

Japanese Introductory 1

JAPANESE INTRODUCTORY 1

IORI HAMADA

Monash University



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Japanese Introductory 1

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INTRODUCTION

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Iori Hamada is a Lecturer in Japanese Studies at Monash University, Australia. Born and raised in Japan, Iori relocated to Australia in 2006 as a recipient of the Endeavour Japan Award conferred by the Australian Government. In 2019, she was awarded [the Institute of Social Science and Oxford University Press Prize](#) for her co-authored journal article titled ‘[Silent Exits: Risk and Post-3.11 Skilled Migration from Japan to Australia](#)’. In 2021, Iori was also awarded a [Fellowship of Higher Education Academy \(FHEA\) by Advance Higher Education, UK](#).

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She has penned several language learning books that have been translated into Chinese and Korean.

In addition to her language learning books, Iori is the author of [The Japanese Restaurant: Tasting the New Exotic in Australia](#) (Routledge, 2023).

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CHAPTER 1: HEAD START WITH JAPANESE

1.0 HEAD START WITH JAPANESE



Figure 1: Cherry Blossom

If you are looking for a language that brings excitement and practicality, Japanese is an excellent choice. With its rich culture and

influence on entertainment, technology and business, Japanese is a language that can unlock many opportunities and enrich your experiences.

This chapter is a vital introduction to Japanese, focusing on equipping you with one of the fundamental scripts in the language – hiragana. Hiragana is a set of phonetic symbols that are mainly used for grammatical particles, as well as the endings of verbs and adjectives.

So why wait? Start your Japanese language journey today and discover all the thrilling possibilities that await you!




Learning goals

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

- Understand what hiragana is and how it functions.
- Understand the benefits of learning hiragana.
- Identify and read the 46 basic hiragana characters.
- Read some simple Japanese words that use hiragana characters.
- Set up a Japanese keyboard input on your computer.
- Type in Japanese.

Figures

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1.1 INTRODUCTION TO HIRAGANA

In this module, we'll cover the basics of hiragana, focusing on how to read it effectively.

What is hiragana?

Hiragana is one of the three scripts in the Japanese writing system, as shown below:

Hiragana (ひらがな)

Katakana (カタカナ)

Kanji (漢字)

Hiragana is often your first step into the world of Japanese. It's primarily used to convey grammatical details and link kanji characters within sentences. Think of it as the glue that holds sentences together, making it easier to read and write in Japanese!

In modern Japanese writing, all three scripts are used together in sentences. For example:

私は今日日本語のクラスでひらがなを勉強します。

*Watashi **wa** kyou Nihongo **no** kurasu **de**
hiragana **o** benkyou **shimasu**.*

I will study hiragana in a Japanese class today.

Here's a brief overview of the distinct roles each script plays in the Japanese language. Please note that these are guidelines and exceptions do exist:

- **Kanji** are used to represent certain words or

parts of words. They are usually content words such as nouns, adjective stems and verb stems. Each kanji character has its own meaning and one or more readings (ways to pronounce it), which you will learn in Chapter 7. For example, 勉強 is a noun-verb compound made of two kanji characters, 勉 (meaning 'exertion') and 強 (meaning 'strong'). Together, they represent the concept of 'study' or 'learning'. In Japanese, many verbs are formed by combining a kanji noun with the verb する (suru: to do), making it a verb phrase.

- **Hiragana** are used to provide grammatical information and fill in the gaps between kanji characters.
- **Katakana** are usually used for emphasis or to represent words borrowed from languages other than Chinese (you will learn katakana in [Chapter 4](#)).

Keep in mind that hiragana is phonetic, which means the same sentence can be written entirely in hiragana like this:

わたしはきょうにほんごのくらすでひらがなをべんきょうします。

This approach is especially beneficial for beginners in Japanese, as it allows them to learn reading and writing in a more straightforward manner. It provides an accessible method to grasp the language's basics before tackling the more complex kanji script.

However, interpreting sentences written entirely in hiragana can be challenging, as the absence of kanji makes it harder to distinguish the grammatical function of each word.

Now, let's delve deeper into the topic of hiragana.

How many hiragana characters are there?

Hiragana consists of **a set of 46 basic characters** in the Japanese writing system. While there are additional hiragana characters, which we will explore later in [Module 2.2](#), for now, let's focus on these 46 fundamental ones.

How can I read words in hiragana?

Reading hiragana is not only straightforward but also quite enjoyable! Every hiragana character represents **a syllable**, akin to a small sound unit that forms words. These syllables can be just a single vowel sound (like the hiragana character あ for *a*) or a combination of a consonant and a vowel (like the hiragana character か for *ka*).

Now, for the fun part: when pronouncing these characters, treat each one as a **mora, a phonological unit used in some languages, including Japanese**. This approach ensures you give each character approximately the same amount of time and rhythm in your speech.

Take にほん (Nihon: Japan), for example, which comprises three moras (Ni-ho-n), each pronounced with equal duration. It's similar to following a steady beat in music, adding a rhythmic aspect to speaking Japanese!

Some examples of Japanese syllables include:

- *ka* in the word *kami* (hair or paper)



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- *shi* in the word *shika* (deer)



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- *nu* in the word *inu* (dog)



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- *re* in the word *remon* (lemon)



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- *ho* in the word *hoshi* (star)



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Should I memorise all the hiragana characters now to read the book?

The answer is 'no'! There is no need to memorise all the hiragana characters to read this book at this stage. Instead, we will use the Roman alphabet, also known as **romaji**, to represent the Japanese sounds.

Romaji is a useful tool for writing and reading Japanese words phonetically, especially for those who are not yet familiar with the three scripts.

For example, in Japan, you will often see romaji on signboards at train stations, as shown in Figure 1:

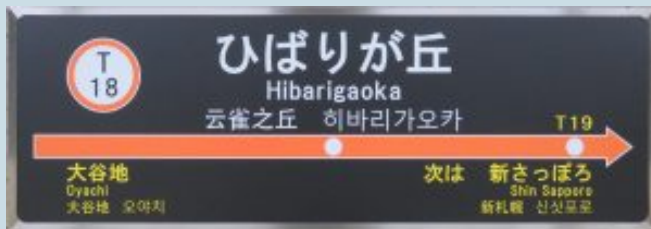


Figure 1: Hibarigaoka Station Signboard

Romaji helps English speakers who are not familiar with the writing system to read and understand Japanese words more easily!

Here is a downloadable PDF chart of basic hiragana that you can utilise to enhance your everyday Japanese learning experience. The chart is read from top to bottom, and left to right.

Basic hiragana chart

あ (a)	か (ka)	さ (sa)	た (ta)	な (na)	は (ha)	ま (ma)	や (ya)	ら (ra)	わ (wa)
い (i)	き (ki)	し (shi)	ち (chi/ti)	に (ni)	ひ (hi)	み (mi)		り (ri)	
う (u)	く (ku)	す (su)	つ (tsu)	ぬ (nu)	ふ (fu/hu)	む (mu)	ゆ (yu)	る (ru)	を (o)
え (e)	け (ke)	せ (se)	て (te)	ね (ne)	へ (he)	め (me)		れ (re)	
お (o)	こ (ko)	そ (so)	と (to)	の (no)	ほ (ho)	も (mo)	よ (yo)	ろ (ro)	ん (n)

Please note that in this textbook, ち and ふ are represented as *chi* and *fu*, respectively, following the Hepburn system of romanisation. However, in some romanisation systems, they might be represented as *ti* and *hu*, respectively.

[Basic Hiragana Chart Japanese Introductory 1 \(PDF 62 KB\)](#)

Typing in Japanese chart

Curious about typing in Japanese on your computer? Whether you're a pro or just starting out, we've got you covered!

If you don't have a Japanese keyboard or aren't sure how to use one, don't worry. Take a look at our easy-to-follow instructions below. They'll guide you through setting up Japanese input on your computer and show you the basics of typing in Japanese.

[How to Set Up Japanese Keyboard Input Japanese Introductory 1 \(PDF 168 KB\)](#)

What are the key benefits of learning hiragana?

Here are some good reasons why learning hiragana offers a good foundation for your Japanese language studies:

- Hiragana forms the core of the Japanese writing system. It is often used to represent sentence elements, for which there are no kanji characters. So, by mastering hiragana, you will mostly be able to read and write in Japanese.
- Hiragana serves as a foundation for learning the two other scripts, katakana and kanji. Knowing hiragana will make it easier for you to build your reading and writing skills in Japanese.
- Learning hiragana will help you to improve your pronunciation of Japanese words. Each hiragana character corresponds to a specific sound (or mora). So, by learning hiragana, you will be able to pronounce words clearly and appropriately.
- Last, but not least, learning hiragana can give

you a sense of accomplishment! It can be highly motivating and boost your confidence in your language-learning abilities.

In sum, learning hiragana is a great first step for those starting out in Japanese. It creates a solid base for comprehending, writing and reading the language, and it is crucial for communicating effectively in Japanese.

Further resources

To further enhance your understanding of the benefits of learning hiragana, you may find the following resource (about 3 minutes long) created by [Tofugu](#) to be useful. It also provides you with an overview of how hiragana functions, which will be covered in more detail in the subsequent modules in this chapter:



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Figures

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References

Tofugu. “Learn Hiragana Today #1: Pronunciation.”
YouTube video, 3:15. August 12, 2014.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-3opZIjwr0>.

1.2 あ (A) – こ (KO)

This module will guide you through the essentials of reading hiragana characters. We will focus on the 10 of the 46 basic hiragana characters: あ (a), い (i), う (u), え (e) and お (o), as well as か (ka), き (ki), く (ku), け (ke) and こ (ko).

What is hiragana?

The hiragana characters あ (a), い (i), う (u), え (e) and お (o) are our starting point.

1. あ (a), い (i), う (u), え (e), お (o)

Read each character aloud twice and then try to pronounce the five characters consecutively in a single breath.



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Are you a visual learner? Then you may find **mnemonics** useful.

But what exactly is mnemonics?

Mnemonics is a learning strategy that assists in the process of memorisation and recall. It can take the form of images, songs, rhymes or other creative strategies.

To learn the 46 basic hiragana characters, you can also refer to this resource (about 3 minutes long) created by [Tofugu](#). It shows how mnemonics can be used to learn あ, い, う, え and お.



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The characters か (ka), き (ki), く (ku), け (ke) and こ (ko) are our next focus.

2. か (ka), き (ki), く (ku), け (ke), こ (ko)

Again, read each character aloud twice and then try to pronounce the five characters consecutively in a single breath.



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Here is an additional resource (about 3 minutes long) created by [Tofugu](#), which shows you how to learn か, き, く, け and こ using mnemonics.



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=314#oembed-2>

References

Tofugu. “Learn Hiragana Today #2: あいうえお.” YouTube video, 3:29. August 12, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WJdwOpJwpYg>.

———. “Learn Hiragana Today #3: かきくけこ.” YouTube video, 3:20. August 12, 2104. <https://youtu.be/gLPzqSkIH58?si=BrpKE0GPTeWUNCLt>.

1.3 さ (SA) – と (TO)

In this module, we will focus on the hiragana characters さ (sa), し (shi), す (su), せ (se) and そ (so), along with た (ta), ち (chi), つ (tsu), て (te) and と (to).

1. さ (sa), し (shi), す (su), せ (se), そ (so)

Read each character aloud twice and then try to pronounce the five characters consecutively in a single breath.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=318#audio-318-1>

Here is an additional resource (about 4 minutes long) created by [Tofugu](#), which shows you how to learn さ, し, す, せ and そ using mnemonics.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=318#oembed-1>

2. た (ta), ち (chi), つ (tsu), て (te), と (to)

Read each character aloud twice and then try to pronounce the five characters consecutively in a single breath.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

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Note that ち is represented as *chi* in this textbook, following the Hepburn system of romanisation. But you might also see it represented as *ti* in

some places, depending on the romaji system used.

Here is an additional resource (about 3 minutes long) created by [Tofugu](#), which shows you how to learn た, ち, つ, て and と using mnemonics.



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References

Tofugu. “Learn Hiragana Today #4: さしすせそ.” YouTube

video, 3:46. August 12, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CtvnJIFTVOs>.

———. “Learn Hiragana Today #5: たちつてと.” YouTube video, 3:25. September 4, 2014. <https://youtu.be/J9nwOeC-juk?si=BBEQ-gNHziF0lGSD>.

1.4 な (NA) - ほ (HO)

In this module, we will focus on the hiragana characters な (na), に (ni), ぬ (nu), ね (ne) and の (no), along with は (ha), ひ (hi), ふ (fu), へ (he) and ほ (ho).

1. な (na), に (ni), ぬ (nu), ね (ne), の (no)

Read each character aloud twice and then try to pronounce the five characters consecutively in a single breath.



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Here is an additional resource (about 4 minutes long) created by [Tofugu](#), which shows you how to learn な, に, ぬ, ね and の using mnemonics:



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For further exploration of mnemonic devices, visit [this webpage](#) by Tofugu.

2. は (ha), ひ (hi), ふ (fu), へ (he), ほ (ho)

Read each character aloud twice and then try to pronounce the five characters consecutively in a single breath.



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Note that ふ is represented as *fu* in this textbook, following the Hepburn system of romanisation. But you might also see it represented as *hu* in some places, depending on the romaji system used.

Here is a more extended resource (about 15 minutes long) created by [Learn Japanese with Kobachan-tachi](#). In addition to a tutorial on learning は, ひ, ふ, へ and ほ using mnemonics, it provides revision games! In this additional resource, you will also learn more about the romanisation of ふ, which can be represented as either *fu* or *hu*, depending on the romaji system used.



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References

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1.5 ま (MA) - よ (YO)

In this module, we will focus on the hiragana characters ま (ma), み (mi), む (mu), め (me) and も (mo), along with や (ya), ゆ (yu) and よ (yo).

