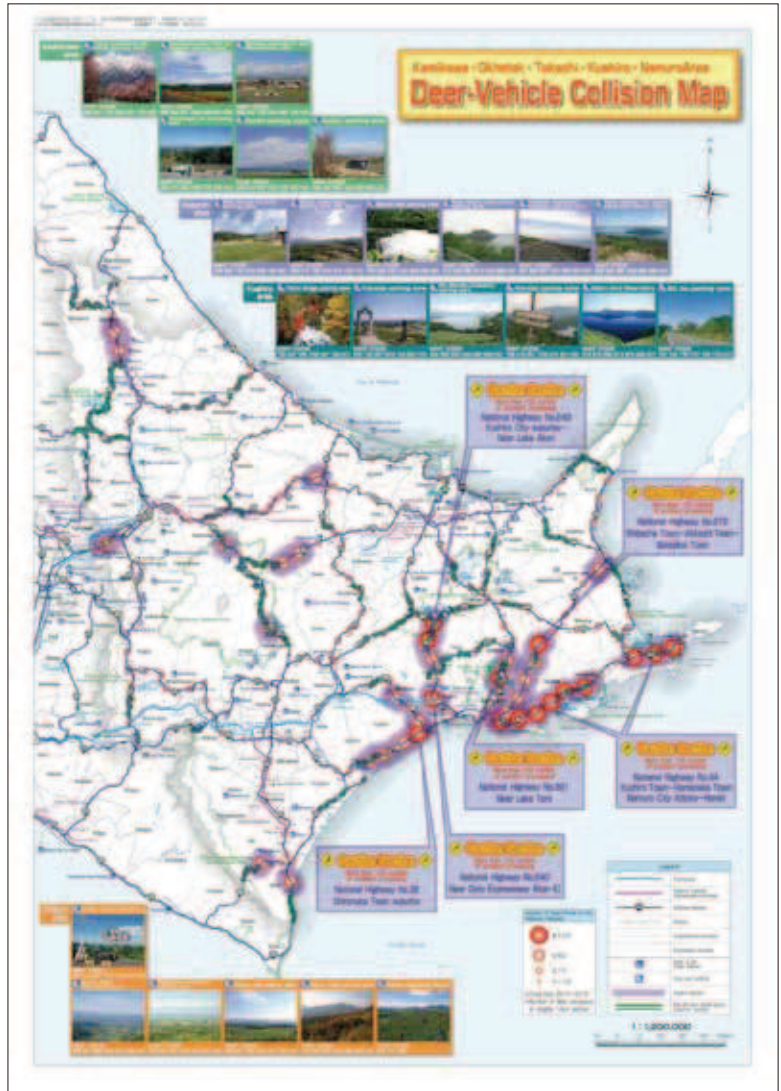
- **April – June:** Be aware that ezo deer come down to the foot of the mountains from the summit areas where they ordinarily live.
- **October – March:** Watch for ezo deer while driving over the summits. The number of accidents peaks during October and November.

Times of day when most accidents happen that involve ezo deer

- Many accidents happen between 16:00 – 20:00 around sunset, and 4:00 – 6:00 a.m., around dawn

Areas where ezo deer-related accidents happen the most frequently. A map of accident sites.

Excerpts from the website of Kushiro Development and Construction Department (Japanese, English and Traditional Chinese)
http://www.ks.hkd.mlit.go.jp/road/etc/shika/shika_map/shika_map_2016_e.pdf

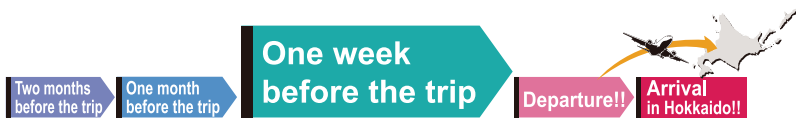


Caution!
Wild
Animals
Crossing



Be careful if you see this road sign.


There are a variety of signs warning of ezo deer crossing the road in addition to the road signs. Most are pictorial signs and they are easy to understand.



Information

(1) Phrases to use (by pointing) in an emergency ·····	46
(2) Telephone numbers and websites of related organizations ··	48
(3) Helpful information ·····	51

Phrases to use (by pointing) in an emergency

 In emergency situations, try to convey what you want to say by speaking Japanese no matter how rudimentary it may be while pointing at the phrases on this sheet.

