

Subways in Tokyo

Tokyo's subway system dates back to a 2.2-km section opened by a private company in 1927. The quasi-government Teito Rapid Transit Authority (TRTA) was established in 1941 to run the 14.3-km subway (today's Ginza Line). At the end of 1959, TRTA had only two lines totalling slightly more than 30 km and public transport in central Tokyo depended heavily on a dense tram network. To prompt subway expansion, the government decided to allow Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) to build and run subway lines in the late 1950s. Through operations between subways and JNR/JR or private suburban lines started in the 1960s. By December 2000, the length of the TRTA and TMG networks will reach 177.2 km and 109.0 km, respectively.



TRTA's Marunouchi Line, Tokyo's second oldest subway linking Japan's business and administration centres in Marunouchi and Kasumigaseki with the Shinjuku and Ikebukuro subcentres, is now served by the air-conditioned Series 02 EMU (top left). Its predecessors Series 300 (centre top) and Series 500 with unique red livery gave a fresh impression when they entered service in the early 1950s. After retirement in the mid-1990s, 131 units were sent to Argentina to serve on Metro Line B in Buenos Aires (top right). TRTA's newest subway is the Namboku Line, forming a new north-south axis in central Tokyo. It is Tokyo's first subway with platform doors (bottom centre), allowing driver-only operation using the latest Series 9000 EMU (bottom right). TRTA uses eye-catching posters (left) selected by public contests to ask passengers to behave more courteously. It is also proud of its beautifully designed passenger signs (bottom left).



Photos: TRTA

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Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG)

The first through operation between subway and suburban lines started in 1960 when the first section of the TMG Asakusa Line was connected with the private Keisei Electric Railway at Oshiage Station (top left) in eastern Tokyo. Keisei rebuilt its tracks from 1372-mm gauge to standard gauge for this connection. In 1968, through operation with Keihin Electric Express Railway, another private operator, started at Sengakuji in south Tokyo. The line is now served by TMG's Series 5000 EMUs (top right), and various EMUs belonging to the connected private railways.

Subway train depots require huge amounts of land in densely populated areas. When the TMG Mita Line was opened in 1968, a high-rise housing complex was built above Shimura Depot (middle left) to justify use of expensive land. Platform barriers and automatic doors have been installed recently at stations on the Mita Line to enable driver-only operation (middle right).

The TMG Shinjuku Line connected with the private Keio Electric Railway uses the 1372-mm gauge used formerly by Tokyo's tramways (bottom left).

The TMG Oedo Line uses unique linear motor traction, enabling steeper gradients and smaller tunnels (bottom right). The last section will be completed by December 2000, forming a second loop in central Tokyo after JR East's Yamanote Line.



(Yukichi Ishimoto)



(TMG)



(The Railway Pictorial)



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