1. ま (ma), み (mi), む (mu), め (me), も (mo)

Read each character aloud twice and then try to pronounce the five characters consecutively in a single breath.



One or more interactive elements



has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=335#audio-335-1>

Here is an additional resource (about 13 minutes long) created by [Learn Japanese with Kobachan-tachi](#), which shows you how to learn ま, み, む, め and も using mnemonics. You might also find its revision games helpful.



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=335#oembed-1>

2. や (ya), ゆ (yu), よ (yo)

Read each character aloud twice and then try to pronounce the five characters consecutively in a single breath.



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Here is another resource (about 10 minutes long) created by [Learn Japanese with Kobachan-tachi](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D8Kpv4MzV0I), which shows you how to learn や, ゆ and よ using mnemonics. You might also find its review games helpful.



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=335#oembed-2>

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watch?v=pJ_TRnfvFos&ab_channel=LearnJapanesewithKo
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1.6 ら (RA) - ん (N) AND HIRAGANA REVIEW

In this final module, we will focus on the hiragana characters ら (ra), り (ri), る (ru), れ (re) and ろ (ro), along with わ (wa), を (o) and ん (n).

1. ら (ra), り (ri), る (ru), れ (re), ろ (ro)

Repeat each letter twice and then try to pronounce the five letters consecutively in a single breath.



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online here: [https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=349#audio-349-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=349#audio-349-1)*

Here is an additional resource (about 15 minutes long) created by [Learn Japanese with Kobachan-tachi](#), which show you how to learn ら, り, る, れ and ゾ using mnemonics. It also includes revision games!

In this resource, you will also learn more about the pronunciation of R-sounds in Japanese, which sounds closer to L-sounds, in greater detail.



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japanese/?p=349#oembed-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=349#oembed-1)

2. わ (wa), を (o), ん (n)

Read each character aloud twice and then try to pronounce the five characters consecutively in a single breath.



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japanese/?p=349#audio-349-2](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=349#audio-349-2)*

Here is an additional resource (about 16 minutes long) created by [Learn Japanese with Kobachan-tachi](#), which shows you how to learn わ, を and ん using mnemonics. It also includes revision games that you may find useful.



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=349#oembed-2>

Exercise 1

1. Some hiragana letters may appear slightly different depending on the typeface used.

Click on the panel and match the equivalent hiragana letter.

NOTE: Only one type of hiragana font provides audio as a hint.



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=349#h5p-22>

2. Some hiragana letters look very similar. Can you figure out if the following statement is true or false?





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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=349#h5p-5>

3. Have you ever explored [Quizlet](#)? If not, now might be the perfect time to sign up for this free flashcard resource. It is a helpful tool to strengthen your grasp on basic hiragana. You can get started by visiting [this specific set of Quizlet flashcards](#) created by SWACIACCLASS.

The following resource, created by [TOMO sensei](#), contains additional words in hiragana. You may find it helpful for assessing your understanding of hiragana.



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japanese/?p=349#oembed-3](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=349#oembed-3)*

What is the difference between お (o) and を (o) ?

In Japanese, the hiragana character お (o)
serves multiple purposes in vocabulary.

Firstly, it is commonly used in everyday words,
like おおさか (Oosaka: Osaka) and おとな
(otona: adults, grown-ups).

Additionally, it functions as an honorific prefix
for nouns, conveying politeness and respect.

For example, in おちゃ (ocha: tea), お acts as the honorific prefix for *cha* (tea). Without the honorific お, the tone can shift from polite to brusque, affecting the overall courtesy conveyed in speech.

In contrast, を (o) is a particle used to mark the direct object of a sentence – the target of an action or the object that is being acted upon. For example, in the sentence 「おちゃをください。」 (ocha o kudasai), which means ‘Tea, please’ or, more literally, ‘Please give me tea’, を marks おちゃ as the object being given.

You will learn more about the particle を in [Module 2.5](#).

How should I pronounce ん (n)?

In Japanese, the character ん (n) is distinct from the English 'n' in terms of pronunciation. It represents a nasal sound and is produced through the nose rather than the mouth.

Here are a few tips for practising the pronunciation of ん:

- Listen to native Japanese speakers and try to imitate their pronunciation.
- Practise saying words that contain ん out loud, such as せんせい (sensei: teacher) and にほん (Nihon: Japan).
- Drop your jaw slightly as you articulate the Japanese ん sound to pronounce it accurately.

The pronunciation of ん can vary slightly depending on the surrounding characters. At this stage, it is not necessary to master these nuances, but if you are interested in delving

deeper into the pronunciation of ん, please see the following resource created by [Dogen](#).



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japanese/?p=349#oembed-4](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=349#oembed-4)*

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watch?v=R00ytkEZ7_4&t=2s&ab_channel=LearnJapanese
withKobachan-tachi](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R00ytkEZ7_4&t=2s&ab_channel=LearnJapanesewithKobachan-tachi).

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CHAPTER 2: WELCOME TO JAPANESE LEARNING COMMUNITIES (1)

2.0 WELCOME TO JAPANESE-LEARNING COMMUNITIES (1)



Figure 1. Tokyo Sky

In this book, our goal is to provide you with the tools and knowledge to actively participate in dynamic learning groups.

In ‘Welcome to Japanese-Learning Communities’, you will start a fun journey to learn basic Japanese conversation skills. This chapter will show you how to introduce yourself and help you make friends with your fellow classmates and people in Japanese-learning groups.

Whether you are saying hello for the first time or joining a new community, we hope that this chapter will make it easy and exciting to connect with others in Japanese!



Learning goals

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

- Identify additional hiragana characters.
- Use simple greetings to start a

friendly conversation in Japanese.

- Understand the cultural distinctiveness of Japanese greetings, including the phrase よろしくお願（ねが）いします (yoroshiku onegai shimasu), which literally means ‘Please treat me kindly’ or ‘Nice to meet you’.
- Understand and apply the fundamental sentence pattern ‘X は (wa) Y です (desu)’ (X is Y) in a self-introduction.
- Use the honorific さん (san) appropriately when addressing others by name.

Words

Japanese	Romaji	English
私（わたし）	<i>watashi</i>	I/me
名前（なまえ）	<i>namae</i>	name
お名前	<i>onamae</i>	name
先生（せんせい）	<i>sensei</i>	teacher/professor/doctor/ lawyer/ author
～さん	<i>san</i>	Mr/Ms/Mrs
皆（みな）さん	<i>mina-san</i>	everyone
学生（がくせい）	<i>gakusei</i>	student
大学（だいがく）	<i>daigaku</i>	university
自己紹介（じこしょうかい）	<i>jiko-shoukai</i>	self-introduction

Expressions and phrases

Japanese	Romaji	English	Notes
じゃあ	<i>jaa</i>	then	
あ	<i>a</i>	oh	
ええと	<i>ecto</i>	well	
はい	<i>hai</i>	yes	
お願い（ねが）いします	<i>onegai shimasu</i>	please	
X（を）お願いします	<i>X (o) onegai shimasu</i>	X, please	Use X for the object of the request.
はじめまして	<i>hajime mashite</i>	Nice to meet you	Never use this phrase with people you already know.
よろしく	<i>yoroshiku</i>	Treat me kindly	Informal, but not rude.
よろしくお願いします	<i>yoroshiku onegai shimasu</i>	Please treat me kindly.	Polite, but not too formal.
ありがとう	<i>arigatou</i>	Thanks	Informal, but not rude.
ありがとうございます	<i>arigatou gozaimasu</i>	Thank you very much	Polite, but not too formal.
どういたしまして	<i>dou itashi mashite</i>	You're welcome	Never use this phrase with people you already know.
こんにちは	<i>konnichiwa</i>	Hello	Never use this phrase with people you already know.
おはよう	<i>ohayou</i>	Morning [greeting]	Informal, but not rude.
おはようございます	<i>ohayou gozaimasu</i>	Good morning	Polite, but not too formal.
さようなら	<i>sayounara</i>	Bye	Never use this phrase with people you already know.

すみません	<i>sumimasen</i>	Excuse me/I'm sorry	Polite
ごめんなさい	<i>gomennasai</i>	I'm sorry	Polite

Key grammar points

Japanese	Romaji	English	Notes
は	<i>wa</i>	—	Particle; It is pronounced 'wa'; however, it is written as 'ha'. This particle is often referred to as a 'topic marker', used to indicate the topic of a sentence (see Module 2.4).
です	<i>desu</i>	is, am, are	Copula/linking verb
Xは?	<i>X wa?</i>	What about X?	Use a noun for 'X' in this sentence pattern.

を

o

—

Particle; It is pronounced 'o'. This particle is often referred to as a 'object marker', used to indicate the object that marks the action of a verb in a sentence (see Module 2.5).

Exercise 1

Guess which hiragana letter needs to be filled in. To check the answer, click the 'turn' button. You can also listen to the sound of each word by clicking the audio icon.

You may notice that some words are not pronounced in the exact way they are written in hiragana and romaji. These sounds are called ‘long vowel’ sounds, which will be covered in more detail in [Module 2.2](#).



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Model dialogue

Lina and Kevin are practising self-introductions in their first Japanese language class at a university in Australia.

Teacher: じゃあ、みなさん。自己紹介（じこしょうかい）をお願いします（ねが）います。	<i>Jaa, mina-san. Jiko shoukai o onegai shimasu.</i>
Lina: あ、はじめまして。わたしは*リナ（りな）です。よろしく。 *This word is usually written in katakana, but we are providing the hiragana here to help you read it in Japanese.	<i>A, hajime mashite. Watashi wa Rina desu. Yoroshiku.</i>
Kevin: Oh, so can we just say よろしく?	<i>Yoroshiku?</i>
Lina: Yeah, that's a shorter and more casual version of <i>yoroshiku onegai shimasu</i> .	<i>Yeah, that's a shorter and more casual version of yoroshiku onegai shimasu.</i>
Kevin: Right. ありがとう、リナさん。	<i>Arigatou, Rina-san.</i>
Lina: ええと、お名前（なまえ）は？	<i>Ecto, onamae wa?</i>
Kevin: ケビン（けびん）です。はじめまして。よろしくお願ひ ... What was that again?	<i>Kebin desu. Hajime mashite. Yoroshiku onegai ... What was that again?</i>
Lina: よろしく is just fine!	<i>Yoroshiku is just fine!</i>
Kevin: よろしく！	<i>Yoroshiku!</i>

<p>Teacher: リナさん、ケビンさん、とてもいいですね！ Just quickly, when you're talking to your teachers or people who are older than you or in more formal contexts, it's customary to use the longer version of the phrase, '<i>yoroshiku onegai shimasu</i>'.</p>	<p><i>Rina-san, Kevin-san, totemo ii desu ne!</i> Just quickly, when you're talking to your teachers or people who are older than you or in more formal contexts, it's customary to use the longer version of the phrase, '<i>yoroshiku onegai shimasu</i>'.</p>
<p>Lina and Kevin: はい。ありがとうございます！</p>	<p><i>Hai, arigatou gozaimasu!</i></p>
<p>Teacher: どういたしまして。</p>	<p><i>Dou itashi mashite.</i></p>

English translation

Teacher: All right, everyone. Please introduce yourselves [literally, ‘Self introduction’].

Lina: Oh, nice to meet you. I’m Lina. Treat me kindly.

Kevin: Oh, so can we just say *yoroshiku*?

Lina: Yeah, that’s a shorter and more casual version of *yoroshiku onegai shimasu*.

Kevin: Right. Thanks, Lina.

Lina: Well, (what’s) your name?

Kevin: (I’m) Kevin. Nice to meet you. *Yoroshiku onegai* ... What was that again?

Lina: *Yoroshiku* is just fine!

Kevin: *Yoroshiku* [Treat me kindly]!

Teacher: Lina and Kevin, that’s very good! Just quickly, when you’re talking to you, it’s customary to use the longer version of the phrase, *yoroshiku onegai shimasu*.

Lina and Kevin: Okay. Thank you very much!

Teacher: You’re welcome.

Exercise 2

Listen to the following audio files. Each phrase is read twice, first at a slow pace and then at a natural pace. Repeat each phrase after the speaker.

Teacher: じゃあ、みなさん。自己紹介をお願いします。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-1>

Lina: あ、はじめまして。わたしはリナ（りな）です。よろしく。



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japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-2](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-2)

Kevin: Oh, so can we just say よろしく?



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japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-3](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-3)

Kevin: Right. ありがとう、リナさん。



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Lina: ええと、お名前は？



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japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-5](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-5)

Kevin: ケビン（けびん）です。はじめまして。よろしくお願ひ ... what was that again?



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view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-6](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-6)

Lina: よろしく is just fine!



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japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-7](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-7)

Kevin: よろしく !



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japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-8](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-8)

Teacher: リナさん、ケビンさん、とても
いいですね！



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view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-9](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-9)

Lina and Kevin: はい。ありがとうございます！



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view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-10](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-10)

Teacher: どういたしまして。



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japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-11](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2026#audio-2026-11)



Discussion points

Let's share our observations and thoughts on the following points!

1. The greeting **よろしくおねがいします** (yoroshiku onegai shimasu) might have sounded quite unfamiliar to you at first. How did it make you feel when you heard it for the first time? Is there an expression in your own language that conveys a similar meaning?
2. How do the brief expressions **あ (a)**, **じゃあ (jaa)** and **ええと (eeto)** function in the conversation? Can you think of specific situations where you might use these phrases? Are you familiar with any other short expressions that facilitate smoother dialogue?

Further resources

The following resource (about 2 minutes long), created by [Japan Voices](#), may help you understand the cultural nuances and connotations of よろしく願います. It explains the expression by using some sequences from the Studio Ghibli anime *Tonari no Totoro* (*My Neighbour, Totoro*).





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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2026#oembed-1>

Figures

1 “[Tokyo Sky](#)” (untitled) by [Pierre Blaché](#). Pexels. Licensed under [Pexels licence](#).

