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Shinjuku Mitsui, Tokyo, (JP)

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Facility:

This facility consists of covered bicycle parking area on a famous skyscraper lower ground of a skyscraper, it is fitted with double deck tier racks. The place sells annual subscriptions and daily tickets. Most of the subscribers and users are employees who work in the skyscrapers nearby and the cycling courier service companies that operate in the area.

Provider:

Shinjuku ward and Shinjuku Mitsui Building .

Designer/ Architect:

Nihon Sekkei.

Cost of Provision:

Undisclosed information.

Silver team relocating a bicycle illegally parked on a non designated area



Shinjuku map shows where is illegal to park bicycles but does not show where the designated parking areas are located

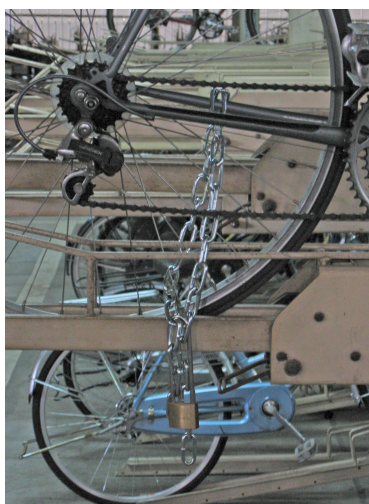


Shinjuku Street Bicycle designated parking area



General Description:

Shinjuku is probably Tokyo's most famous district internationally; it is a major commercial and administrative centre, housing the busiest train station in the world. The area, seismically stable, area largely escaped the devastation of the Kanto earthquake in 1923. At that point Shinjuku developed into one of the few areas in Tokyo with many skyscrapers. Shinjuku is also the residential west gate of Tokyo. Many people commute by train and by bicycle from the neighbouring wards. Many bicycles that populate the streets of Shinjuku are left there overnight and serve their owners who commute by train to Shinjuku to finish their trips to work. Shinjuku has 18 bicycle parking facilities, 16 of them being freestanding designated areas placed on the streets and footpaths that can be only differentiated by the floor markings or boxes on the tarmac. The remaining two facilities are 'off street parking' fitted with double tier racks; one is a storage unit allocated within the station building on the station south exit and the other (the one reviewed in this research) is on the west side 200m away from the station on the lower ground of the Shinjuku Mitsui skyscraper. Shinjuku ward charges ¥5000 a year subscription for use of its facilities by issuing subscription stickers. However, the bicycle population exceeds the available parking spaces and there is a waiting list of 2 years to apply for a space in certain areas. To decrease the chaos caused by the illegally parked bicycles, silver teams (retirees) rearrange the bicycles regardless of the stickers or if they are on designated areas. Shinjuku road authorities remove the illegal bicycles especially those parked in front of Banks and Important business stores such as Takashimaya, while on areas like Kabukicho they tend to be less strict.



Location of Facility:

Shinjuku Mitsui Building Lower ground, west Shinjuku. The lower ground is where the motorways are, the air at this level is very polluted, the bicycle parking is somehow hidden from the street and it does not appear on the local maps as a bicycle parking facility. A staff member sells daily tickets and informs the public where is suitable to park their bikes. They operate the facility on working days from 0700-1900.

Scale (capacity):

1065 bikes.

Length of Stay:

24 hours.

Charges (cost to user):

¥100 a day (£0.50). Weekends and holidays is free, annual subscription ¥5000 (£25).

Access:

The facility is open access, though is not very visible for pedestrians and from the street.

Signage:

There is signage within the facility displaying information about subscription application procedures, fees, and instructions to use the racks. 'Way in' and 'way out' signs and 'good manners' cycling campaigns.



Furniture:

Double deck tier racks, they do not have in built lock. There are no vending machine or any automatic system on this site.

Technical Requirements:

The double deck tier racks are made from sheet steel, the lower rack is shorter (1567mm) than the top one (1900mm), the whole unit requires a clearance space of 2430mm vertically and 450mm wide.

Security, Guardianship and Lighting:

This facility has no appointed guardians. Cycle crime is very low. The level of security offered by the cycle parking is low, but appropriate for this context. The site is lit with fluorescent lights activated by proximity recognition sensors. There are CCTV cameras operating in this area guarded 24 hours by the building security team.

Maintenance and Servicing:

Shinjuku ward authorities handle all maintenance on this site. CCTV is maintained by Mitsui building, the tier racks are completely mechanical and low maintenance, though when spares or periodic revisions are required a contractor (the makers of the racks) sends an engineer.

Service Period (how long it will last):

Unspecified, but the building was designed for a 100 years' service time of which 34 have passed already.

Strengths:

- This is one of the few bicycle-parking facilities in Shinjuku that have available bicycle spaces; there is no waiting list for this particular site.
- It is a spacious site and well organised, the tier racks optimise use of the area

Weaknesses:

- The site is somewhat hidden from the exterior view, which explains why most users are subscribers; visitors who don't know about its existence leave their bikes on the street,
- The air at this level is rather polluted. The facility is a bit far from the station.

Useful References:

Description, User Assessment (Japanese):

http://www.geocities.co.jp/NatureLand/4515/bikejpn/egshinjuku_j.html

<http://blog.goo.ne.jp/takekurabe/e/71b30c7e6cb68be1065014b4c2fe7b28>



Shinjuku ward website on bicycles (English):

http://www.city.shinjuku.tokyo.jp/foreign/english/guide/seikatsu/seikatsu_2.html

Tier racks maker website (Japanese)

<http://www.cycletechno.com/cycleport/index.html>