

## Re: no smoRking?

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- *From:* "Ben Bullock" <[benkasminbullock@xxxxxxxxxx](mailto:benkasminbullock@xxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* 13 Aug 2006 23:52:52 -0700
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Cindy wrote:

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Actually I wouldn't do that, as it's a form of vandalism, even if the spelling on the sign is wrong.

When I first came to Japan, I used to know a man called Neil, a veteran resident. Neil was never very interested in these stories of mistaken English. I tried to make him laugh with the title of a motorcycle magazine called "Mr. Bike – the magazine for windy people" (for non-native speakers let me explain that windy usually means "prone to flatulence") and Neil, instead of laughing uproariously at the English mistake, said something like "wind in their hair perhaps?"

Now I've been here a while, I have to admit that after some time Japanese English mistakes stop seeming funny or even interesting somehow. I think it has something to do with when you realise that a lot of Japanese people can't point to Britain on a map of the world, and ask you what language people speak in Britain.