



Five Rules for Safe Bicycle Use

Basic rules
for bicycle
traffic

The Road Traffic Act legally defines a bicycle as a vehicle.
You may face penalties if you break the law.

1

**Cyclists must ride on the road and keep to the left.
You can cycle on the sidewalk only
in exceptional circumstances.
Pedestrians have the right of way.**



Improper road use: 6,000 yen
Failure to slow down on sidewalks: 3,000 yen

Cases where cycling on sidewalks is permitted

1. Where permitted by road signs or markings
2. If the cyclist is under 13, or aged 70 or over
3. Where unavoidable due to road or traffic conditions
(e.g. roadworks, continuous roadside parking or incredibly heavy traffic)

△ In any of the above cases, you must immediately follow the instructions of a police officer or other authority if they instruct you not to ride on the sidewalk to ensure pedestrian safety.



2

**You must stop
at a red traffic light or stop
sign at an intersection.
Look both ways
before proceeding.**

Fines

Failure to obey traffic lights:
6,000 yen
Failure to stop at a stop sign:
5,000 yen



3

**You must turn on
your lights
at night.**

Fines

Cycling without lights:
5,000 yen



4

**Cycling after drinking
alcohol is illegal.**

Criminal
proceedings

(Cycling after drinking alcohol)
Up to 3 years' imprisonment or
a fine of up to 500,000 yen
(Cycling while intoxicated)
Up to 5 years' imprisonment or
a fine of up to 1,000,000 yen



5

Wear a helmet.

- Cyclists should wear a helmet when cycling.
- When cycling with a child under school age seated in a front or rear child seat, the child should wear a helmet.



**Riding while using a mobile
phones or earphones,
or an umbrella is prohibited.**



12,000 yen



5,000 yen



5,000 yen

Violations Subject to Fines (Common Examples)

Holding and using a smartphone while cycling

12,000yen

Article 71, Item 5-5 of the Road Traffic Act

Do not use a mobile phone or look at the screen while cycling.

Entering a railway crossing when closed

7,000yen

Article 33, Paragraph 2 of the Road Traffic Act

Do not enter a railway crossing when the barrier is closing or the alarm is sounding.

Ignoring traffic signals (red light, etc.)

6,000yen

Article 7 of the Road Traffic Act

Cross at a green light.

Cycling without lights

5,000yen

Article 52, Paragraph 1 of the Road Traffic Act

Use lights at night.

Defective brakes, etc.

5,000yen

Article 63-9, Paragraph 1 of the Road Traffic Act

Use a bicycle with working brakes.

Cycling while using an umbrella | **Cycling while using earphones**

5,000yen

Article 71, Item 6 of the Road Traffic Act

Do not cycle while using an umbrella or earphones.

Riding side by side

3,000yen

Article 19 of the Road Traffic Act

Ride single file.

Two people riding on one bicycle (violation of passenger limits for light vehicles)

3,000yen

Article 57, Paragraph 2 of the Road Traffic Act

Do not ride double.

Dangerous driving behaviors that could lead to traffic accidents, as well as malicious or hazardous actions such as continuing to violate traffic laws despite police warnings, are subject to enforcement as bicycle traffic violations. In addition, **serious violations, such as cycling while intoxicated or reckless driving, are handled through criminal procedures (red tickets), as before.**

Improper road use (cycling on sidewalks where not allowed)

6,000yen

Article 17, Paragraph 1 of the Road Traffic Act

Cyclists must ride on the road. Do not cycle on sidewalks unless in exceptional circumstances.

Cycling on the right-hand side of the road

6,000yen

Article 17, Paragraph 4 and Article 18, Paragraph 1 of the Road Traffic Act

Keep to the left-hand side of the road.

Entering a no-entry road | **Cycling the wrong way on a one-way street**

5,000yen

Article 8, Paragraph 1 of the Road Traffic Act

Obey traffic signs. Do not ride against traffic.

Failure to stop at a stop sign

5,000yen

Article 43 of the Road Traffic Act

Stop at a stop sign.

Failure to slow down on sidewalk

3,000yen

Article 63-4, Paragraph 2 of the Road Traffic Act

Ride at a safe speed and give priority to pedestrians on sidewalks.

Improper turning at intersections

3,000yen

Article 34, Paragraph 3 of the Road Traffic Act

Cyclists must turn right in two steps.

Severe violations

Cycling while intoxicated

Cycling after drinking alcohol

Up to 5 years' imprisonment or a fine of up to 1,000,000 yen

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

Article 65, Paragraph 1 of the Road Traffic Act

Do not drink and cycle. These offences are subject to criminal proceedings, not fines.