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2.1 THE JAPANESE SOUND SYSTEM

In this module, you will explore the fundamental aspects of the Japanese sound system.

The Japanese sound system is relatively straightforward compared to that of English. Each syllable consists of a consonant and a vowel.

Japanese vowels

The Japanese sound system has **five vowels**, namely, 'a', 'i', 'u', 'e' and 'o', which are pronounced as they are written.

Let's watch this short video (about 1 minute long) created by [Kokoro Communications](#) to learn and practise how to pronounce Japanese vowels.



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version of the text. You can view them
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japanese/?p=356#oembed-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=356#oembed-1)*

Each vowel sound is pronounced distinctly and clearly. For example, 'a' is pronounced as /ah/. It is somewhat akin to the 'uh' sound in English words like 'cup', 'study' and 'tunnel'. However, remember to keep it short and not stretch out the sound.

Japanese consonants

These consonants are combined with the vowels to form syllables. Compared to English, the Japanese pronunciation system is relatively consistent and uncomplicated.

Japanese consonants are made up of a limited number of sounds, such as 'k', 's', 't', 'n', 'h', 'm', 'y', 'r' and 'w', with some variations of these sounds. They are combined with the vowels to form syllables.

Let's watch this short video (about 1 minute long), created by [Kokoro Communications](#), to learn and practise how to pronounce Japanese consonants.

Please note that the chart displayed behind the presenter is oriented vertically. In vertical writing, you read from right to left and from top to bottom.

Consequently, the initial hiragana character 'あ' (a) is located in the top right corner.



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In [the next module](#), we will explore more about the Japanese sound system using hiragana!

Exercise 1





An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=356#h5p-31>

References

- Kokoro Communications. “Japanese Phonetics Part 1: Vowel Sounds.” YouTube video, 0:53. Apr 3, 2021. https://youtube.com/shorts/JOaJ2BFq-xs?si=NBT8O_FunjyAKb7k.
- . “Japanese Phonetics Part 2: Consonants.” YouTube video, 0:53. Apr 3, 2021. <https://youtube.com/shorts/LWAC224J-SI?si=FLlhw0OCenZcWtla>.

2.2 ADDITIONAL FEATURES OF HIRAGANA

In this module, we will explore four additional features of hiragana and how they reflect the pronunciation of words in Japanese.

There are four additional features of hiragana that influence the pronunciation of words in Japanese:

- 1. Long vowels**
- 2. Diacritical marks**

3. Contracted sounds**4. Double consonants**

Let's explore each of these features in detail!

1. Long vowels

Some vowels in Japanese can be pronounced as long vowel sounds, which are represented by hiragana. For example, the vowel 'e' is long, pronounced as /ee/, in the word **せんせい** (sensei). In hiragana, it is represented by a **せ** (se) and an **い** (i).

Exercise 1



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=359#h5p-71>

2. Diacritical marks

Some hiragana characters can be modified with diacritical marks to represent different sounds. There are two types of diacritical marks: **だくてん (dakuten)** and **はんだくてん (han-dakuten)**.

だくてん (dakuten) : “

The *dakuten* mark looks like a double quotation

mark (゛), which is placed to the right of certain characters.

A *dakuten* is a mark that alters the sound of a Japanese character from soft (unvoiced) to harder (voiced). For example, the character か (ka) has a soft sound, where the 'k' is spoken without vibrating the vocal cords. When you add a *dakuten*, which looks like two small lines, to か, it becomes が (ga), changing the sound to a harder 'g', where the vocal cords vibrate.

Please listen to the recording provided below and notice the difference between the unvoiced 'k' sounds and the voiced 'g' sounds in these pairs of characters: か/が (ka/ga), き/ぎ (ki/gi), く/ぐ (ku/gu), け/げ (ke/ge) and こ/ご (ko/go).

Pay attention to how the 'k' sounds are made without vocal cord vibration, while the 'g' sounds are made with vocal cord vibration.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=359#audio-359-1>

はんだくてん (han-dakuten) : °

The *han-dakuten* is represented by a small circle (°) and can be placed to the right of an H-sound character.

A *han-dakuten* modifies a character by changing the sound of its initial consonant 'h' to a 'p'. For example, adding a *han-dakuten* to は (ha) changes it to ぱ (pa).

Here is a chart of hiragana with *dakuten* (゛) and *han-dakuten* (゜). Remember to read the chart from top to bottom, and left to right.

Note that ぢ is represented as *ji* and づ is represented as *zu* in this textbook, following the Hepburn system of romanisation. But you might also see them represented as *di* and *du* respectively in some places, depending on the romaji system used.

が (ga)	ざ (za)	だ (da)	ば (ba)	ぱ (pa)
ぎ (gi)	じ (ji)	ぢ (ji/di)	び (bi)	ぴ (pi)
ぐ (gu)	ず (zu)	づ (zu/du)	ぶ (bu)	ぷ (pu)
げ (ge)	ぜ (ze)	で (de)	べ (be)	ぺ (pe)
ご (go)	ぞ (zo)	ど (do)	ぼ (bo)	ぽ (po)

Please listen to the recording below to hear the pronunciation of each hiragana character, ranging from が (ga) to ぽ (po):



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=359#audio-359-2>

Exercise 2

Read the following three words in sequence and record your voice.



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=359#h5p-12>

3. Contracted sounds

Two syllables in Japanese can merge into a single, contracted sound, known as **ようおん (you-on)**. In hiragana, this contraction is represented by adding small versions of **ゃ (ya)**, **ゅ (yu)** or **ょ (yo)** to

characters ending in 'i' (excluding the character い itself). This process effectively replaces the 'i' sound with 'ya', 'yu' or 'yo'. For example, combining き (ki) with a small や (ya) changes it from き (ki) to きゃ (kya), creating this contracted sound.

Here is a chart of the contracted sounds in hiragana:

きゃ (kya)	しゃ (sha)	ちゃ (cha)	にゃ (nya)	ひゃ (hya)	みゃ (mya)	りゃ (rya)
きゅ (kyu)	しゅ (shu)	ちゅ (chu)	にゅ (nyu)	ひゅ (hyu)	みゅ (myu)	りゅ (ryu)
きょ (kyo)	しよ (shu)	ちょ (cho)	にょ (nyo)	ひょ (hyo)	みょ (myo)	りょ (ryo)

Please listen to the recording below to hear the pronunciation of each hiragana character, ranging from きゃ (kya) to りょ (ryo):



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=359#audio-359-3>

Exercise 3



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=359#h5p-13>

4. Double consonants

Japanese has some sounds that are pronounced as a double consonant, and hiragana is used to transcribe these sounds.

Double consonants is represented by a **small つ (tsu)**, called **そくおん (soku-on)**. It introduce a brief

pause before the following consonant sound, creating a distinct pronunciation effect akin to a stutter or a stronger emphasis on the following consonant.

For example, the word なっとう (nattou), meaning 'fermented soybeans', is written with a small っ (tsu) character between the な (na) and と (to) characters to indicate that the 'tt' is pronounced as a double consonant.

Exercise 4



An interactive HSP element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=359#h5p-72>

Voiced consonants, contracted sounds and double consonants can be combined in various ways to represent a wide range of sounds in Japanese. It is important to learn these different combinations and their pronunciations to read and write Japanese effectively.

Here are some charts of hiragana with additional features to enhance your daily hiragana practice:

Additional hiragana charts

Hiragana with diacritical marks

が ^ゎ (ga)	ざ ^ゐ (za)	だ ^ゐ (da)	ば ^ゎ (ba)	ぱ ^ゎ (pa)
ぎ ^ゐ (gi)	じ ^ゐ (ji)	ぢ ^ゐ (ji/di)	び ^ゐ (bi)	ぴ ^ゐ (pi)
ぐ ^ゐ (gu)	ず ^ゐ (zu)	づ ^ゐ (zu/du)	ぶ ^ゐ (bu)	ぷ ^ゐ (pu)
げ ^ゐ (ge)	ぜ ^ゐ (ze)	で ^ゐ (de)	べ ^ゐ (be)	ぺ ^ゐ (pe)
ご ^ゐ (go)	ぞ ^ゐ (zo)	ど ^ゐ (do)	ぼ ^ゐ (bo)	ぽ ^ゐ (po)

Hiragana for contracted sounds

きゃ (kya)	しゃ (sha)	ちゃ (cha)	にゃ (nya)	ひゃ (hya)	みゃ (mya)	りゃ (rya)
きゅ (kyu)	しゅ (shu)	ちゅ (chu)	にゅ (nyu)	ひゅ (hyu)	みゅ (myu)	りゅ (ryu)
きょ (kyo)	しよ (shu)	ちょ (cho)	によ (nyo)	ひょ (hyo)	みょ (myo)	りょ (ryo)

Note: In addition to the standard set of additional hiragana, there are a few characters that are not commonly used in standard Japanese but can be found in certain contexts.

These include: てい (ti), でい (di), ふぁ (fa) and ふぉ (fo).

These characters are typically used in loanwords and foreign names. They represent sounds that are not traditionally part of the Japanese phonetic system but have been adopted to accommodate foreign words and sounds. For example, ふぁみりー (famirii) for 'family' (usually written in Katakana as ファミリー) or ディズニー (dizunii) for 'Disney' (also usually written in Katakana as ディズニー). These characters showcase the adaptability of the Japanese writing system in incorporating foreign linguistic elements.

Hiragana with diacritical marks and contracted sounds

ぎゃ (gya)	じゃ (jya)	ぢゃ (jya/ dya)	びゃ (bya)	ぴゃ (pya)
ぎゅ (gyu)	じゅ (jyu)	ぢゅ (jyu/ dyu)	びゅ (byu)	ぴゅ (pyu)
ぎょ (gyo)	じょ (jyo)	ぢょ (jyo/ dyo)	びょ (byo)	ぴょ (pyo)

Please listen to the pronunciation of each character listed in the table:



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=359#audio-359-4>

The combined chart of hiragana with additional features can be downloaded here:

[Additional Hiragana Chart Japanese Introductory 1 \(PDF 75 KB\)](#)

Now that you have familiarised yourself with the basic hiragana characters and their additional features, you might be interested in the following comprehensive resource created by [JAPANESE KORO](#). Start at a level that suits your proficiency and work your way gradually through the increasingly challenging levels.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=359#oembed-1>

References

JAPANESE KORO. “[Hiragana] 100 Reading Challenge Test02 | Level1〜Level4 | JLPT Lesson Japanese.” YouTube video, 18:28. July 25, 2023. https://youtu.be/MODSeBnisFE?si=VXqOcgAMXk54yU_5.

2.3 THE ART OF MEETING AND GREETING

In this module, you will delve deeper into Japanese greetings to enhance your understanding. You will learn how to introduce yourself politely and when to use common greetings, while exploring the cultural nuances and the usage of the honorific suffix **さん** (san).

How can I introduce myself in Japanese?

There is no set formula for introducing yourself in Japanese, as it can vary depending on the situation and personal preferences. However, you can try this commonly used, straightforward set of expressions for introducing yourself in Japanese:

Step 1. はじめまして

はじめまして (hajime mashite) is a polite and friendly way to greet someone for the first time. It literally means 'this is the beginning' and can be roughly translated as 'Nice to meet you' in English.

Step 2. Your name + です

Next, say your name followed by です (desu). For example, リナ (りな) です (Rina desu) means '(I am) Lina'.

You can also add the pronoun わたし (watashi):

I) and the topic particle は (pronounced 'wa'). For example, わたしはリナ (りな) です means 'I am Lina'.

We will learn more about how to use the 'X は Yです' sentence structure in the [Module 2.4](#).

It is important to remember not to use さん (san) with your own name. The honorific is intended for others as a sign of politeness and respect, not for self-reference.

Step 3. よろしくお願 (ねが) いします

よろしくお願 (ねが) いします (yoroshiku onegai shimasu) is a phrase used to express your desire for a good relationship with the person you are speaking to. It can be translated as 'Please treat me kindly' or 'Nice to meet you' in this context.

In a casual situation, such as a class activity with peers, you can use a shorter, more casual version: *yoroshiku*. However, it is important to remember that it is not appropriate to use this

version to address teachers or people who are older than you.

To put it all together, you can say:

はじめまして。(私は) リナです。よろしくお
願いします。

Hajime mashite. (Watashi wa) Rina desu.
Yoroshiku onegai shimasu.

Nice to meet you. (I am) Rina. Please treat me kindly.

Introducing yourself in Japanese can be a bit intimidating, but don't worry! With these simple phrases and a friendly smile, you can make a great impression.

Exercise 1

Introduce yourself by filling in your name in the blank in the following sample sentences and record your voice. Afterward, listen to your recording to ensure that your pronunciation is clear and easy to understand.



*An interactive HSP
element has been excluded
from this version of the text. You
can view it online here:
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=365#h5p-6](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=365#h5p-6)*

In addition to these self-introduction

sentences, bowing is an important aspect of the greeting process in Japan. The timing of the bow may vary, but it is typical to bow while saying よろしく
お願いします (yoroshiku onegai shimasu).

Here, it's important to keep your eyes down while bowing. This contrasts with the Western practice of shaking hands, where maintaining eye contact is seen as polite and indicative of honesty. In Japanese culture, bowing with your eyes lowered is a sign of humility; direct eye contact during a bow can be perceived as aggressive or disrespectful.

If you're interested in practising the pronunciation of these self-introduction sentences with the correct pitch – which refers to the variation in the tone

and how high or low the voice is – you may find the following resource created by [Speak Japanese Naturally](#) to be helpful.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=365#oembed-1>

The expression よろしくお願ひします (yoroshiku onegai shimasu), or simply よろしく (yoroshiku) in more casual situations, is incredibly versatile. It is

used in various contexts, including when asking for a favour.

