

# Rules by state

Rules for registering Kei cars in all 50 US states.

If your state does not allow registering a Kei car, see [Out of state registration](#) for potential loopholes

- [Alabama](#)
- [Alaska](#)
- [Arizona](#)
- [Arkansas](#)
- [California](#)
- [Colorado](#)
- [Kentucky](#)
- [Ohio](#)
- [Out of state registration](#)
- [Rhode Island](#)
- [Texas](#)

# Alabama

## Legality

Kei trucks are allowed on any road except for interstate highways. However, kei cars must be able to reach 25mph and are only allowed to reach maximum speeds of 25 mph.

### Memorandum on Mini trucks

“ A mini-truck may only be issued a mini-truck license plate and cannot operate on interstate highways (§32-6-59). Minitruck license plates are ordered through the Plate Reservation and Ordering System (PROS) and will be mailed to the registrant.

For kei cars that aren't trucks, I can't find information. I will update this page once I find information.

## Vehicle inspection

For Kei trucks, Alabama requires:

- An installed speed governor to prevent the truck from attaining a speed of more than 25 miles per hour
- Headlamps
- Stop lamps
- Front and rear turn signal lamps
- Tail lamps
- Reflex reflectors
- A parking brake
- Rearview mirrors
- Windshield
- Seat belts
- Nonconforming vehicle identification number

## Title and registration

Kei trucks are exempt from titling and are only issued a mini-truck license plate

To register a kei truck, visit a local Vehicle licensing office

- Evidence that Alabama registers Kei trucks (in case of questions)
  - Section-40-12-240
  - Memorandum on Mini trucks
  - Mini-truck license plate
- Proof of insurance
- Bill of sale

The license plate issuing official must physically inspect the vehicle to verify that the VIN on the vehicle is the same as the VIN on the documents required to register the vehicle

Source for the registration process.

# Alaska

## Legality

As of May 6, 2025, Kei vehicles are not street legal in Alaska, according to [this Alaska statute](#).

[\[Source indicating issues registering\]](#)

# Arizona

## Legality

Kei cars are street legal in Arizona but titled as an ATV with a street sticker. According to the office memo below:

“ ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
MOTOR VEHICLE DIVISION  
OFFICE MEMO  
T5474  
July 17, 2009

TO: MVD ORGS  
MVD T&R/DL THIRD PARTY PROVIDERS

FROM: STACEY K. STANTON  
Division Director

SUBJECT: IMPORTED MIMI-TRUCKS

*Effective immediately, the Division shall title and, when applicable, register imported mini-trucks as an off-road recreational motor (off-highway) vehicle.*

*An imported mini-truck, which is designed for off-road use, has been defined by the Division as an undersized truck without federal label. The mini-truck may variously be known as a Japanese mini-truck, Chinese mini-truck, Kei truck, K-truck, or a low-speed truck. The mini-trucks are available with 2WD or 4WD, have an unladen weight that is less than 1800 lbs, generally only reach a top speed of 50 mph, and have an engine displacement of 550 cc or more.*

*Off-highway Use*

*As an off-highway vehicle, the mini truck is issued:*

- *A Certificate of Title and*
- *An Off-Road Recreational Vehicle plate*

*The Customer Service Representative (CSR) will use the “ATV” body style and the “R” registration category. The vehicle has no annual renewal and is also exempt from the emissions requirement.*

## *On-highway Use*

*Initially, these vehicles do not meet the safety and equipment requirements of A.R.S. Title 28, Chapter 3, Article 16, as well as EPA, and other federal requirements needed for on-highway use. If the owner wants to register the vehicle for on-road use, he or she must submit a properly completed Highway Use Certificate, form #96-0371, certifying that the vehicle meets all applicable safety and equipment requirements for on-road use and will remain in compliance as long as the vehicle is registered.*

### *IMPORTED MINI-TRUCKS*

*Page 2 of 2*

*For primary or occasional on-road use, the mini truck is issued:*

- A certificate of Title*
- A registration, and*
- A qualified small license plate*

*The CSR will use the "ATV" body style and the "H" registration category. Since the vehicle's engine displacement is greater than 90cc, the vehicle may be subject to an emissions requirement.*

*Since the mini-truck is titled with an "ATV" body style it cannot be changed at a future date due to the fact that the vehicle does not have a federal label. The "ATV" body style will remain for the life of the vehicle.*