“Car Accident” Section

Seeking help	助けてください tasukete kudasai Please help me.	日本語ができません nihongo ga dekimasen I don't speak Japanese.	警察を呼んでください keisatsu wo yonde kudasai Please call the police.
	救急車を呼んでください kyukyusha wo yonde kudasai Please call an ambulance.		
Explaining the conditions and location	交通事故です koutsuu jiko desu There has been an accident.	けが人がいます kega nin ga imasu There are injured persons.	1人/2人/3人 hitori/futari/sannin 1 person/2 people/3 people
	ここがどこかわかりません koko ga dokoka wakarimasen I don't know where I am.	この住所を教えてください。 kokono jusho wo oshiete kudasai Please tell me the address of this location.	

“Injury/Sudden Illness” Section

Going to the hospital	ケガをしました kega wo shimashita I am hurt.	具合が悪いです guai ga warui desu I feel unwell.	医者に診てほしい isha ni mite hoshii I want to see a doctor.
	病院に連れて行ってください byoin ni tsurete itte kudasai Would you take me to the hospital?		
Symptoms (Injuries)	血が出ています chi ga detemasu I am (he is/ she is) bleeding.	頭を打ちました atama wo uchimashita I (he/she) hit my (his/her) head.	意識はあります/意識がありません ishiki wa arimasu / ishiki ga arimasen Is conscious/unconscious.
	首が痛い kubi ga itai My neck hurts.	手/足 が動きません te / ashi ga ugokimasen I cannot move my hand(s)/foot (feet).	麻痺しています mahi shite imasu Feels numb.
Symptoms (Illness)	歯/頭/お腹が痛い ha/atama/onaka ga itai Tooth/head/stomach hurts.	熱があります netsu ga arimasu I have a temperature.	腫れています harete imasu Hand/foot/face is swollen.
	せきが出ます seki ga demasu I am coughing.	だるい darui I feel languid.	めまいがします memai ga shimasu I feel dizzy.
	寒気がします samukega shimasu I feel chilled.	吐き気がします hakike ga shimasu I feel nauseous.	下痢をしています geri wo shiteimasu I have diarrhea.

“Injury/Sudden Illness” Section (continued)

Communicating with the hospital staff	アレルギーがあります allergy ga arimasu	保険請求のために、この用紙に記入して下さい hoken seikyu no tame ni, kono youshini kinyuu shite kudasai
	I have allergies.	Please fill out this form for insurance claim.

“Traffic Jam” Section

Information gathering	通行止めはありますか？ tsuukoudome wa arimasuka?	迂回しなければなりませんか？ ukai shinakereba narimasenka?	吹雪/大雨/強風/天気が悪い fubuki/oame/kyofu/tenki ga warui
	Are there road closures?	Do I have to take a detour?	Blizzard/Rainstorm/Windstorm/Bad weather

Alternative transportation	午後2時までに千歳空港に行きたい gogo niji madeni chitose kuukou ni ikitai	飛行機に間に合わないかもしれない hikouki ni manawanai kamo shirenai	午後2時ぐらいに千歳空港に着きます gogo niji gurai ni chitose kuukou ni tsukimasu
	I have to be at Chitose Airport by 2.	I may not make my flight.	I will be arriving at Chitose Airport around 2.
Communicating/Reporting	列車の方が早いですか？ ressha no hou ga hayai desuka?	どうすればいいですか？ dousureba ii desuka?	
	Will it be faster to take the train?	What should I do?	

Communicating/Reporting	道路が通行止めです doro ga tsuukoudome desu	最寄の店舗に返します moyori no tenpo ni kaeshimasu
	Road is closed.	I will return the car to the nearest office.

“Parking” Section

駐車場はありますか？ chushajo wa arimasuka?	車はどこに停めればいいですか？ kuruma wa dokoni tomereba ii desuka?
Where is a parking lot?	Where should I park my car?

“Fueling” Section

レギュラー 満タン！ regular mantan	レギュラー 20リッター！ regular niju liter
Fill up with regular!	20 liters of regular!

