



3 Basic services in daily life

Railway, bus and taxi are some of the means of transportation available in Japan. Rules for using trains and buses such as buying tickets and getting on and off may vary depending on the region. Please familiarize yourself with the regional rules so you will not be confused when traveling.

3-5 Railways (trains)

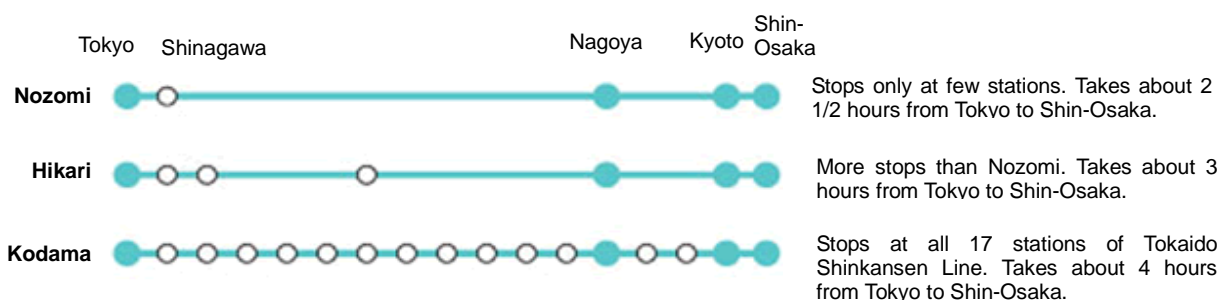
(1) Types of railway

Railways in Japan include JR lines operated by Japan Railways Group, railway lines operated by prefecture (or the Metropolitan Government in case of Tokyo), city, town or village, and private railway lines operated by private companies. There is a variety of railways such as subway, monorail and tram.

Trains are classified as follows, in order of speed: *shinkansen* (bullet train), *tokkyu* (limited express), *kyuko* (express), *kaisoku* (speed train) and *futsu* (normal) *. Trains other than *futsu* do not stop at all stations. So confirm the stops with a route map to get used to the system.

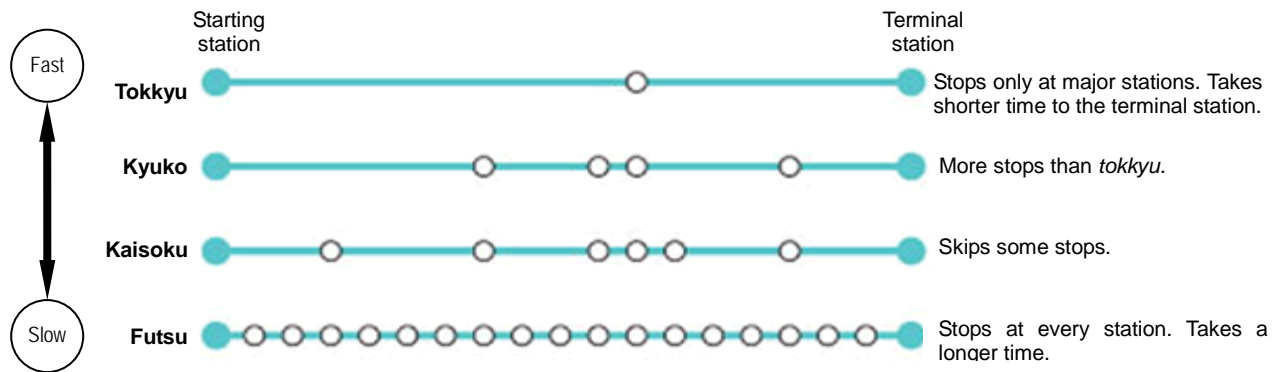
* Depending on the region and railway line, there are other classifications such as *tsukin-kaisoku* (speed commuter train), *kaisoku-tokkyu* (rapid limited express) and *junkyu* (local express), with different speeds and stops.

Frequency of stops for *Tokaido shinkansen* trains (Example: Tokyo-Osaka)





JR local line or private railway line trains and number of stops (Example)



(2) Checking with route maps

When using the train, check the route map posted above the vending machines to figure out the destination and fare. In case of JR, trains going in direction towards Tokyo are called "*nobori* (up)" and those in direction away from Tokyo are called "*kudari* (down)." For loop lines, outbound trains are called "*sotomawari*" and inbound train "*uchimawari*."

(3) Fares

When using the train, you usually pay normal fare (*futsu-unchin*) which is charged by distance. JR express trains like *shinkansen*, *tokkyu* and *kyuko* require extra fees (*tokkyu-ryokin* or *kyuko-ryokin*) in addition to normal fare. Sleeper trains (*shindai-ressha*) and reserved seats (*shitei-seki*) require further additional fees (*shindai-ryokin* and *shitei-ryokin*, respectively).

Children under 12 years of age can ride at half price. Up to two children under six are free of charge if accompanied by adult; if there are more than two, additional children are charged the same fare as an adult.

(4) Purchasing tickets

Tickets are bought either by using vending machine or at the station counter by indication the destination. If you are not used to the vending machine, it is safer to purchase ticket at the counter.

Besides normal ticket, there are various kinds of tickets as follows:

Commuter pass (<i>teiki-ken</i>)	There are two kinds, one for students and other for working people. Pass can be purchased for one month, three months, six months, one year, etc.
Coupon tickets (<i>kaisu-ken</i>)	You can buy tickets in bulk between certain stations. Usually, you get 11 tickets for the price of ten tickets.
Round-trip ticket (<i>ofuku-kippu</i>)	You get outbound and return tickets at once, sometimes at discount price.



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One-day ticket (ichinichi jousha-ken)	Value ticket that lets you get on and off as many times as you like during the day, including return trips, within the designated area.
IC card	There are "Suica" (for JR East Japan), "TOICA" (for JR Tokai), "ICOCA" (for JR West Japan), "PASMO" (for major railways and bus routes in Tokyo Metropolitan Area), etc. There are cards you can charge in advance (prepaid type), and cards with which the charges are calculated afterwards (postpaid type).

(5) Automatic ticket gates

When entering the station through the automatic ticket gate, you insert the ticket into the slot as you pass by and the ticket will appear on the slot at the other side of the gate. Do not forget to take the ticket back. When exiting station, the ticket inserted will not reappear on the other side of the gate, so just pass by.

If there is no automatic gate, you show the ticket to the staff to have it stamped.