The following resource, created by [MINA LUNA JAPANESE](#), may help you gain a better understanding of the nuances and variations of this expression as it is used in everyday conversations.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=365#oembed-2>

What are the other simple greetings and expressions I can use?

Here are some simple Japanese greetings and expressions that you can use in both formal and casual settings:

こんにちは (konnichiwa)

This is a common greeting that means ‘Hello’ or ‘Good afternoon’. It can be used in both formal and casual settings. The **は** in こんにちは is pronounced *wa* instead of *ha* because it is used here as a particle that marks the topic of the sentence – the greeting is actually based on the sentence ‘Today is a good day’ (こんにちは [today] は [topic particle] いい [good] ひ [day] です). So, to write こんにちは correctly, use the topic particle **は** instead of the character **わ**.

おはようございます (ohayou

gozaimasu)

This greeting means 'good morning' and is used in formal settings such as the workplace or with someone you don't know well. The casual version is おはよう (ohayou), which can be used between family members and friends.

ありがとうございます (arigatou gozaimasu)

This phrase means 'thank you very much' and is used in formal settings. The casual version is ありがとう (arigatou), which can be used between family members and friends.

どういたしまして (dou itashi mashite)

This phrase is similar to 'You're welcome' in English. It is used to respond to expressions of gratitude in a polite and humble way.

すみません (sumimasen)

This phrase means 'excuse me' or 'I'm sorry'

depending on the situation, and can be used in formal settings.

ごめんなさい (*gomen nasai*)

This phrase means 'I'm sorry' and is used when apologising to someone.

The phrases **すみません** (*sumimasen*) and **ごめんなさい** (*gomen nasai*) both mean 'I'm sorry' in Japanese, but they are not completely interchangeable.

ごめんなさい is a bit more informal, though still polite, and is often used in casual apologies, whereas **すみません** is more formal and professional.

Notably, **すみません** is used more widely than **ごめんなさい**, serving not only to apologise but also to get someone's attention or to excuse oneself in minor situations, like when you're trying to make your way through a crowd.

Remember, when greeting someone in Japanese, it is important to consider the level of formality required for the situation. In general, using polite language, with endings such as **です** (desu) and **ござい (ます)** (gozai[masu]), is appropriate in formal settings, while shorter and more casual versions are used among friends and family members.

Exercise 2

Choose the most appropriate expression for each situation.



*An interactive HSP
element has been excluded
from this version of the text. You*

can view it online here:

[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=365#h5p-8](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=365#h5p-8)

Why do Japanese people bow?

In countries like Australia, it is common for people to hug each other as a greeting, especially when they are close friends or family. But how about in Japan?

In Japanese culture, physical contact is traditionally kept to a minimum, and public displays of affection, such as hugging and kissing, are not common. Instead, there are other ways to show affection in Japanese culture that are more socially acceptable. These include bowing, using honorific language (e.g., *さん* after someone's name), giving small gifts or souvenirs and perhaps sharing food or drinks. These gestures show respect, appreciation and thoughtfulness.

When greeting people in Japanese culture, whether you are standing or sitting, bowing is a common practice. A slight bow with a nod of the head is typically used in casual situations, such as when greeting friends or colleagues. The depth and duration of the bow vary depending on the level of formality and respect being shown. A deeper and longer bow is typically used in more formal situations, such as when talking to someone you don't know very well or at a ceremony.

To learn more about bowing, you might enjoy the following informative and entertaining resource created by [Cozy Japan](#).



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=365#oembed-3>

What is the honorific suffix 'san'? How do I use it when I

meet someone?

In Japanese, it's customary not to address someone by their name alone unless there's a close relationship, like with friends or family. Instead, an honorific suffix is typically used after the person's name.

There are a few different honorific suffixes that can be added to someone's name. **さん (san)** is the most common and neutral of these suffixes, and it is used to show respect for the person being addressed. It is similar in meaning to the English 'Ms' or 'Mr', and it can be used with both family names and given names. For example, Ms Rie Kimura can be called 'Kimura-san' or, more casually, 'Rie-san'.

The word 先生 (せんせい: sensei) can be translated as 'teacher' or 'master'. It's used on its own or as an honorific suffix after someone's family name, not usually their given name. It's a title that shows respect towards an expert in a particular field, such as a teacher, professor, doctor, lawyer or author.

For example, Ms Rie Kimura, who is a high school teacher in Japan, can be called 'Kimura sensei' or just 'Sensei'. She might be called 'Rie sensei' at a kindergarten, but it is not customary to use せんせい after someone's first name.

On a final note, honorific suffixes are used to address or refer to other people, not yourself. This is a common mistake for many Japanese learners, but make sure you don't use an honorific suffix after your own name!

Exercise 3



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=365#h5p-10](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=365#h5p-10)

If you want to learn more about honorific suffixes, here is a concise summary of them created by [George Japan](#).



*One or more interactive elements
has been excluded from this
version of the text. You can view them
online here: [https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=365#oembed-4](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=365#oembed-4)*

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Cozy Japan. “What’s Japan? – Bowing (お辞儀).” YouTube video, 2:08. October 21, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZ2s8IvMwDI>.

George Japan. “How to Use Honorifics in Japan (san, chan, kun, sama).” YouTube video, 1:00. January 19, 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/9Ux7BTVy2bo>.

MINA LUNA JAPANESE. “Learn Japanese | How to Use ‘Yoroshiku onegaishimasu’ [English Sub].” YouTube video, 5:44. October 16, 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmO1VMjoJfc>.

Speak Japanese Naturally. “How to Introduce Yourself in Japanese with Pitch accent | 自己紹介（じこしょうかい）.” YouTube video, 5:18. August 9, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UsaNCx8Xzl0>.

2.4 Xは (WA) Yです (DESU)。 (X IS Y.)

In this module, you will learn the fundamental sentence pattern of 'X は (wa) Y です (desu)'.

The Japanese sentence pattern '**X は (wa) Y です (desu)**' is often used to introduce someone or something, where X is the topic of a sentence and Y is the predicate.

A simple example is:

私（わたし）**は**学生（がくせい）**です**。

*Watashi **wa** gakusei **desu**.*

I **am** a university student.

The particle は (wa)

In this sentence pattern, **は (wa)** serves as the **topic marker**, telling us what or who we're talking about. It's like saying, 'As for this person or thing, ...' before sharing more details.

Even though it's written as **は**, when used as a topic marker, you'll pronounce it 'wa'. The particle **は** comes after the noun or noun phrase it's about. This little particle sets up the context for everything else you're going to say in the sentence.

Particles are an integral component of the Japanese language as they indicate the grammatical relationships between words in a sentence. They are short sentence elements that are used after a noun or verb. You will learn more about particles throughout this textbook.

です (desu)

です functions as a polite and formal form of a copula verb or linking verb. It can be translated as 'is', 'am' or 'are' in English. In short, **です** is used to establish an equivalence between the subject of a sentence and a predicate.

Just to clarify, **a predicate** is a grammatical term used to define the part of the sentence that provides knowledge about the subject. Taking the sentence 私 (わたし) は学生 (がくせい) です。 (Watashi wa gakusei desu) as an example, 学生 (gakusei) forms the predicate.

In the Japanese language, a predicate must be either a noun or an adjective. The subject of the sentence typically precedes the predicate, and **です** comes after the predicate.

Exercise 1



An interactive HSP element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=368#h5p-16>

Introduce yourself by filling in your name in the blank in the following sample sentences and record your voice. Afterward, listen to your recording to ensure that your pronunciation is clear and easy to understand.



An interactive HSP element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=368#h5p-18>

2.5 PARTICLE を (o)

This module introduces the particle を (o), which serves as a direct object marker in Japanese sentences. This particle is essential for identifying the object that receives the action of a verb, clarifying who or what is being acted upon.

The particle を (o)

The particle を, pronounced 'o', is placed directly after a noun or a noun phrase. It serves as a 'direct object marker,' indicating the direct object in a sentence and thereby spotlighting the target or recipient of an action. In simpler terms, it clarifies upon what or whom the action is being carried out.

For example, in the phrase 本（ほん）を読（よ）みます (hon o yomimasu), the translation is 'I read

books', with を marking 本 (books) as the item being read.

本を読みます。

hon o yomimasu

I read books.

We will explore Japanese verbs like 読みます (yomimasu: to read) in [Module 6.2](#). However, for now, it's important to understand that the typical Japanese sentence order is Topic + は (wa) + Object + を (o) + Verb. This structure contrasts with English, where the typical sentence order is Subject + Verb + Object:

Japanese: Topic + は (wa) + Object + を (o) +
Verb

English: Subject + Verb + Object.

Noun + を + 願 (ねが) い しま す

The structure for making requests in Japanese often follows the pattern: Noun + を + 願います (onagai shimasu), which is very useful.

This chapter has introduced the phrase both as a standalone expression used to convey greetings, gratitude or confirmation, and as a phrase that pairs with the particle を to clearly indicate the object or action being requested.

Originating from the word 願 (ねが) い (negai), which means ‘wish’ or ‘hope’, the use of 願います represents a polite way to ask someone for a favour. It transitions from merely expressing a desire to issuing a more direct request or instruction. By stating (noun) を願います, you’re effectively saying ‘I would like ...’ or ‘please ...’.

For example, the English request ‘Please introduce yourself’ differs from the Japanese format, which would be ‘自己紹介 (じこしょうかい) を願います’ (jiko shoukai o onagai shimasu), translating to ‘Please introduce yourself’. This emphasises the action being requested:

自己紹介（じこしょうかい）をお願い（ねが）
いします。

Jiko shoukai o onegai shimasu.

Please introduce yourself.

Keep in mind that the particle を is used exclusively with nouns or noun phrases. Therefore, in sentences where actions are involved, it's more logical to use the noun form of the action.

As demonstrated above, rather than the verb phrase 'to introduce yourself', the noun 'self-introduction' is used in conjunction with the particle を, because を does not accompany verbs.

Noun + を + ください

You will learn this in [Module 4.0](#), but for the sake of comparison, let's explore another commonly used

phrase incorporating を: **(noun) をください** (...o kudasai: please give me ...).

Take a look at a simple example below:

水（みず）をください。

Mizu o kudasai

Please give me water.

The verb ください is derived from the more formal and honorific verb くださる, which translates to 'give me'. It is used to express a humble request, similar in function to くれる, which also means to give but is used in a less formal context.

ください is used when requesting something from another person or party. In English, it's akin to saying 'Please give me ...'. Thus, the verb articulates the action of the 'requester'.

So, what distinguishes ... をお願いします from ... をください?

The usage of ください is typically more direct and is often used for requests involving concrete and

tangible items. Conversely, for non-tangible requests such as understanding, explanations or other abstract concepts, **お願いします** is preferred.

For example to request a further explanation, you would say: **説明（せつめい）をお願いします** (Setsumei o onegai shimasu: I would like further explanation). This is because ‘explanation’, or **説明**, is an intangible concept.

Exercise 1



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=3075#h5p-73>

2.6 THE JAPANESE PUNCTUATION SYSTEM

When it comes to reading and writing in Japanese, understanding the punctuation is crucial. In this module, we will explore the punctuation marks that are typically used in the language.

Punctuation in Japanese is used similarly to English, even though the symbols themselves might not look like what you are used to!

Now, let's take a closer look at the punctuation marks commonly seen in Japanese text.

Full stop (。): くてん (kuten) or まる (maru)

A full stop is used to mark the end of a sentence. It comes right after the final forms, such as **です** and **ます**, in polite, formal sentences. Here is an example:

私（わたし）は学生（がくせい）です。

Watashi wa gakusei desu.

I am a university student.

Comma (、): とうてん (touten) or てん (ten)

A comma is used to indicate where you should pause in the middle of a sentence. It is often used after conjunctions, such as **でも** (demo), which means 'however'. Here is an example:

私（わたし）は学生（がくせい）です。で
も、会社（かいしゃ）のCEOです。

*Watashi wa gakusei desu. Demo, kaisha no
shii-ii-oo desu.*

I'm a university student, but I'm the CEO of a
company.

Single quotation marks (「 」): かぎカッコ (kagi kakko)

Japanese quotation marks are indicated using a combination of brackets. The opening single quotation mark is 「 (left corner bracket), and the closing single quotation mark is 」 (right corner bracket).

These quotation marks look different from English ones, but their function is similar. Here is an example:

ゆみさんは「ありがとう」と言（い）いました。

Yumiko-san wa 'arigatou' to ii mashita.

Yumiko said, 'Thank you'.

Double quotation marks (『 』): にじゅうかぎカッコ (nijuu kagi kakko)

The double quotation marks are used to set apart quotations within quotations. Here is an example:

友達（ともだち）は、「ゆみさんが『あああ！』とさげんだ」と言（い）いました。

Tomodachi wa 'Yumiko-san ga "aaa!" to sakenda' to ii mashita.

(My) friend said, 'Yumiko screamed, "AHHH!"'

They are also used to refer to the titles of cultural products, such as books, anime and movies, which are usually indicated in italics in English. Here is an example:

村上春樹（むらかみはるき）さんの『ノルウェーの森（もり）』は面白（おもしろ）いです。

Murakami Haruki-san no 'Noruwee no mori' wa omoshiroi desu.

Haruki Murakami's [book] *Norwegian Wood* is interesting.

Here are a few other key punctuation marks used in Japanese:

- **Question mark:** In Japanese, a question is typically indicated using the question marker か (ka) at the end of the sentence. This makes the use of a question mark (?) redundant most of the time, especially in formal writing. However, in casual writing, such as in manga or text messages, a question mark can be used to convey a questioning tone of voice, even though its use is not strictly necessary. This is because Japanese speakers often drop the か question marker in conversation, and conveying tone in writing can be challenging without a question mark.
- **Exclamation mark:** The exclamation mark in Japanese is !
- **Parentheses:** Parentheses in Japanese are () .
- **The ellipsis:** The ellipsis in Japanese is indicated using three dots: ...