“Car Trouble” Section

故障しました koshi shimashita	車が動かない kuruma ga ugokanai	鍵を閉じ込みました kagi wo tojikomemashita
My car broke down.	My car does not work.	I locked my car keys inside.
ガス欠です gasuketsu desu	バッテリーが上がりました battery ga agarimashita	パンクです panku desu
I ran out of gas.	The battery is dead.	I have a flat tire.



Totally lost?
Help is here!

A convenient
website.








Hokkaido Tourism Organization

“Good Day HOKKAIDO”

“Point at the Sentence” Travel Conversation Booklet”

<http://en.visit-hokkaido.jp/library/brochures>

1. List of relevant telephone numbers

- Police (110) 
- Ambulance (119) 
- Directory Assistance (104) 
- Hokkaido Emergency Medical Treatment Information Center (0120-20-8699 (Toll Free), 011-221-8699) 
- Japan Road Traffic Information Center (050-3369-6666, Speed number 8011) 
 - *Hokkaido Regional Information (050-3369-6601) Hokkaido Expressway Information (050-3369-6760)
- Road Emergency Number (Speed number 9910) 
- JAF Roadside Service (0570-00-8139, Speed number 8139) 
- Consulate-General of the United States of America in Sapporo (011-641-1115)
- Australian Consulate in Sapporo (011-242-4381)
- Consulate-General of the Republic of Korea in Sapporo (011-218-0288)
- Sapporo Branch, Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in Japan (011-222-2930)

2. List of related websites

Hokkaido District Transport Bureau

<http://www.tb.mlit.go.jp/hokkaido/> 

★Tourism Promotion ★Policy on attracting foreign tourists

“Northern Road Navi”:

Civil Engineering Research Institute of Cold Region

<http://northern-road.jp/navi/eng/>     

- ★Route maps
- ★Driving information
- ★Road/mountain pass (blizzard) information
- ★Winter driving guide
- ★Distance and time search function is available

“Basic knowledge of traffic safety”



on the website of Department of Environment and Lifestyle, Hokkaido Government

<http://www.pref.hokkaido.lg.jp/ks/dms/saftydrive/eng/index.htm>     

- ★Driving safely
- ★Basic rules and manners
- ★Driving on winter roads
- ★What to do in a traffic accident

“Good Day HOKKAIDO”:

Hokkaido Tourism Organization

<http://www.visit-hokkaido.jp/en/>     

- ★Hotels/Ryokan
- ★Events & Festivals
- ★Route Search
- ★Travel & Transport

※Various publications including Hokkaido tourism pamphlets can be downloaded from English, Chinese (Traditional/Simplified) and Korean pages.

Supported languages  Japanese  English  Traditional Chinese  Simplified Chinese  Korean  French  German

2. List of related websites (continued)

● Public agencies/services

Hokkaido Prefectural Police

<http://www.police.pref.hokkaido.lg.jp/english/english-top.html>

★Outline of Hokkaido ★Outline of Hokkaido Prefectural Police
★Area Map of Police Stations

Japan Post

http://www.post.japanpost.jp/index_en.html

★Sending/receiving letters and parcels ★About international mail

Japan Automobile Federation (JAF)

<http://www.jaf.or.jp/e/>

★Roadside service call ★Translation of driver's license
★Traffic manual sales ★Global Service

● Travel Information

Hokkaido Tourism Organization

<http://en.visit-hokkaido.jp/>

★Tourist route information ★Seasonal information
★Map of major expressways ★Publications including Hokkaido tourism pamphlets can be downloaded.

Scenic Byway Support Center

<http://www.scenicbyway.jp/>

★Introducing 12 scenic routes

East Nippon Expressway Company

<http://en.driveplaza.com/>

★Expressway toll/route search ★Traffic information
★Service area information

http://www.driveplaza.com/trip/drawari/hokkaido_expass/en.html

★Hokkaido Expressway Pass

● Airports

New Chitose Airport

<http://new-chitose-airport.jp/en/>

Hakodate Airport

<http://www.airport.ne.jp/hakodate/en/>

Asahikawa Airport

<http://www.aapb.co.jp/en/>

Tokachi-Obihiro Airport

<http://www.tokachiobihiro-airport.jp/index.html.en>

Nemuro-Nakashibetsu Airport

<http://www.nakashibetsu-airport.jp/>



Kushiro Airport

<http://www.kushiro-airport.co.jp/>



Memambetsu Airport

<http://mmb-airport.co.jp.e.ug.hp.transer.com/>

Wakkanai Airport

<http://www.wkj-airport.jp/>



Monbetsu Airport

<http://www.ok-m.jp/>



2. List of related websites (continued)

● Transport organizations

Car rentals

Sapporo Rent-Car Association

<http://sapporo-renta.com/english/>

- ★ Monitor report
- ★ From reservation to return
- ★ About the use of expressways