*Note: These vehicles are eligible for the Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) decal. If the customer requests the OHV decal, he or she must submit a properly completed Off-Highway Vehicle Decal Application, form # 96-0572. If the customer is registering the vehicle for on-road use and requesting the OHV decal, the customer does not need to submit the Highway Use Certificate.*

*Reminder: A mini-truck currently titled and /or registered in another state or country and with no previous record of an Arizona title or registration will require a Level I Inspection.*

*This office memo rescinds and supersedes Office Memo T5382 Shandong Liangzi Power Co. Ltd. Mini-trucks with Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) Beginning with L6F.*

*Attachments: Highway Use Certificate, Form #96-0371  
Off-Highway Vehicle Decal Application, Form #96-0572*

# Vehicle inspection

Arizona will not require emission testing for any JDM cars.

You should go to a third-party Motor Vehicle Division that has done this before. People have recommended [EZ Title](#).

## Title and registration

To register your car, bring the following papers to the MVD.

- CBP Form 7501 (Entry Summary)
- CBP Form 3461 (Entry/immediate delivery)
- Customs Bond Arrival Notice
- Original Invoice Original
- Export certificate (English and Japanese)
- DOT HS-7 declaration
- EPA Form 3520-1
- Bill of Lading
- [Off-Highway Vehicle Decal Application Form # 96-0572](#)
  - Check "Primarily On-Highway"
- Liability insurance

If you want an OHV decal for offroading, Arizona residents will need to take [Safe and Ethical riding course](#).

# Arkansas

## Legality

Arkansas allows for titling and registering Kei trucks in the state. They'll register the vehicle with a farm tag regardless of whether you live on a farm and require that you do not travel on highways going over 55 mph.

Law regarding Kei cars

## Vehicle inspection

Arkansas does not require any emissions or safety inspections.

## Title and registration

In the application to register the mini-truck, the owner of the mini-truck shall provide:

- Proof of insurance as required under the Motor Vehicle Safety Responsibility Act
- Proof of ownership that is in the English language
  - Includes a bill of sale and an export certificate or a title.

The Kei cars have the same affidavit as required under § 27-14-601(a)(3)(H)(v) and § 27-14-601(a)(3)(H)(xi)



# California

## Legality

Due to California's strict emissions testing, California will not register a Kei vehicle without CARB testing. Most places will not test emissions on a Kei car. However, it seems like only G&K in Santa Ana will perform the test, and testing is around \$6,500.

Otherwise, the only other options are private land use without registration or out-of-state registration.

# Colorado

## Legality

As of May 3, 2025, legality on Kei trucks in Colorado seems to be mixed. Call your local DMV to clarify the registration of Kei cars. People have been successful in registering Kei cars in Colorado and it seems to be easier in mountain towns where no emissions test is required.

As of May 3, 2025, there is a bill heading to the governor's desk to codify Kei cars in Colorado. This bill will allow kei cars that are either 25 years old or older when imported into the country, or over 25 years old when it was previously issued a title in the U.S. Once it is signed by Polis, this proposed law will go into effect on July 1, 2027.

## Vehicle inspection

Colorado does not require safety inspections on vehicles, but does require an emissions test based on the county. Counties that require an emissions test.

## Title and registration

Requirements for title and registration in Colorado. Link to checklist but below should cover everything:

- A Verification of Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) form DR 2698 completed by either:
  - A Colorado law enforcement officer
  - A licensed Colorado motor vehicle dealer
  - A licensed Colorado emissions testing station (They will have the form)
- Proof of Colorado insurance
- Passing Emissions Test as required (verify with your local county motor vehicle office or the Emissions page)
- Secure and verifiable identification (DR 2841)
- The current title, or other ownership documents, are properly endorsed by the previous owner
  - If imported from Japan, bring foreign evidence in the name of the owner/dealer or assigned to the owner/dealer. The Japanese export certificate and an English copy should work.

- Completed odometer disclosure
- A bill of sale for tax purposes. This will be the invoice.

# Kentucky

## Legality

As of [June 27, 2025](#), Kei cars are legal in Kentucky. Kentucky [Senate Bill 63 \(SB 63\)](#) classifies kei trucks as "special purpose vehicles," allowing their operation on public roads under specific conditions.

Kei trucks are prohibited from operating on interstate highways and parkways and may not travel more than 20 miles on highways with centerline markings.

## Vehicle inspection

Kei trucks must be equipped with essential safety features such as headlights, brake lights, turn signals, mirrors, a windshield, seat belts, and appropriate tires.