Exercise 1



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=371#h5p-33>

2.7 REVIEW

To recap, in this chapter, you have learned various aspects of Japanese to enhance your conversations, as well as your reading and writing skills, including:



Hiragana mastery

You have now added more hiragana characters to your Japanese reading and writing toolkit, broadening your skills in areas, such as the Japanese sound and punctuation systems.



Greeting techniques

You have used simple greeting phrases to initiate engaging and friendly conversations.



Cultural insights

You have explored the nuances of the Japanese greetings, including よろしくお願（ねが）いします (yoroshiku onegai shimasu), and the accompanying body language.



Self-introduction proficiency

You have mastered essential sentence patterns to introduce yourself confidently.



Honorifics application

You have learned to use honorifics appropriately, showing respect when addressing others.

The insights you have gained in this chapter provide a solid foundation for your continued journey towards mastering Japanese.

To further consolidate your understanding of the concepts and techniques we have covered in this chapter, we have prepared a revision exercise for you. It is designed to help you practise your new skills. Have fun with it, and feel free to review any sections of the chapter to clarify any points!


Exercise 1



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[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=1707#h5p-66](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=1707#h5p-66)

Figures

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CHAPTER 3: WELCOME TO JAPANESE LEARNING COMMUNITIES (2)

3.0 WELCOME TO JAPANESE-LEARNING COMMUNITIES (2)



Figure 1: Women in Kimono Holding Cotton Candy

In this chapter, you will uncover a wealth of expressions and grammar tools that will

empower you to engage in captivating introductory conversations with fellow Japanese-language enthusiasts.

Prepare to take your connections within Japanese language-learning communities to the next level!



Learning goals

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

- Grasp the basics of Japanese word order.
- Gain confidence in using additional features of hiragana.
- Apply the sentence pattern 'X は (wa) Y です (desu)' (X is Y) in questions and answers.

- Apply the sentence pattern 'X は (wa) Y が (ga) 好 (す) き (suki) です (desu)' (X likes Y) to describe what you or someone else likes.
- Understand how the particles の (no) and も (mo) function and apply them in sentences effectively.
- Read and count numbers from 0 to 10.
- Use the counter 年生 (ねんせい) (nensei: year level) with small numbers.

Words

Japanese	Romaji	English
Nouns		
まんが	<i>manga</i>	manga
日本語（にほんご）	<i>Nihongo</i>	Japanese
クラブ（くらぶ）	<i>kurabu</i>	club
クラス（くらす）	<i>kurasu</i>	class
こちら	<i>kochira</i>	this
専攻（せんこう）	<i>senkou</i>	major
IT	<i>ai-tii</i>	IT
メディア（めでいあ）	<i>media (medbia)*</i>	media
* The spelling <i>medbia</i> in parentheses is used for inputting Japanese text with romaji		
Adjectives		
好（す）き（な）	<i>suki(na)</i>	likeable
大（だい）好き（な）	<i>daisuki(na)</i>	very like
嫌（きら）い（な）	<i>kirai(na)</i>	dislikeable
大（だい）嫌い（な）	<i>daikirai(na)</i>	very dislike
Numbers		
ゼロ（ぜろ）or 零（れい）	<i>zero or rei</i>	zero

一（いち）	<i>ichi</i>	one
二（に）	<i>ni</i>	two
三（さん）	<i>san</i>	three
四（よん, し or よ）	<i>yon, shi or yo</i>	four
五（ご）	<i>go</i>	five
六（ろく）	<i>roku</i>	six
七（なな or しち）	<i>nana or shichi</i>	seven
八（はち）	<i>hachi</i>	eight
九（きゅう or く）	<i>kyuu or ku</i>	nine
十（じゅう）	<i>juu</i>	ten

Expressions and phrases

Japanese	Romaji	English	Notes
ようこそ、...へ	<i>youkoso ... e</i>	welcome to ...	The particle へ, which means ‘to’, is pronounced <i>e</i> , not <i>be</i>
はい	<i>hai</i>	yes	Polite; It is also formal when used as ‘yes,’ while はい can have meanings other than ‘yes’ in casual settings.
いいえ	<i>iee</i>	no	Polite/ formal
そうですか	<i>sou desu ka</i>	I see/Is that so?	Polite/ formal

Key grammar points

Japanese	Romaji	English	Notes
XはYですか	X wa Y desu ka	Is X Y?	
XはYが好きです	X wa Y ga suki desu	X likes Y	
の	no	of	Possessive particle
も	mo	too, as well	Addition particle

Exercise 1

Lina invited Kevin to visit the Japanese Club held in the Manga Library at their university. Nervously, Kevin is exploring the club and getting to know other club members.



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*[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2030#h5p-63](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2030#h5p-63)*



Model dialogue

Lina invited Kevin to visit the Japanese Club held in their university's Manga Library. Nervously, Kevin is exploring the club and getting to know other club members.

Kevin: Hi ... こんにちは ...	Hi ... <i>Konnichiwa</i> ...
Lina: あ、ケビン (けびん) さん！ようこそ、日本語 (にほんご) クラブへ！	<i>A, Kebin-san! Youkoso, Nihongo Kurabu e!</i>
Kevin: Wow, すごいですね。あ、『ハイキュー (はいきゅう) ！！』。	<i>Sugoi desu ne. A, * 'Haikyuu!!' (the title of a Japanese manga series)</i>
Lina: ケビンさんは『ハイキュー ！！』が好き (す) ですか。	<i>Kebin-san wa, 'Haikyuu!!' ga suki desu ka.</i>
Kevin: 大 (だい) 好き (す) です！	<i>Daisuki desu!</i>
Lina: 私 (わたし) も好き (す) です。えーと、こちらはなおさんです。なおさん、こちらは日本語 (にほんご) のクラス (くらす) のケビンさんです。	<i>Watasbi mo suki desu. Eeto, kochira wa Nao-san desu. Nao-san, kochira wa Nihongo no kurasu no Kebin-san desu.</i>
Nao: こんにちは。はじめ (はじめ) まして。	<i>Konnichiwa. Hajime mashite.</i>
Kevin: はじめ (はじめ) まして。ケビン (ケビン) です。よろしく (よろしく) お願い (ねが) いします。	<i>Hajime mashite. Kebin desu. Yoroshiku onegai shimasu.</i>
Nao: なお (なお) です。ケビン (ケビン) さんは一年生 (いちねんせい) ですか。	<i>Nao desu. Kebin-san wa ichi nensei desu ka.</i>

Kevin: あ、はい。専攻（せんこう）はITです。	<i>A, hai. Senkou wa ai-tii desu.</i>
Nao: 私はメディア（めでいあ）です。三年生（さんねんせい）です。	<i>Watasbi wa media desu. San nensei desu.</i>
Kevin: あ、そうですか。よろしくお願いします！	<i>A, sou desu ka. Yoroshiku onegai shimasu!</i>
Nao: よろしく！	<i>Yoroshiku!</i>

English translation

Kevin: Hello ...

Lina: Ah, Kevin! Welcome to (our) Japanese Club!

Kevin: Wow, (this is) great. Oh, *Haikyu!!*

Lina: Do you like *Haikyu!!*?

Kevin: (I) love it!

Lina: I like it, too. Umm, this is Nao. Nao, this is Kevin from (my) Japanese class.

Nao: Hello, nice to meet you.

Kevin: Nice to meet you, too. I'm Kevin. Please treat me kindly.

Nao: I'm Nao. Kevin, are you a first-year student?

Kevin: Yes. My major is IT.

Nao: I'm (majoring in) Media. (I'm) a third-year student.

Kevin: Ah, right. It's nice to meet you.

Nao: Nice to meet you, too!

Exercise 2

Listen to the following audio files and repeat each Japanese phrase after. Each phrase is read twice, first at a slow pace and then at a natural pace.

Kevin: こんにちは...。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-1>

Lina: あ、ケビン (けびん) さん！ようこそ、日本語 (にほんご) クラブ (くらぶ) へ！



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-2>

Kevin: すごいですね。あっ、『ハイキューー（はいきゅう）！！』。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-3>

Lina: ケビンさんは『ハイキューー！！』が好（す）きですか。



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elements has been excluded
from this version of the text. You can
view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-4](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-4)

Kevin: 大（だい）好きです！



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view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-5](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-5)

Lina: 私（わたし）も好きです。



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view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-6](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-6)

Lina: えーと、こちらはなおさんです。
なおさん、こちらは日本語のクラス（く
らす）のケビンさんです。



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elements has been excluded
from this version of the text. You can
view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-7](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-7)

Nao: こんにちは。はじめまして。



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elements has been excluded
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view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-8](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-8)

Kevin: はじめまして。ケビンです。よろ
しくお願い（ねが）します。



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elements has been excluded
from this version of the text. You can
view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-9](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-9)

Nao: なおです。ケビンさんは一年生
（いちねんせい）ですか。



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elements has been excluded
from this version of the text. You can
view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-10](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-10)

Kevin: あ、はい。専攻（せんこう）はIT
（あいていい）です。



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elements has been excluded
from this version of the text. You can
view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-11](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-11)

Nao: 私はメディア（めでいあ）です。三
年生（さんねんせい）です。



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from this version of the text. You can
view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-12](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-12)

Kevin: あ、そうですか。よろしくお願
い
します！



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from this version of the text. You can
view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-13](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-13)

Nao: よろしく！



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2030#audio-2030-14>



Discussion points

Let's reflect on these points and share our observations and thoughts.

1. **そうですね (sou desu ne)** is what is known as **あいづち (aizuchi)**, a short

response used all the time in conversations to show you are engaged and you understand. Are you familiar with any other examples of あいづち? Feel free to share them!

2. Lina used the word **こちら (kochira)** when introducing Kevin to Nao. Are you familiar with this word? If so, can you come up with some situations where you might be able to use it?
3. Did you notice that Nao used the shortened version of **よろしくお願ひします (yoroshiku onegai shimasu)**? Do you think it was appropriate in this situation? Why or why not?

Further resources

Short responses in Japanese, known as あ

いづち (aizuchi), are frequently used to demonstrate that you are listening attentively to the speaker.

If you would like to learn more, the following resource created by [Miku Real Japanese](#) explores how あいづち is often used in both formal and informal situations.





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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2030#oembed-1>

Figures

1 “[Women in Kimono Holding Cotton Candy](#)” by [Sataoshi Hirayama](#). Pexels. Licensed under [Pexels licence](#).

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3  “[Speech Bubble Icon](#)” (untitled) by [Jeremy Good](#). Wikimedia Commons. Licensed under [CC 0](#).

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References

Miku Real Japanese. *15 Most Useful Japanese Quick Responses!* (あいづち). YouTube video, 5:53. October 20, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ai5fzxm36so>.

3.1 JAPANESE WORD ORDER

In this module, you will learn four crucial features of Japanese word order. What are they? Let's find out!

There are four crucial features of Japanese word order:

- 1. Verbs come last**
- 2. Particles**
- 3. Flexibility**
- 4. Omission**

Now, let's take a closer look at each point in more detail.

1. Verbs come last

In [Chapter 2](#), you learned the fundamental Japanese sentence pattern: 'X は Y です'. You may have noticed that, unlike English, the copula verb **です** is placed at the end of the sentence. This is a major feature of Japanese word order: **verbs come last**.

Another important sentence pattern is Topic-Object-Verb (T-O-V). While you will explore this pattern in [Module 6.1](#), it means that the topic of the sentence typically comes first, followed by the object, and then the verb. This differs from the Subject-Verb-Object (S-V-O) word order that is common in English and other European languages.

In language, **subjects** are the doers of an action, while **topics** set the context of a sentence. In Japanese, subjects are often marked by the particle **が** (ga) and can be omitted if understood from context. Topics, marked by **は** (wa), provide the conversational focus but aren't necessarily the performers of the action.

Here is an example of the T-O-V word order:

私（わたし）は日本語（にほんご）を話（は
な）します。

私 (Topic) + は + 日本語 (Object) + を + 話しま
す (ます-form of Verb 話す)。

Watashi wa Nihongo o hanashi masu.

I speak Japanese.

In this sentence, each word serves a specific function:

	Topic	Topic Particle	Object	Object Particle	Verb
Japanese	私	は	日本語	を	話しま す
Romaji	<i>Watashi</i>	<i>wa</i>	<i>Nihongo</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>hanashi masu</i>
English	I	—	Japanese	—	speak

In the sentence, 私 (watashi: I/me) serves as the topic, highlighted by the particle は (wa). This particle establishes the topic, framing the context of the sentence. Here, the sentence revolves around the action associated with 'I,' which is speaking Japanese. While the topic informs us about the context (who the sentence is about), the focus remains on the action (speaking Japanese) in relation to the topic (私).

2. Particles

Japanese particles play a significant role in determining word order in sentences. Unlike English, which has a fixed word order, Japanese relies on particles to establish the relationships between words, allowing for a more flexible word order.

Particles act as markers that indicate the grammatical function and relationship of a word within a sentence. By using different particles in different positions, Japanese speakers can modify the word order to emphasise certain elements or convey different levels of formality.

For example:

- The particle **は** (wa) marks the topic of the sentence, and it comes after the topic word.
- The particle **を** (o) is used to mark the direct object, and it follows the object of the verb.
- Other kinds of particles, like **に** (ni), **へ** (e) and **で** (de) indicate the locations of actions and method or direction. You will learn these particles in more detail in [Module 6.5](#) and [Module 6.X](#).

3. Flexibility

In Japanese, word order is notably flexible, especially in conversational settings. This flexibility lets you adjust the sentence to emphasize particular elements.

For instance, placing the object at the start of a sentence highlights its importance. Here's an example:

日本語を私は話します。

Nihongo o watashi wa hanashi masu.

The example sentence, 日本語を私は話します, positions the object 日本語 (Japanese language) at the beginning to stress that the speaker specifically speaks Japanese.

