

Tokyo Highway Battle FAQ Final

by Wolf Feather

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TOKYO HIGHWAY BATTLE: GAME GUIDE

by

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ACCOLADE: The Tokyo Highway Battle: Game Guide was deemed
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SPACING AND LENGTH

For optimum readability, this driving guide should be
viewed/printed using a monowidth font, such as Courier.
Check for appropriate font setting by making sure the numbers
and letters below line up:

1234567890123456789012345678901234567890123456789012
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNPOQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxy

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INTRODUCTION

Tokyo Highway Battle is not necessarily a hidden gem on the PlayStation/PSOne, but it IS an interesting game. Unlike its newer counterpart Tokyo Extreme Racer Zero on the PlayStation2, advancement is fairly rapid, although the highways themselves are a bit more challenging. The graphics admittedly are not state-of-the-art, but the gameplay itself is very involving to make up for the graphical defects.

Please note that some information comes from my General Racing/Driving Guide, with appropriate modifications.

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STARTING THE GAME

This may seem like an unusual place to start in discussing a game, but there is one particular area of Options which needs to be explained: Key Config. Most players likely go to a game's Options section and change the controller configuration to their liking. However, this is not truly a straightforward or intuitive process in Tokyo Highway Battle.

Changing button assignments is a three-step process. First, once in the Key Config menu, the up and down keys on the D-pad move between the button actions (Shift Up, Accelerate, etc.). Once a player has arrived at a button action, the button assignment is changed by using the left and right keys on the D-pad; this is the second step. The final step, once the correct button symbol matches the player's desire for a given button action, is to CONFIRM, which is done by pressing the 'X' button; most games do not require a confirmation for each button change, so this can be easily forgotten or overlooked. Fortunately, once the controller has been changed to the player's liking, it is unlikely to require being changed again.

Once the game options have been set to the player's liking, Practice should be explored. Here, players can choose from one of six cars and one of three circuits. This gives players a good sense of what gameplay will be like, except that there are no rivals to race. Once Practice has been explored, players can go to Vs. CPU, which is essentially a Single Race mode; a few races here will truly give the player a sense of what the gameplay will be like in Scenario, where the majority of gameplay is located.

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SCENARIO

Scenario is the equivalent of a Career mode in many other racing games. The point of Scenario is to race and defeat numerous rivals to become the best highway racer in all of Tokyo.

To begin this quest, a player must first choose a car. Three cars are initially available, and the car stats are shown. Once a car has been chosen, the player has 5000 initial points to spend on car parts to help the car perform better.

The selection of car parts is also non-conventional in Tokyo Highway Battle. First, players must use the up and down arrows on the D-pad to move between categories of parts (Engine, Tires, etc.). Once the desired category has been selected, the right arrow button must be pressed to actually choose among the available parts in each category; once in the actual parts menu, using the up and down keys on the D-pad switches between parts, with each part highlighted as it is selected. The player can then purchase a part by pressing the 'X' button; the tuning advisor will ask for confirmation.

However, parts have not yet been installed. Pressing the Triangle button twice returns to the Speed Shop menu; the player must now select Install and then use the process mentioned above to install each desired part. Parts can also be uninstalled in the same manner later.

When ready, the player can select a race venue, then head for the Tokyo highways :-). Regardless of whether or not the player defeats the indicated rival, the player will receive a given number of points (in part based upon performance in each race) for simply completing a race. The player should expect to lose a lot initially, but points will accumulate, and these points can be used to purchase car parts to improve the car's performance.

Initially, players will not be able to buy many parts. Perhaps the best parts to acquire immediately are the most expensive tires a player can afford, plus Sport Brakes (2000 points). Buying these parts will give the car better initial pavement grip and better braking ability.

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CARS

There are several cars available in Tokyo Highway Battle. Since none of the cars are licensed, these have very generic names: Type-1, Type-2, Type-3, etc. Initially, only three cars are available; the next three are unlocked by winning at all three initially-available tracks.