Toyota Rent a Car Sapporo

<http://www.toyotarentacar.net/english/>

- ★ Location of the New Chitose Airport sales counter and rental procedures
- ★ Branch locations
- ★ Rates
- ★ How to use the car navigation system

Nippon Rent-A-Car Hokkaido

<http://www.nrh.co.jp/foreign/>

- ★ Rental rates
- ★ From reservation to return
- ★ Rates, fees, services, provisions, etc.
- ★ Pick up

ORIX Rent-A-Car

<http://car.orix.co.jp/eng/>

Nissan Rent a Car

<https://nissan-rentacar.com/english/>

SKY Rent a Car

<http://www.hokkaido-sky.jp/>



Hokkaido BUBU Rent-A-Car

<http://www.bubu-rentacar.com/>

Toyota Rent a Car

<http://rent.toyota.co.jp/eng/>

- ★ First time users
- ★ Rates and car models
- ★ How to make a reservation
- ★ International licenses
- ★ Illegal parking
- ★ Non-operation charges (NOC)

Toyota Rent a Car Shinsapporo

<http://www.rent-a-lease.com/english/>

- ★ Location of the Chitose Airport sales counter and rental procedures
- ★ Insurance and options
- ★ Safe Driving Guidebook
- ★ Branch locations

Honda Rent a Car

<http://www.hondarent.com/ver1/english/>

- ★ Car rates
- ★ How to make a reservation
- ★ When renting and returning a vehicle
- ★ For safe driving

JR Hokkaido Rent a Car

<https://www.jrh-rentacar.com/>

Times Car RENTAL

<http://www.timescar-rental.com/>

OTS Rent-a-car

<https://www.otsinternational.jp/otsrentacar/en/hokkaido/>

Ferries

Heart Land Ferry

<http://www.heartlandferry.jp/english/>

- ★ Operating conditions
- ★ Timetable, Fare and Rate Table
- ★ Terminal information
- ★ How to make a reservation
- ★ Boarding procedures

JR

JR Hokkaido

<http://www2.jrhokkaido.co.jp/global/>

- ★ Timetable
- ★ Route Map
- ★ Travel Information
- ★ Model Course
- ★ Visitors Information Desk

● Weather

Japan Metrological Agency

<http://www.jma.go.jp/jma/indexe.html>

- ★ Warnings/Advisories
- ★ Weather conditions, Typhoon information, Flood forecasts
- ★ Tsunami warnings/advisories, Earthquake information

Japan Weather Association

<http://www.jwa.or.jp/english/>

- ★ Hokkaido weather forecast
- ★ 7-day forecast for Hokkaido
- ★ Weather forecasts for tourist destinations
- ★ Airport weather

Hokkaido Disaster Prevention Information

https://www.bousai-hokkaido.jp/BousaiPublic/html/dou/en/top_english.html

- ★ Information regarding Hokkaido's weather, earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, volcanoes, landslides and tornados.

Information (3) Helpful information

Supported languages 日: Japanese 英: English 繁: Traditional Chinese 簡: Simplified Chinese 韓: Korean 仏: French 独: German

“Drive Hokkaido”

Department of Environment and Lifestyle, Hokkaido Government 日英繁韓

- Front http://www.pref.hokkaido.lg.jp/ks/dms/kat/map_E_f.pdf
- Back http://www.pref.hokkaido.lg.jp/ks/dms/kat/map_E_b.pdf

How to handle an accident: Checking for casualties and reporting to the police and car rental companies

Michi-no-Eki (Road Station) information: Map codes are listed. You can reach your destination by following michi-no-eki.

Distance/time between cities: Distance and time between major cities in Hokkaido are listed.

Road signs in Japan: Main road signs in Japan are introduced.

What to watch for in winter driving: Main points/issues are introduced

Sample routes: 8 sample routes based on a 3 nights/4 days plan are listed.