This technique allows you to spotlight different parts of the sentence depending on what you want to emphasise.

However, for those just starting out with Japanese, sticking to the standard sentence order is advisable until you're more comfortable with the nuances that rearranging the sentence structure can imply.

4. Omission

It is also important to note that Japanese allows for the omission of certain elements in sentence construction. This includes the omission of the topic

of a sentence, assuming it is understood from the context.

For example, you might have noticed in the dialogues of self-introductions that instead of repeating the topic **私は** (watashi wa) in subsequent sentences, you can omit it. The listener can easily infer from the context that you are still referring to yourself.

In informal conversations, it's common to leave out particles like **は** (wa) and **を** (o) for brevity and ease, making sentences more casual.

For instance, the sentence **私は日本語を話します** could be simplified to **私日本語話します**, removing the particles but keeping the meaning intact. This makes the speech sound more direct and casual, a style often used among close friends or in relaxed settings.

Beginners, though, might find it easier to stick to the standard structure until they're more comfortable with these nuances.

Exercise 1



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=423#h5p-34>

3.2 X は (WA) Y ですか (DESU KA)。 (IS X Y?)

Now you are familiar with the sentence pattern 'Xは (wa)Yです (desu)', you will find it easy to transform it into a question. In this module, we will expand on the sentence pattern and introduce the question sentence structure.

One of the fascinating aspects of learning Japanese is the simplicity of transforming the 'XはYです' sentence structure into a question!

By simply adding the question particle か (ka) at the end, you can easily create a question:

X は Y です。 (X is Y.)

↓

X は Y ですか。 (Is X Y?)

For example, to turn the following sentence into a question:

『ハイキュー（はいきゅう）！！』は日本（にほん）の漫画（まんが）です。

'Haikyuu!!' wa Nihon no manga desu.

Haikyuu!! is a Japanese manga (series).

You simply add か at the end and say:

『ハイキュー！！』は日本のまんが
ですか。

*‘Haikyu!!’ wa Nihon no manga desu
ka.*

Is *Haikyu!!* a Japanese manga
(series)?



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japanese/?p=570#audio-570-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=570#audio-570-1)

Keep in mind that the intonation and stress of the sentence also change when converting a statement to a question. Generally, when forming a question, **the intonation rises at the end of the sentence.**

The question particle か (ka) in Japanese serves as a question marker and often makes the use of a question mark (?) redundant. Therefore, when writing formally, it is recommended to use a full stop (。) instead of a question mark.

However, in casual writing, such as manga or text messages, Japanese speakers may use a question mark to convey a questioning tone of voice.

Exercise 1



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=570#h5p-35>

3.3 DESCRIBING LIKES AND DISLIKES

In this module, we will focus on a simple sentence pattern to express your likes and dislikes using adjectives: 好（す）き (suki) and 嫌（きら）い (kirai).

In Japanese, expressing likes and dislikes is a bit different from English. Instead of using verbs, you will use adjectives! The word for 'likeable' is 好（す）き（な） (**suki[na]**), and the word for dislikeable is 嫌（きら）い（な） (**kirai[na]**).

Here is how you can structure a sentence to say that you like something:

私（わたし）はＹが好きです。

Watashi wa Y ga suki desu.

I like Y [literally, 'For me, Y is likeable'].

To replace 'likeable' with 'dislikeable', you simply replace 好き (suki) with 嫌い (kirai). Don't use the final な at this stage.

If you want to express a stronger level of liking or disliking, you use the word 大（だい）(dai) before 好き and 嫌い to mean 'very'. So you can say 大好き (dai suki) for 'love' and 大嫌い (dai kirai) for 'strongly dislike'.

For example, if you are a lover of ramen (ラーメン [らあめん]: raamen), you can say:



Figure 1: Ramen Noodles

私はラーメンが大好きです。

Watashi wa raamen ga dai suki desu.

I love ramen
[literally, 'For me,

ramen is very likeable'].



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has been excluded from this
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japanese/?p=1539#audio-1539-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=1539#audio-1539-1)*

Now, let's explore **three important points** to remember when using this pattern at this stage.

Point 1. Use a noun in the position marked by Y

A noun or a verb can be placed in the position of Y in the sentence pattern 'XはYが好きです.'. However, to keep it simple, using a noun in the position of Y is recommended because it does not require any conjugations.

Point 2. Use the particle が after Y

Make sure you use the particle が (ga), instead of the particle は (wa), when you first state what you like and dislike with the adjectives 好き and 嫌い.

However, when contrasting two opposing ideas of liking and disliking, you can use the particle は.

For example:

私はトマト（とまと）が好きです。

Watashi wa tomato ga suki desu.

I like tomatoes
[literally, 'For me, tomatoes are likeable'].



Figure 2: Tomato Juice

でも、トマトジュース（とまとじゅうす）は嫌いです。

Demo, tomato juusu wa kirai desu.

But, I dislike tomato juice [literally, 'But tomato juice is dislikeable'].



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The word **でも** (demo) is a conjunction that links two contrasting sentences. Don't worry if you are not familiar with it yet – you will learn all about how to use it later in [Module 5.5](#)!

Point 3. Opt for softer expressions instead of using 嫌い (kirai) and 大嫌い (dai kirai)

It is worth considering that the adjectives 嫌い and 大嫌い carry a strong negative connotation.

When you want to express that you don't particularly like something, it is safer and more natural to negate 好きです and use the expression 'Yがあまり好きじゃないです' (Y ga amari suki ja nai desu), which translates to 'I don't really like Y'.

Here, the adverb あまり, meaning 'not very much', is used in a negative sentence and placed before 好きじゃないです. You can use this expression to convey your preference without sounding overly negative or strong.

We will delve deeper into the negative ending じゃ
ないです (ja nai desu) in [Module 5.2](#).

Exercise 1



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[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=1539#h5p-59](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=1539#h5p-59)

To provide a comprehensive understanding of how to use **好き** and **嫌い** in your conversations, the second section will guide you through formulating sentences and crafting appropriate responses.

Question

To ask someone whether they like something or someone, use the following sentence pattern for questions:

Yは好きですか。

Y wa suki desu ka.

Do you like Y? [Literally, 'Is Y likeable?']

As shown, you simply add the question particle **か** at the end. In this context, it is **more natural to use the particle は, instead of が, when first posing the question without any prior information about the topic.**

Also, remember that in Japanese, it's often more natural and polite to use the person's name instead of the pronoun 'you' (あなた: anata). Don't forget to add **さん** (san) after the name!

So for example, to ask if someone named Ms. Yoshida likes fish without any prior information about the topic, you would ask:

吉田（よしだ）さん、魚（さかな）は好きで
すか。

Yoshida-san, sakana wa suki desu ka.

Do you like fish, Ms. Yoshida?

Affirmative response

To answer the above question in the affirmative, you would say:

はい、好きです。

Hai, suki desu.

Yes, I do [literally, 'Yes, it's likeable'].

Negative response

To answer the above question in the negative, you would say:

いいえ、あまり好きじゃないです。

lie, amari suki janai desu.

No, I don't really like it [literally, 'No, it's not very likeable'].

Exercise 2



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=1539#h5p-61>

Figures

1 “[Ramen Noodles](#)” (untitled) by [Quang Anh Ha Nguyen](#). Pexels. Licensed under [Pexels licence](#).

2 “[Tomato Juice](#)” (untitled). Uncredited. PxHere. Licenced under [CC 0](#).

3.4 THE PARTICLES の (NO) AND も (MO)

This module will show you how to use the particles の (no) and も (mo) in a sentence.

The particle の (no) is called a '**possessive particle**'. It is used to indicate possession or to connect nouns or phrases together to show that the first modifies the second. It is similar to 'of' or 'X's' (apostrophe before the 's') in English.

For example:

- 私（わたし）の名前（なまえ）

(watashi no namae) – My name



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has been excluded from this
version of the text. You can view them
online here: [https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=451#audio-451-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=451#audio-451-1)*

- ケビン (けびん) さんの (専攻) せん
こう (Kebin-san no senkou) – Kevin's
major



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has been excluded from this
version of the text. You can view them
online here: [https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=451#audio-451-2](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=451#audio-451-2)*

- 日本語 (にほんご) のクラス (くら
す) (Nihongo no kurasu) – Japanese
class



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Exercise 1



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japanese/?p=451#h5p-21](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=451#h5p-21)

The particle も (mo) is used to indicate that something else is also true or also the case. It can be translated as 'also' or 'as well' in English. It is also called an '**addition particle**'. To use it in a sentence, simply add it after the relevant word or phrase.

For example:

Model dialogue 1

Student A: 私（わたし）は三年生（さんねんせい）です。(Watashi wa san nensei desu.) – I'm a third-year student.



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Student B: あ、私も三年生です！(A, watashi mo san nensei desu.) – Oh, I'm also a third-year student!



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Model dialogue 2

Student A: 私はまんがが好（す）きです。
(Watashi wa manga ga suki desu.) – I like
Japanese comics.



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has been excluded from this
version of the text. You can view them
online here: [https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=451#audio-451-6](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=451#audio-451-6)*

Student B: そうですか。私もまんがが好きで
す！ (Soudesuka. Watashi mo manga ga suki
desu!) – Is that right? I like Japanese comics,
too!



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has been excluded from this
version of the text. You can view them*

online here: <https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=451#audio-451-7>

In these examples, the particle も is used instead of the particle は to convey inclusion or addition. When も follows 私 in a sentence, it signifies that the speaker, too, belongs to the category or agrees with the statement mentioned earlier. That is, using も after 私 can imply that the speaker is also a third-year student or that they, too, like Japanese comics. This particle effectively communicates the idea of ‘also’ or ‘as well’ in relation to the topic.

Here’s another handy tip for making your Japanese a bit more natural: you can switch the particle が for も when you want to add something else you like to your sentence.

Remember when we learned 私はトマトが好きです (Watashi wa tomato ga suki desu – I like

tomatoes.) back in [Module 3.3](#)? If you want to say you also like tomato juice, just replace も with が like this:

トマトジュースも好きです。(Tomato juusu mo suki desu – I also like tomato juice.)

Here, there's no need to repeat 私は in the follow-up sentence since it's understood from the initial statement, 私はトマトが好きです.

Exercise 2



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3.5 NUMBERS 0 TO 10 AND YEAR LEVELS

This module will explain how to count from zero to ten in Japanese. Additionally, you will learn how to use the counter 年生 (ねんせい: nensei) to indicate year levels.

Counting from 0 to 10

Here is how to count from zero to ten in Japanese. Repeat after each sound.



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text. You can view them online here:

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[japanese/?p=590#audio-590-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=590#audio-590-1)

0	ゼロ (zero) or 零 (れい: rei)	6	六 (ろく: roku)
1	一 (いち: ichi)	7	七 (なな: nana) or (しち: shichi)
2	二 (に: ni)	8	八 (はち: hachi)
3	三 (さん: san)	9	九 (きゅう: kyuu) or (く: ku)
4	四 (よん: yon) or (し: shi)	10	十 (じゅう: juu)
5	五 (ご: go)		

Here are a few important points to keep in mind:

- **The number zero:** When counting numbers, the number zero is generally read as ゼロ (ゼロ: zero) rather than 零 (れい: rei).
- **The number four:** It can also be read as よ (yo) with certain 'counters' (words used for counting objects, people or concepts), such as

年生 (ねんせい: nensei) for year level. We will learn how to use the counter 年生 in this module.

- **The number seven:** When counting numbers, it is a personal preference to read the number seven either as 'nana' or 'shichi'.
- **The number nine:** When counting numbers, the number nine is generally read as きゅう (kyuu) instead of く (ku).

Now you can read these basic numbers as phone numbers in Japanese. However, keep in mind that instead of saying 'triple three' for the numbers 333 in a phone number, you should say 'san san san'. Similarly, 000 is 'rei rei rei' or 'zero zero zero', not 'triple zero'.

Exercise 1

Drag numbers from the left to match them with corresponding images on the right. (The

sources of the images used here are listed at the end of this module.)



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=590#h5p-36>

To test your comprehension of small numbers in Japanese, you may find the following resource (about 8 minutes long) created by [MYSensei](#) helpful. The video provides mnemonics and covers the numbers from 0 to 12. In [Chapter 5](#), we will delve into numbers greater than 10.



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=590#oembed-1>

Counter: 年生（ねんせい）

With the basic numbers, you can also describe your year level by using the counter 年生 (ねんせい: nensei). To indicate someone's year level in Japanese, simply add 年生 after the number.

Here are a few examples of how to use the counter 年生 with numbers in Japanese:

Year Level	Japanese	Romaji
1	一年生 (いちねんせい)	ichi nensei
2	二年生 (にねんせい)	ni nensei
3	三年生 (さんねんせい)	san nensei
4	四年生 (よねんせい) *	yo nensei
5	五年生 (ごねんせい)	go nensei
6	六年生 (ろくねんせい)	roku nensei
7	七年生 (ななねんせい or しちねんせい)	nana nensei or shichi nensei
8	八年生 (はちねんせい)	hachi nensei
9	九年生 (きゅうねんせい)	kyuu nensei
10	十年生 (じゅうねんせい)	juu nensei



Note that before the counter 年生, the number four is always よん (yon), not よ (yo), and the number nine is commonly きゅう (kyuu), not く (ku).

