

New JR West Shinkansen Rolling Stock

Series 700 Rail Star Shinkansen EMU

JR West's Series 700 *Rail Star* entered service in March 2000 between Shin Osaka and Hakata (Fukuoka) on the San'yō Shinkansen. The eight-car configuration carrying a maximum of 499 passengers is composed of three cars with conventional non-reserved 2+3 seating, four and a half cars with reserved 2+2 seating, and half a car of reserved compartments. Unlike other shinkansen, there are no Green Car (first class) carriages. The top speed is 285 km/h and the 18 daily services in each direction cover the 553.7 km between Shin Osaka and Hakata in about 2 hours and 45 minutes. JR West introduced this new stylish and fast *Rail Star* service to compete with the frequent airline services between Osaka and Fukuoka. The Series 700 was developed jointly with JR Central, which operates a 16-car configuration (with three Green Cars) in a different livery for *Nozomi* services between Tokyo and Hakata.



Duck-billed nose of JR West's Series 700 *Rail Star*



Each *Rail Star* service offers four private compartments with four seats.



Some reserved seats provide wider cabin tables with power outlets for business travellers using portable computers.



The reserved 2+2 seating (left) offers wider armrests and aisle than the non-reserved 2+3 seating (right).



Photos: JR West

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New JR Group Narrow-gauge Rolling Stock



The bright red livery of the Series E751 stands out against the snowy northern Japanese countryside. (JR East)

JR East's Series E751 EMU

JR East's Series E751 entered service in March 2000 to replace the old Series 258 *Hatsukari* services on the Morioka–Aomori section of the Tohoku main line. It is for AC electrified lines and customized for the severe weather conditions in N. Japan.



An elevated seat gives the driver a good view through the panoramic window. (JR East)



The curvaceous nose gives an impression of speed. (JR Kyushu)

JR Kyushu's Series 885 EMU

JR Kyushu's Series 885 entered service in March 2000 on the Nagasaki main line between Hakata and Nagasaki. The six-car configuration uses a controlled natural tilting mechanism for a smooth ride on the winding route. Both the Green Car and standard carriages have real leather seat coverings that add to the luxurious interior design.



Stylish leather seats are used throughout the train. (JR Kyushu)

JR Hokkaido's Series 261 DMU

JR Hokkaido's Series 261 tilting DMU is for newly introduced *Super Soya* limited express services on the Soya main line between Sapporo and Wakkanai, Japan's most northerly city. The four-car configuration includes half a car of Green Car seating. The seat design and colour schemes were designed jointly with Danish State Railways (pp. 34–37).



A door with the *Super Soya* logo in the nose of the Series 261 allows through passage when two trains are coupled. (JR Hokkaido)