Car selection is extremely important. Once a player has chosen a car, that is the ONLY car which can be modified. Further, as soon as the player selects another car, all other cars the player has unlocked lose any parts acquired/installed by the player and revert to their stock (original) configurations... which effectively means that all the time and points spent on modifying other cars is

immediately lost forever. (This can be 'prevented' by saving game progress to different slots on the memory card instead of constantly overwriting the same game progress file.)

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UNFAIR ADVANTAGE

The CPU-controlled cars DEFINITELY have an unfair advantage in this game. The main unfair advantage is in the area of collisions. Colliding with other cars and/or barriers causes the car to bounce away from the obstacle and also take a severe reduction in speed. However, CPU-controlled cars, should they have a collision, are NOT as hindered by these collision effects as players. Therefore, it should be no surprise that if the CPU-controlled car is close to the player, the player can expect to get rammed... and thus suffer the ('player-only') dire consequences >:-(

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GAME TIPS

When waiting for a race to begin, DO NOT simply stand on the accelerator button. This may be a quasi-arcade game, but standing on the accelerator button at the beginning of a race will simply result in excessive wheelspin once the race truly begins. It is best to not touch ANY of the buttons until the race begins; even then, there will be slight initial wheelspin, so it is best to quickly pump the accelerator button until the wheelspin dissipates, then begin racing normally.

For those playing using Automatic Transmission, it is important to note that the transmission is not truly 'automatic.' While the game will indeed take over the shifting duties, the player can still upshift and downshift at will. However, should the player's chosen gear not match the RPM revband for that gear, the game will automatically return back to the previous gear. It is important to keep this 'glitch' in mind, as the game will sometimes not upshift at optimum times, especially when climbing hills, so the player can essentially force the car into an earlier upshift. During severe braking, it may also be a good idea to downshift one or more gears before using the accelerator again.

Vehicles not involved in races tend to change lanes fairly often; trucks and busses seem especially prone to sudden lane changes. Note that in areas of highway with a solid white line, vehicles are not supposed to change lanes; however, this does not stop the uninvolved traffic from changing lanes at whim.

As more points are accumulated and spent on parts, tires and brakes should receive serious consideration. More horsepower is great for making the car go faster, but the horsepower is wasted if the car is unable to hold the road while cornering and/or slow quickly to prepare for cornering.

Should the player's car collide with any obstacle (a barrier, or another vehicle), the car will bounce back and slow significantly. Therefore, it is imperative that the player NEVER become trapped between two vehicles or between a vehicle and a barrier; in either scenario, the player's car will essentially become the ball in a ping-pong match, and the player will be virtually unable to do anything to control the car until the player's car has slowed enough to escape the unwanted predicament. By this time, any lead the player may have enjoyed is certainly lost; if the player had been trailing the rival, the rival's lead is extended exponentially.

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RACING TIPS: BRAKING

The first step in driving fast is knowing when, where, and how much to slow down (braking). The braking zone will differ somewhat for each car depending upon its strengths and weaknesses. It certainly helps for the player to try a Practice run to truly learn the circuits - including the braking zones - before engaging in the actual events.

When looking for braking zones, try to find a particular stationary object near the entry of each corner; it helps tremendously if this object is far enough away from the circuit that it will not be knocked over during a race. To begin, try using the brakes when the front of the car is parallel with the chosen stationary object. If this does not slow the car enough before corner entry or if the car slows too much before reaching the corner, pick another stationary object on the following lap and try again.

Cars with a higher horsepower output will inherently attain faster speeds, and will therefore require a longer braking zone than cars with a lower horsepower output.

A final note on braking: To the extent possible, ALWAYS brake in a straight line. If braking only occurs when cornering, the car will likely be carrying too much speed for the corner, resulting in the car sliding and/or spinning (a slide or spin can mean the difference between winning and ending up in last position at the end of a race.)

If nothing else, players should strive to become one of the best 'breakers' they possibly can. This will essentially force a player to become a better racer/driver in general once the player has overcome the urge to constantly run at top speed at all times with no regard for damages to self or others. Also, slowing the car appropriately will make other aspects of racing/driving easier, especially in J-turns, hairpin corners, and chicanes.

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RACING TIPS: CORNERING

Ideally, the best way to approach a corner is from the outside of the turn, braking well before entering the corner.

