



### 5 Personal seals

In Japan, personal seals (hanko) are used as a substitute for signatures.

#### 5-1 What is a personal seal?

There are two types of personal seals: general seals which are used in day to day life, and registered seals which are used for important documentation. You can have either of these made at a store that sells personal seals (insho-ten or hanko-ya san), but there is a considerable difference in price depending on the materials and other factors.

##### (1) General seals



This is a small seal which is used to mean the same thing as a signature in cases such as applications at administrative offices and receiving small parcels through registered mail. There are no special regulations, but the seal which is used when opening a bank account (bank seal) is necessary when using a bank book to withdraw money or when closing the bank account, so please be sure to keep it safe.

##### (2) Registered seal

"Registered seal" refers to the seal used for important public documents. You should register an impression of such a seal (personal seal registration) to the administrative office of the municipality where you reside.