



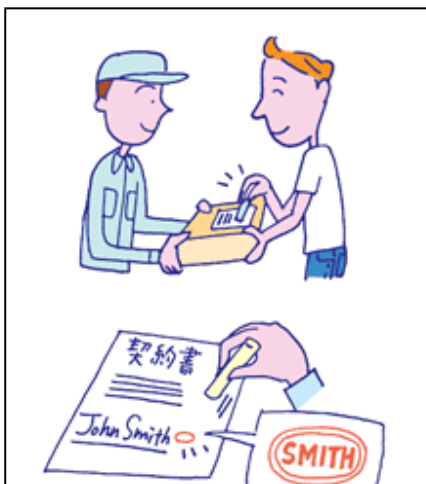
5 Personal seals

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.