At the apex (the midpoint of the corner), the car should be right up against the edge of the pavement. On corner exit, the car drifts back to the outside of the pavement and speeds off down the straightaway. So, for a right-hand turn of about ninety degrees, enter the corner from the left, come to the right to hit the apex, and drift back to the left on corner exit. See the Diagrams section at the end of this guide for a sample standard corner.

For corners that are less than ninety degrees, it may be possible to just barely tap the brakes - if at all - and be able to clear such corners successfully. However, the same principles of cornering apply: approach from the outside of the turn, hit the apex, and drift back outside on corner exit.

For corners more than ninety degrees but well less than 180 degrees, braking will certainly be required. However, for these 'J-turns,' the apex of the corner is not the midpoint, but a point approximately two-thirds of the way around the corner. J-turns require great familiarity to know when to begin diving toward the inside of the corner and when to power to the outside on corner exit. See the Diagrams section at the end of this guide for a sample J-turn.

Hairpin corners are turns of approximately 180 degrees. Braking is certainly required before corner entry, and the cornering process is the same as for standard corners: Approach from the outside, drift inside to hit the apex (located at halfway around the corner, or after turning ninety degrees), and drifting back to the outside on corner exit. See the Diagrams section at the end of this guide for a sample hairpin corner.

If there are two corners of approximately ninety degrees each AND both corners turn in the same direction AND there is only a VERY brief straightaway between the two corners, they may be able to be treated like an extended hairpin corner. Sometimes, however, these 'U-turns' have a straightaway between the corners that is long enough to prohibit a hairpin-like treatment; in this case, drifting to the outside on exiting the first of the two corners will automatically set up the approach to the next turn. See the Diagrams section at the end of this guide for a sample U-turn.

FIA (the governing body of F1 racing, World Rally Championship, and other forms of international motorsport) seems to love chicanes. One common type of chicane is essentially a 'quick-flick,' where the circuit quickly edges off in one direction then realigns itself in a path parallel to the original stretch of pavement, as in the examples in the Diagrams section at the end of this guide. Here, the object is to approach the first corner from the outside, hit BOTH apexes, and drift to the outside of the second turn.

FIA also seems to like the 'Bus Stop' chicane, which is essentially just a pair of quick-flicks, with the second forming the mirror image of the first, as shown in the Diagrams section at the end of this guide. Perhaps the most famous Bus Stop chicane is the chicane (which is actually

called the 'Bus Stop Chicane') at Pit Entry at Spa-Francorchamps, the home of the annual Grand Prix of Belgium (F1 racing) and the host of The 24 Hours of Spa (for endurance racing).

Virtually every other type of corner or corner combination encountered in racing (primarily in road racing) combines elements of the corners presented above. These complex corners and chicanes can be challenging, such as the Ascari chicane at Monza. See the Diagrams section for an idea of the formation of Ascari.

However, in illegal street/highway racing, the positioning of traffic can 'create' the various corners and corner combinations mentioned here. For example, weaving in and out of traffic creates a virtual bus stop chicane (see the Diagrams section at the end of this guide). Slowing may be necessary - it often is - depending on the distance between the vehicles. See the Sample Circuit Using Some of the Above Corner Types Combines in the Diagrams section at the end of this guide; note that this is a diagram for a very technical circuit.

At some race venues, 'artificial chicanes' may be created by placing cones and/or (concrete) barriers in the middle of a straightaway. This situation exists at numerous circuits in Tokyo.

One thing which can change the approach to cornering is the available vision. Blind and semi-blind corners require ABSOLUTE knowledge of such corners. Here is where gamers have an advantage over real-world drivers: Gamers can (usually) change their viewpoint (camera position), which can sometimes provide a wider, clearer view of the circuit, which can be especially important when approaching semi-blind corners; real-world drivers are obviously inhibited by the design of their cars and racing helmets.

Also important to cornering - especially with long, extended corners - is the corner's radius. Most corners use an identical radius throughout their length. However, some are increasing-radius corners or decreasing-radius corners. These corners may require shifting the apex point of a corner, and almost always result in a change of speed. Decreasing-radius corners are perhaps the trickiest, because the angle of the corner becomes sharper, thus generally requiring more braking as well as more turning of the steering wheel. Increasing-radius corners are corners for which the angle becomes more and more gentle as the corner progresses; this means that drivers will generally accelerate more, harder, or faster, but such an extra burst of speed can backfire and require more braking. See the Diagrams section at the end of this guide for sample images of a decreasing-radius corner and an increasing-radius corner.