## Title and registration

To title and register a Kei truck

- Pass a [Sheriff's inspection](#)
  - Bring all import papers in case
- Foreign evidence in the name of the owner/dealer or assigned to the owner/dealer
- Bill of sale
- Proof of Kentucky insurance
- Kentucky Photo ID

[Source](#)

# Ohio

## Legality

Ohio defines Kei cars as mini-trucks:

“(BBB) "Mini-truck" means a vehicle that has four wheels, is propelled by an electric motor with a rated power of seven thousand five hundred watts or less or **an internal combustion engine with a piston displacement capacity of six hundred sixty cubic centimeters or less**, has a total dry weight of nine hundred to two thousand two hundred pounds, contains an enclosed cabin and a seat for the vehicle operator, **resembles a pickup truck or van with a cargo area** or bed located at the rear of the vehicle, and was not originally manufactured to meet federal motor vehicle safety standards.

### Bill regarding the operation of a mini-truck

If registered as a mini-truck, there is a restriction that they cannot go on roads with a speed limit over 35 mph

## Vehicle inspection

Ohio does not require emission testing for vehicles older than 25 years old.

## Title and registration

If a vehicle will be driven before a title is issued, then a temporary tag can be purchased from any local deputy registrar license agency or online at OPLATES.com.

- Bill of sale
- Foreign title or registration
- U.S. Customs Entry Form 7501, stamped and signed, verifying that Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) document 3520-1 or 3520-21 and the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Form HS-7 have been viewed and approved

- When the military ships a vehicle for military personnel, the military personnel may have the CBP Form 3461 Entry/Immediate delivery in place of the Form 7501
- USDOT Form HS-7
  - If box #3 has been checked, a copy of a Bond Release Letter from the USDOT National Highway Traffic (NHTSA), verifying compliance with USDOT safety standards, must generally be presented.
  - Evidence that a timely certification of compliance was submitted to NHTSA (i.e., 120 calendar days from the vehicle's date of entry into the country) may be used if NHTSA did not issue a Bond Release Letter or otherwise respond to the certification of compliance within 30 days of NHTSA's receipt of such certification, provided all other requirements are met.
- An out-of-state vehicle identification number (VIN) inspection. Inspections can be obtained at the following:
  - **Ohio deputy registrar license agency**
  - Participating Clerk of Courts Title Office
  - Participating Ohio licensed motor vehicle dealership
- English translations of all documents written in a foreign language; translations must be done by an accredited institution and submitted on that institution's letterhead
- Payment for title fees and sales tax on the purchase price if applicable (see sales tax rates by county)

Source for the registration process.

# Out of state registration

# Rhode Island

## Legality

Rhode Island will not register a Kei car. The only other options are private land use without registration or Out of state registration.



# Texas

## Legality

As of May 21, 2025, Kei vehicles that follow federal standards are legally codified by law in Texas, according to [SB 1816](#) (This is thanks to [Lone Star Kei](#))

[Article covering passing of SB 1816](#)

## Vehicle inspection

As of January 1st, 2025, cars in [Texas no longer need a safety inspection](#). Counties can still require an emissions test and most populous counties in Texas do (Harris, Travis, Tarrant, etc) but there is an exemption for [cars 25+ years old](#).

- Gasoline vehicles model-year 2 through 24 years old are inspected annually beginning with the vehicle's second anniversary.

For street legal Kei vehicles, no inspection or emissions test in Texas is required.

## Title and registration

Requirements for title and registration in Texas. [Link to checklist](#), but below should cover everything:

- [Application for Texas Title and/or Registration \(Form 130-U\)](#)
- Proof of current vehicle insurance.
  - Agents in TX who might help
- Your current driver's license or government-issued photo identification.
  - Click [here](#) for photo identification requirements.
- [Title a new vehicle](#)
  - Law Enforcement Identification Number Inspection (Form VTR-68-A) from an authorized inspector.
    - Authorized inspectors can be found by contacting an [MVCPA grantee organization](#) or by contacting a [TxDMV Regional Service Center](#).
  - Properly assigned evidence of ownership may include:

- foreign evidence in the name of the owner/dealer or assigned to the owner/dealer
- title in the name of or properly assigned to the applicant, which may be used when the original VIN is identified by an authorized inspector.
- bill of sale or receipt, which may be used in limited situations.
- bonded title application, which may be used for assembled or homemade vehicles.
- Proof of US Customs Entry/Clearance (CBP 7501)
- Proof of Form HS-7 (DOT HS-7 Short)

You can apply for a [temporary 30-day permit here](#) before you get a law enforcement inspection.