One important point to keep in mind is that the counter 年生 is specifically used to count school year

levels, such as grade levels in school or university. However, it's not applicable for other types of years, such as:

- **Calendar Years:** For instance, for the year 2024, the term 年 (nen) is used in Japanese, as in 二千二十四年 (にせんにじゅうよねん: ni-sen ni-juu yo nen).
 - **Age:** When talking about someone's age, the counter 歳 (さい: sai) or 才 (さい: sai) is used, like 十九歳 (じゅうきゅうさい: juu-kyuu sai) for 19 years old. Interestingly, while the age 20 is written as 二十歳, it is pronounced not as にじゅうさい (nijuusai) or 'にじゅっさい' (nijussai), but as はたち (hatachi). This is because turning 20 is regarded as a coming-of-age milestone in Japan.
 - **Anniversaries or Yearly Events:** In these cases, 周年 (しゅうねん: shuunen) is used. For example, 結婚七周年 (けっこんななしゅうねん: kekkon nana shuunen) for a 7th wedding (anniversary).
-

Exercise 2



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3 “[Tomatoes](#)” (untitled). Uncredited. PxHere. Licensed under [CC 0](#).

4 “[Starwars Lego](#)” (untitled). Uncredited. PxHere. Licensed under [CC 0](#).

5 “[Number Five Written on the Road](#)” (untitled). Uncredited. PxHere. Licensed under [CC 0](#).

6 “[Six Marbles](#)” (untitled). Uncredited. PxHere. Licensed under [CC 0](#).

7 “[Number Seven](#)” (untitled). Uncredited. PxHere. Licensed under [CC 0](#).


8 “[Number Eight on the Door](#)” (untitled). Uncredited. PxHere. Licensed under [CC 0](#).

9 “[Number Nine](#)” (untitled). Uncredited. PxHere. Licensed under [CC 0](#).

10 “[Ten Fingers](#)” (untitled). Uncredited. PxHere. Licensed under [CC 0](#).

11 “[Number Zero](#)” (untitled). Uncredited. PxHere. Licensed under [CC 0](#).

Figures – Counter 年生 (ねんせい)

- 1  “[Exclamation sign font awesome](#)” by Dave Gandy. [Wikimedia Commons](#). Licensed under [CC by SA 3.0](#).

References

MYsensei. “Genki L1 #1 Japanese numbers 0-12 with mnemonics (JLPT N5).” YouTube video, 8:30. July 16, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IjYPvGKHAdo>.

3.6 REVIEW

In this chapter, you have honed your skills in Japanese sentence construction, expanded your hiragana proficiency and embraced essential grammatical points and daily expressions, including:



Mastering the Japanese word order

Now, you can confidently construct sentences with the correct structure.



Hiragana proficiency

You have gained confidence in using additional hiragana characters, broadening your ability to read and write in Japanese.



Crafting sentences with 'XはYです'

You can now apply this fundamental sentence pattern to form questions and responses.



Expressing likes with 'XはYが好き(す) きます'

You can now express your preferences and ask about others' likes using this pattern.



Particle magic with 'の' and 'も'

You have learned to use these particles to enhance your sentences, adding depth and detail to your expression.



Counting numbers from 0 to 10

You have acquired the ability to count small numbers in Japanese, a fundamental skill for quantifying, discussing quantities in daily life and reading phone numbers.

**Year level with 年生 (ねんせい)**

Now that you have mastered counting skills, you are also able to discuss educational year levels in Japanese.

Each of these skills will add a new dimension to your Japanese conversations. Practise them regularly, and they will become second nature.

We have prepared a fun revision exercise to help you solidify all the wonderful skills you have picked up in this chapter. Whether you need practice or just want to test your knowledge, this exercise is for you. If anything stumps you, don't hesitate to revisit the chapter. Happy practising!


Exercise 1



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Figures

- 1  “[Tick Icon](#)” (untitled) by [Mrmw](#). Wikimedia Commons. Licensed under [CCO 1.0](#).

CHAPTER 4: BRINGING JAPAN HOME (1)

4.0 BRINGING JAPAN HOME



Figure 1: Tokyo Skytree Tower

'Bringing Japan Home' invites you on an exciting journey to explore Japanese culture and language in your own local community.

Whether it is savouring the delicious flavours of a local Japanese restaurant or immersing yourself in the vibrant atmosphere of Japanese festivals, these experiences will enrich your understanding of traditions, customs and language.

This chapter offers practical tips for engaging with the local Japanese community, including engaging in conversations with Japanese speakers and connecting with fellow language enthusiasts. By embracing these cultural opportunities, you will create a sense of 'home' and foster cross-cultural understanding, all while cultivating a deeper appreciation for Japanese language and culture.

Get ready to embark on this adventure of bringing Japan home, right in your own community!



Learning goals

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

- Understand how katakana functions in sentences.
- Write or type your name in katakana.
- Use demonstrative pronouns to refer to objects for which you do not know a specific name.
- Use the question maker 何（なん） (nan: what) in the sentence pattern 'X は Y です' to ask what an object is.
- Count small items.
- Understand the difference between the conjunction それから (sorekara: and then) and the particle と (to: and) and apply them in sentences

appropriately.

- Understand the ending particles ね (ne) and よ (yo), and how to apply them in sentences.

Words

Japanese	Romaji	English	Notes
Nouns			
カフェ (かふゑ)	<i>kafe</i>	café	The word 'café' is generally written in katakana as カフェ, as is the case for other imported concepts such as 'menu', 'crêpe', and 'dollar'. The hiragana かふゑ is only provided for reference.
メニュー (めにくう)	<i>menyuu</i>	menu	

The word ‘お茶’ can be used as a general term for tea, but it usually used to refer specifically to Japanese green tea.

お茶 (ちゃ)	<i>ocha</i>	tea
ほうじ茶	<i>houjicha</i>	hojicha (roasted green) tea
ラテ (らて)	<i>rate</i>	latte
コーヒー (こおひい)	<i>koohii</i>	coffee
ケーキ (けえき)	<i>keeki</i>	cake
プリン (ぷりん)	<i>purin</i>	crème caramel
クレープ (くれえぷ)	<i>kurepu</i>	crêpe

まっ茶

matcha

matcha

ごま

goma

sesame

あんこ

anko

sweet red bean paste

ドル (どる)

doru

dollar

おすすめ

osusume

recommendation

Demonstrative pronouns

これ

kore

this (one)

それ

sore

that (one)

あれ

are

that (one) over there

どれ

dore

which (one)

Adjectives

おいしい

oishii

delicious

あまい

amai

sweet

The word ‘あまい’ is commonly used to describe sweet-tasting food. However, it also has a figurative meaning, used to describe someone being overly indulgent or lenient towards someone else. For example, to express that ‘My dad is indulgent to my younger sister’, in Japanese, you would say ‘お父（とお）さんは妹（いもう

**Numbers (used to count
small objects)**

一 (ひと) つ	<i>hitotsu</i>	one (thing)
二 (ふた) つ	<i>futatsu</i>	two (things)
三 (み) つ	<i>mittsu</i>	three (things)
四 (よ) つ	<i>yotsu</i>	four (things)
五 (い) つ	<i>itsutsu</i>	five (things)
六 (む) つ	<i>muttsu</i>	six (things)

と) にあまいです,
(Otousan wa imouto
ni amai desu).

七 (なな) っ

nanatsu

seven (things)

八 (やっ) っ

yattsu

eight (things)

九 (ここの) っ

kokonotsu

nine (things)

十 (とお)

too

ten (things)

Expressions and phrases

Japanese	Romaji	English	Notes
日本語 (にほんご) で	<i>Nibongo de</i>	In Japanese	Please refer to the 'Key grammar points' section below for an explanation of the particle で (de).
大丈夫 (だいじょうぶ) です	<i>Daijoubu desu</i>	It's okay	
			Polite/formal

The expression ‘をどうぞ’ is used when offering something to someone or inviting them to do something. The ‘X’ in this phrase is replaced by whatever you are offering or suggesting.

Xをどうぞ

X o douzo

Please (have/take/do) X

The particle を (o) is the object marker in Japanese, used after the noun that serves as the object of a sentence. Nouns should be positioned where the ‘X’ is indicated. For more details on the particle を, please refer to

[Module 2.5.](#)

While the expression ‘をください’ is more direct and commonly used for simple requests, the expression ‘をお願いします’ is more formal and polite, suitable for a broader range of requests, including favours or actions. For more information, please visit [Module 2.5](#).

X, please

X o kudasai

Xをください

X, please

X o onegai shimasu

Xをお願い (ねが) いい
ます

Polite/formal

That's right

Sou desu

そうです

Polite/formal

All right/Certainly/I see

Wakarimashita

わかりました

Key grammar points

Japanese	Romaji	English	Notes
X は 何 (なん) です か	<i>X wa nan desu ka</i>	What is X?	Nouns should be placed in the position marked by X.
それから	<i>sorekara</i>	And then	Conjunction

で

de

by means of ...

Particle

In this chapter, we will introduce the particle で, which is used in phrases like '... で' to mean 'in X language'. For example, when you want to say 'in Japanese', you would use 日本語 (にほんご) で (Nihongo de).

と

to

and

Particle

ね

ne

..., isn't it?

Particle

♂

$\gamma\theta$

I'm telling you/you know Particle

Exercise 1

Guess which hiragana or katakana character needs to be filled in. To listen to the pronunciation of each word, click the audio icon. To check the answer, click the 'turn' button.



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Model dialogue

Lina and Nao find themselves at a local Japanese café in Australia, excited to put their Japanese language skills into practice. They know that the café has Japanese-speaking staff, so they decide to challenge themselves by ordering their food in Japanese.

Café staff: Hi, guys!	Hi guys!
Lina: あ、日本語（にほんご）で大丈夫（だいじょうぶ）です。	<i>A, Nihongo de daijoubu desu.</i>
Café staff: そうですか。じゃあ、日本語で。メニュー（めいんゆう）をどうぞ。	<i>Sou desu ka .Jaa, Nihongo de!</i>
Lina: ありがとうございます。あ、これはまっ茶（ちゃ）ケーキ（けいき）ですか。	<i>Arigatou gozaimasu. A, kore wa matcha keeki desu ka.</i>
Café staff: はい、そうです。おいしいですよ。	<i>Hai, soudesu. Oishii desu yo.</i>
Lina: じゃあ、まっ茶ケーキをお願い（ねが）します。それから、ほうじ茶ラテ（らて）もお願いします？	<i>Jaa, matcha keeki o onegai shimasu. Sorekara, boujicha rate mo onegai shimasu. Nao-san wa?</i>
Nao: ええと....	<i>Ecto...</i>

Café staff: ごまプリン（ぷりん）もおいしいですよ。	<i>Goma purin mo oishii desu yo.</i>
Lina: ごまプリン？どれですか。	<i>Goma purin? Dore desu ka.</i>
Café staff: あ、これです。九（きゅう）ドル（どる）です。	<i>A, kore desu. Kyuu doru desu.</i>
Nao: そうですか。これは何（なん）ですか。	<i>Soudesuka. Kore wa nan desu ka.</i>
Café staff: そうですね。それはあんこのクレープ（くれえぷ）です。	<i>Sore desu ka. Sore wa anko no kureepu desu.</i>
Nao: 「あんこ」は何ですか。	<i>Anko wa nan desu ka.</i>
Café staff: あんこはred bean pasteです。あまいですよ。おすすめですよ。	<i>Anko wa reddo biin pecuto desu. Amai desu yo. Osusume desu.</i>

Nao: じゃあ、あんこのクレープをお願いします。それから、私（わたし）もほうじ茶ラテをください。

Jaa, anko no kurepu o onegai shimasu. Sorekara, watashi mo houji-cha rate o kudasai.

Café staff: はい、わかりました。まっちゃケーキひとつと、あんこのクレープひとつと、ほうじ茶ラテをふたつですね。

Hai, wakari masita. Matcha keeki hitotsu to, anko no kurepu hitotsu to, houjicha rate o futatsu desu ne.

Lina and Nao: はい、そうです。ありがとうございます！

Hai, soudesu. Arigatou gozaimasu!

English translation

Café staff: Hi guys!

Lina: Oh, Japanese is fine!

Café staff: Okay, then in Japanese. Here's a menu.

Lina: Thank you. Oh, is this a matcha cake?

Café staff: Yes, that's right. It's delicious!

Lina: Well then, I'll have the matcha cake, please. And also, a hojicha latte, please. How about you, Nao-san?

Nao: Well...

Café staff: I would say sesame pudding is nice, too.

Lina: Sesame pudding? Which one is it?

Café staff: Ah, this one is. It's nine dollars.

Nao: Right. What is this one?

Café staff: That one? That's an anko crêpe.

Nao: What is 'anko'?

Café staff: It's red bean paste. It's sweet! I recommend it.

Nao: Then, I will have an anko crêpe. And also, I will have a hojicha latte, too.

Café staff: All right. One matcha cake, one anko crêpe and two hojicha lattes, is that right?

Lina and Nao: Yes, that's right. Thank you!

Exercise 2

Listen to the following audio files and repeat each Japanese phrase after. Each phrase is read twice, first at a slow pace and then at a natural pace.

Lina: あ、日本語（にほんご）で大丈夫（だいじょうぶ）です。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-1>

Café staff: そうですか。じゃあ、日本語で。メニュー（めにゅう）をどうぞ。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-2>

Lina: ありがとうございます。あ、これはまっ茶（ちゃ）ケーキ（けえき）ですか。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-3>

Café staff: はい、そうです。おいしいですよ。



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[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-4](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-4)

Lina: じゃあ、まっ茶ケーキをお願い（ねが）いします。それから、ほうじ茶ラテ（らて）もお願いします。なおさんは？



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[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-5](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-5)

Nao: ええと....。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-6>

Café staff: ごまプリン（ぷりん）もおいしいですよ。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-7>

Lina: ごまプリン？どれですか。



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[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-8](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-8)

Café staff: あ、これです。9(きゅう)ドル(どる)です。



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[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-9](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-9)

Nao: そうですか。これは何(なん)ですか。



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from this version of the text. You can
view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-10](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-10)

Café staff: そうですね。それはあんこの
クレープ（くれえぷ）です。



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elements has been excluded
from this version of the text. You can
view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-11](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-11)

Nao: 「あんこ」は何ですか。



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view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-12](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-12)

Café staff: あんこはred bean pasteで
す。あまいですよ。おすすめです。



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elements has been excluded
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view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-13](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-13)

Nao: じゃあ、あんこのクレープをお願い
します。それから、わたしもほうじ茶
ラテをください。



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view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-14](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-14)

Café staff: はい、わかりました。まっ茶
ケーキひとつと、あんこのクレープひと
つと、ほうじ茶ラテをふたつですね。



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japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-15](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-15)

Lina and Nao: はい、そうです。ありが
とうございます！



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2036#audio-2036-16>



Discussion points

Let's reflect on these points and share our observations and thoughts!