For traditional road racing circuits, increasing-radius and decreasing-radius corners may not be too much of a problem; after several laps around one of these circuits, a driver will know where the braking and acceleration points are as well as the shifted apex point (should a shift be required).

However, for stage-based rally racing, where the roads are virtually unknown and the driver knows what is ahead only because of the navigator's instructions (which - based upon notes - may or may not be absolutely correct), the unknown can cause drivers to brake more often and/or more heavily. This need for 'extra' braking is also tempered by the fact that in much of rally racing, corners are either blind or semi-blind, due to trees, buildings, and other obstacles to clear vision all the way around a corner.

One particularly interesting aspect of cornering is one which I honestly do not know if it works in reality (I am not a real-world racer, although I would certainly LOVE the chance to attend a racing school!!!), but which works in numerous racing/driving games I have played over the years. This aspect is to use the accelerator to help with quickly and safely navigating sharp corners. This works by first BRAKING AS USUAL IN ADVANCE OF THE CORNER, then - once in the corner itself - rapidly pumping the brakes for the duration of the corner (or at least until well past the apex of the corner). The action of rapidly pumping the accelerator appears to cause the drive wheels to catch the pavement just enough to help stop or slow a sliding car, causing the non-drive wheels to continue slipping and the entire car to turn just a little faster. Using this rapid-pumping technique with the accelerator does take a little practice initially, and seems to work best with FR cars; however, once perfected, this technique can pay dividends, especially with REALLY sharp hairpin corners, such as several in London.

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SPEED CONVERSIONS

Tokyo Highway Battle, not surprisingly, uses kilometers per hour to indicate speed; this cannot be changed in the game's Options menu. For an indication of just how fast this is in miles per hour (for those living in places where the metric system is not in use), here are the conversions (numbers rounded):

| KPH = MPH | KPH = MPH | KPH = MPH |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| ----- | ----- | ----- |
| 5 = 3 | 105 = 66 | 205 = 128 |
| 10 = 6 | 110 = 69 | 210 = 131 |
| 15 = 9 | 115 = 72 | 215 = 134 |
| 20 = 13 | 120 = 75 | 220 = 138 |
| 25 = 16 | 125 = 78 | 225 = 141 |
| 30 = 19 | 130 = 81 | 230 = 144 |
| 35 = 22 | 135 = 84 | 235 = 147 |
| 40 = 25 | 140 = 88 | 240 = 150 |
| 45 = 28 | 145 = 91 | 245 = 153 |
| 50 = 31 | 150 = 94 | 250 = 156 |
| 55 = 34 | 155 = 97 | 255 = 159 |
| 60 = 38 | 160 = 100 | 260 = 163 |
| 65 = 41 | 165 = 103 | 265 = 166 |
| 70 = 44 | 170 = 106 | 270 = 169 |
| 75 = 47 | 175 = 109 | 275 = 172 |
| 80 = 50 | 180 = 113 | 280 = 175 |

| | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 85 = 53 | 185 = 116 | 285 = 178 |
| 90 = 56 | 190 = 119 | 290 = 181 |
| 95 = 59 | 195 = 122 | 295 = 184 |
| 100 = 63 | 200 = 125 | 300 = 188 |

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DIAGRAMS

This section contains the diagrams referred to earlier in the guide.

Ascari Chicane (at Monza):

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    ***
     *
      *****

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Bus Stop Chicane (Variant I - Wide Chicane):

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*****
          *          *
          *****

```

Bus Stop Chicane (Variant II - Narrow Chicane):

```

*****
          *****

```

Decreasing-radius Corner:

```

->*****
          *
           *
            *
             *
              *
               *
<-*****

```

Hairpin Corner:

```

->*****
          *
<-*****

```

Increasing-radius Corner:

```

->*****
          *
           *
            *
             *
              *
<-*****

```

J-turn

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*****
          *
           *

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