For safe driving: Basic rules and regulations such as yielding to pedestrians, no use of cell phones while driving, and other related items.



“Enjoy Driving in HOKKAIDO”

Hokkaido District Transport Bureau 繁

<http://www.tb.mlit.go.jp/hokkaido/bunyabetsu/kankou/gaikokuzin/drive/01.pdf>

How to reserve a rental car: Who to contact, what you need, important points to consider when renting a car and other related matters.

Distance/Time between major cities: Distance and Time are shown on the map.

Notes of caution about driving: Right-hand steering wheels and left-hand traffic. Parking violations and other related items.

Notes of caution about road signs/fueling: Notes of caution about no overtaking, small animals crossing and fuel types.

Driving on snow-covered roads: Driving techniques for snow-covered roads

Driving manners: Handling accidents.

Size of Hokkaido: Comparison against the size of Taiwan by using maps of the same scale.



“北海道主要観光地交通導覽手冊”

繁

■ Pamphlet for Taiwanese

<http://www.tb.mlit.go.jp/hokkaido/bunyabetsu/kankou/accessbook/tw/index.html>


“Hokkaido Expressway Pass”

日英繁簡韓

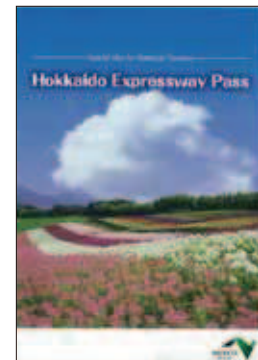
Available from NEXCO East (East Nippon Expressway Company) / car rental offices

http://www.driveplaza.com/trip/drawari/hokkaido_expass/en.html

Hokkaido road map

Description on how to use expressways and the ETC system

Hokkaido tourist information



“Rules of the Road” in foreign languages

日英

Sold at all JAF branch offices

<http://www.jaf.or.jp/e/road.htm>

The Japan Automobile Federation (JAF) publishes and sells “Rules of the Road” translated into five languages for foreign motorists. It is designed to promote safety on the road and to prevent traffic accidents involving foreign residents in Japan.

Languages supported:

English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese and Hangul



In closing

This publication, the “Must-have Handbook for Driving in Hokkaido” was developed following the findings of the 2008 Study of Hokkaido’s Development Plan – Strategic Investigational Study to Promote Car Tourism by Foreign Visitors in Hokkaido.

When developing this handbook, we received cooperation from the Hokkaido District Transport Bureau, the Government of Hokkaido, the Hokkaido Prefectural Police, the Hokkaido Tourism Organization, Hokkaido District Rent-a-Car Association, Chitose Airport Rent-a-Car Liaison Council, Japan Automobile Federation, the Eastern Nippon Expressway Company Hokkaido Office, TOYOTA Rent-A-Lease Sapporo Co., Ltd., TOYOTA Rent-A-Lease Shinsapporo Co., Ltd., Nippon Rent-A-Car Hokkaido Co., Ltd., the Civil Engineering Research Institute for Cold Region, the tourism-related and other related agencies/organizations in the Furano-Biei-Asahikawa region, the tourism-related and other related agencies/organizations in the Niseko-Kutchan region, and the tourism-related and other related agencies/organizations in the Abashiri-Rausu region.

The data in this “Must-have Handbook for Driving in Hokkaido” was updated in FY 2013. The data update was possible thanks to the cooperation of many organizations including Hokkaido District Transport Bureau, the Government of Hokkaido, the Hokkaido Prefectural Police, The Hokkaido Tourism Organization, Hokkaido District Rent-a-Car Association, Chitose Airport Rent-a-Car Liaison Council, Japan Automobile Federation Hokkaido Headquarters, Eastern Nippon Expressway Company Hokkaido Office, Scenic Byway Resource Center Japan, Hokkaido Economic Federation, Hokkaido Airport Terminal Co., Ltd., Nippon Rent-A-Car Hokkaido and the Civil Engineering Research Institute for Cold Region.

Inquiries:

Development Partnership Division, Development Administration Department,
Hokkaido Regional Development Bureau,
Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism
Tel: 011-709-2311

The information contained in this document is current as of March 3, 2009.

Revised in March 2017