1. Have you ever tried to communicate with someone at a shop in another language?

Do you recall your first experience? What was it like?

2. Imagine you are working at a local café in your hometown, and someone from outside the area attempts to place an order in the local language, but their fluency is limited. How would you feel about it?

Further resources

If you haven't been to Japan yet and would like to know how ordering works at a restaurant, this resource created by [Cakes with Faces](#) will walk you through with some useful tips and expressions.

By the way, the producer of this video highlights an intriguing cultural aspect that may resonate with practices around the world. In Japan, pointing at people




with one finger is viewed as impolite, much like in many other cultures. Instead, using the whole hand to point at objects or things is considered polite and professional in Japan.



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Figures

- 1 “[Tokyo Skytree Tower](#)” (Low angle shot of the Tokyo Skytree) by [Evgeny Tchebotarev](#). Pexels. Licensed under [Pexels licence](#).

- 2  “[Goal Icon](#)” (untitled) by [faisalovers](#). Wikimedia Commons. Licensed under [CC by 3.0](#).
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- 4  “[Lightbulb Icon](#)” (untitled) by [Maxim Kulikov](#). Wikimedia Commons. Licensed under [CC by 3.0](#).

References

Cakes with Faces. “Ordering Food at Restaurants in Japan—JAPLANNING.” YouTube video, 11.03. September 20, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E33w7KgWVPw>.

4.1 INTRODUCTION TO KATAKANA

Welcome to the next phase of your Japanese language journey! As you continue your journey to master hiragana, we are excited to introduce you to another unique script: カタカナ (katakana)

What is katakana?

Like hiragana, katakana consists of 46 basic characters that represent distinct sounds in Japanese:

ア (a)	カ (ka)	サ (sa)	タ (ta)	ナ (na)	ハ (ha)	マ (ma)	ヤ (ya)	ラ (ra)	ワ (wa)
イ (i)	キ (ki)	シ (shi)	チ (chi /ti)	ニ (ni)	ヒ (hi)	ミ (mi)		リ (ri)	
ウ (u)	ク (ku)	ス (su)	ツ (tsu)	ヌ (nu)	フ (fu /hu)	ム (mu)	ユ (yu)	ル (ru)	ヲ (o)
エ (e)	ケ (ke)	セ (se)	テ (te)	ネ (ne)	ヘ (he)	メ (me)		レ (re)	
オ (o)	コ (ko)	ソ (so)	ト (to)	ノ (no)	ホ (ho)	モ (mo)	ヨ (yo)	ロ (ro)	ン (n)



Please note that in this textbook, チ and フ are represented as *chi* and *fu*, respectively, following the Hepburn system of romanisation. However, in some romanisation systems, they might be represented as *ti* and *hu*, respectively.

In this book, you will encounter katakana words along the way, and we will provide the corresponding hiragana readings to support your learning.

Let's start by understanding what katakana is and how it functions within Japanese sentences.

When to use katakana

Katakana is primarily used to transcribe loanwords, that is, words from other languages except for Chinese, into Japanese. It is also used for onomatopoeic words, scientific and technical terms, and certain personal and place names. A practical example of katakana usage is seen on street signboards:







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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=603#h5p-24>

Figure 1: People walking on road

What katakana looks like

In terms of appearance, **katakana** characters have sharper corners and a more angular shape compared to hiragana characters:

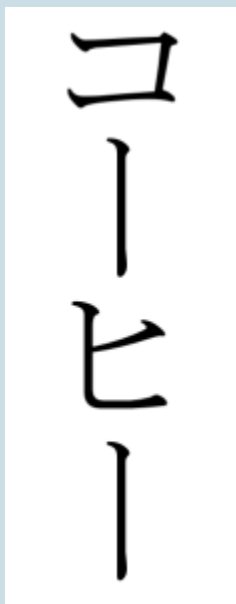
Romaji	Katakana	Hiragana
<i>fu</i>		
o		

Long vowel sounds in katakana

Another notable difference between hiragana and katakana is its method of transcribing long vowels. In katakana, the symbol ‘ー’ is used to indicate long vowels. For example:

The word ‘coffee’ is written in katakana as ‘コーヒー’ (koohii), rather than in hiragana (こおひい), as it is a loanword.

When writing or typing katakana words with long vowels, the symbol ‘ー’ should be presented vertically like this:



Similarities between katakana and hiragana

Even though katakana is different from hiragana, there is some good news.

First of all, similar to hiragana, katakana has

additional characters that represent double consonants and contracted sounds, as well as characters with diacritical marks. So, in terms of functionality, katakana works in the same way as hiragana. Here are a few examples:

	Romaji	Hiragana	Katakana
Diacritical Marks	<i>ba • pa</i>	ば • ぱ	バ • パ
Contracted Sounds	<i>kya</i>	きゃ	キャ
Double Consonants	<i>matchi</i>	まっち	マッチ

Second, some katakana characters look similar to their hiragana counterparts, but with sharper lines. Here are a few examples:

Romaji	Hiragana	Katakana
<i>be</i>	へ	ヘ
<i>ri</i>	り	リ
<i>ka</i>	か	カ
<i>ni</i>	に	ニ

Basic katakana practice

Although our main emphasis in this book is on mastering hiragana, it is important to be aware of katakana words used in sentences. To help you practise recognising katakana characters, try the exercise below using the katakana chart provided:

ア (a)	カ (ka)	サ (sa)	タ (ta)	ナ (na)	ハ (ha)	マ (ma)	ヤ (ya)	ラ (ra)	ワ (wa)
イ (i)	キ (ki)	シ (shi)	チ (chi /ti)	ニ (ni)	ヒ (hi)	ミ (mi)		リ (ri)	
ウ (u)	ク (ku)	ス (su)	ツ (tsu)	ヌ (nu)	フ (fu /hu)	ム (mu)	ユ (yu)	ル (ru)	ヲ (o)
エ (e)	ケ (ke)	セ (se)	テ (te)	ネ (ne)	ヘ (he)	メ (me)		レ (re)	
オ (o)	コ (ko)	ソ (so)	ト (to)	ノ (no)	ホ (ho)	モ (mo)	ヨ (yo)	ロ (ro)	ン (n)

Here is a downloadable PDF chart for practising basic katakana:

[Basic Katakana Chart Japanese Introductory 1 \(PDF 60.2 KB\)](#)

Exercise 1

Can you match the corresponding hiragana and katakana characters that share the same syllables? Click on the panel and identify the equivalent hiragana or katakana character.

NOTE: Only the katakana panels provide audio as a hint.



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=603#h5p-23>

Writing and typing your name in katakana

If your name is not of Japanese origin, you will be expected to transcribe it in katakana, rather than hiragana or kanji, particularly in official documents. Here are some tips for writing and typing your name in katakana:

Tip 1. Check the pronunciation

Before writing a non-Japanese name in katakana, make sure you know the correct pronunciation of the name. Katakana is a phonetic script, so it is important to accurately transcribe the sounds of the name.

Tip 2. Double check the spelling

Make sure you have spelled your name in hiragana correctly before writing it in katakana. Katakana does not have separate characters for the letters 'r' or 'v', so you may need to substitute them with other characters that sound similar, such as 'l' or 'b', respectively.

So, for example, the English name 'Kevin' is transcribed in Japanese as ケビン (Kebin) instead of ケヴィン (Kevin). This is due to the absence of a native 'v' sound in Japanese. The language typically substitutes the 'v' with the closest equivalent, the 'b' sound, to fit its phonetic system. Such adaptations of foreign sounds to match the available sounds in Japanese are common.

Tip 3. Practise writing and typing

Writing and typing in katakana takes

practice, so take some time to practise writing and typing non-Japanese names.

If you are struggling to convert your name into katakana, don't worry! There are online tools available to help you out. But keep in mind that not all of these tools are 100% accurate, so it might be a good idea to ask a Japanese speaker for some extra help if you can.

Online Japanese name converters


- Clegg, Simon. "Japanese Name Converter." Developed by Nolan Lawson. Accessed August 13, 2023. <https://japanga.com/name-converter>.
- John, Mitch. "Translate Your Name into Japanese Katakana." Last updated January 29, 2023. Accessed

August 13, 2023.

<https://yourkatakana.com/>.

Figures

1 “[People Walking on Road](#)” (untitled) by [Aleksandar Pasaric](#). Pexels. Licensed under [Pexels licence](#).

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4.2 DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS: これ (KORE), それ (SORE), あれ (ARE) AND どれ (DORE)

Demonstrative pronouns are useful because they enable you to effortlessly refer to and discuss different objects or things, even if you are unaware of their names. Let's delve deeper into these pronouns, with a particular focus on これ (kore), それ (sore), あれ (are) and どれ (dore).

What are demonstrative pronouns?

When encountering an object whose name you don't know, you can use the demonstrative

pronouns **これ (kore: this), それ (sore: it), あれ (are: that one over there) and どれ (dore: which)**. Please use these demonstrative pronouns to indicate objects only, as it can come across as impolite if used to refer to people!

Now, let's watch a video created by [Shiro Neko Japanese](#), which explains the first three demonstrative pronouns – これ, それ and あれ – in a Japanese restaurant setting and how they can be incorporated into sentences.

You can watch the first part of the video, which ends at around 3:20. If you are interested in the usage of demonstrative nouns in sentences, the second part of the video includes a quick reading exercise for additional practice.



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Here is a summary of the demonstrative pronouns:

- **これ** is used to refer to something that is close to the speaker.
- **それ** is used to refer to something that is close to the listener.
- **あれ** is used to refer to something that is far away from both the speaker and the listener.

All the demonstrative pronouns are types of nouns. So, you can use them in the position of X in the following sentence patterns we have learned:

	これ	それ	あれ
XはYです。	これはYです。	それはYです。	あれはYです。
	This is Y.	That is Y.	That [thing] over there is Y.
XはYですか。	これはYですか。	それはYですか。	あれはYですか。
	Is this Y?	Is that Y?	Is that [thing] over there Y?

Finally, we have a demonstrative pronoun that is used in questions: **‘どれ’ (dore)**. It is used to ask which one out of a group of things.

どれ is not only a demonstrative pronoun but also a question word that means ‘which’ or ‘which one’. For example, you can use it in the following sentence pattern to ask about a specific item or choice:

Xはどれですか。

X wa dore desuka.

Which (one) is X?

For example, if there are multiple remote controls – リモート・コントロール (りもおと・こんとろおる) or リモコン (りもこん) for short – and you want to know which one is the remote control for the TV, you could ask:

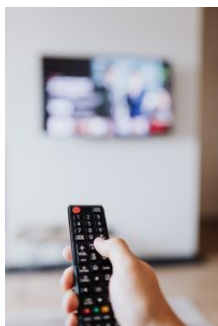


Figure 1: TV Remote Control

テレビ（てれ
び）のリモコン
はどれですか。

*Terebi no
rimokon wa
dore desu ka.*

Which one is the
TV remote
control?



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Exercise 1

Try to say each sentence in Japanese. You can listen to the example sentence in Japanese by clicking the audio icon on the card.



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Figures

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Figures – Exercise

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- 2 “[A Slice of Cake with Raspberry Topping](#)” (untitled) by [Olena Bohovyk](#). Pexels. Licensed under [Pexels licence](#).
- 3 “[Creme Caramel Dessert](#)” (untitled) by [Max Griss](#). Pexels. Licensed under [Pexels licence](#).
- 4 “[A Wooden Coffee Stall](#)” (untitled) by [Eva Bronzini](#). Pexels. Licensed under [Pexels licence](#).
- 5 “[Hot Water Pouring on a Coffee Maker](#)” (untitled) by [Cup of Couple](#). Pexels. Licensed under [Pexels licence](#).

References

Shiro Neko Japanese. “Japanese [#2-1] [GENKI L2] – これ(kore)、それ(sore)、あれ(are) – This and That – What is This? YouTube video, 10:36. November 22, 2020. <https://youtu.be/mYbkjVYyWpg?si=m1ofDXOoAitPbbdz>.

4.3 Xは (WA) なん (NAN) ですか (DESU KA)。(WHAT IS X?)

This module will introduce the simple yet powerful question: Xはなんですか (X wa nan desu ka).

Here is another useful sentence pattern to add to your toolkit:

Xは何 (なん) ですか。

X wa nan desu ka.

What is X?

The word **何** (なん: nan) functions as the question

word, indicating 'what'. By substituting 'X' with a specific noun or topic, this sentence pattern enables you to ask about unfamiliar objects or concepts.

Here is an example of how to use this sentence pattern in a conversation:



Figure 1: Dorayaki

If you are unfamiliar with the word あんこ (anko), you can substitute X with 何 and ask:

あんこは何ですか。

Anko wa **nan** desu ka.

What is anko?



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japanese/?p=608#audio-608-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=608#audio-608-1)

Anko is X.

あんこ	は	X	です。
Anko	wa	X	desu.

What is anko?

あんこ	は	何	ですか。
Anko	wa	nan	desu ka

Another useful way to utilise this sentence pattern is to ask about how to say something in Japanese. Give the following pattern a try:

Xは日本語（にほんご）で何ですか。

*X wa **Nihongo de** nan desu ka.*

What is X **in Japanese**?

For example, if you want to ask how to say ‘English’ in Japanese, you can ask:



Figure 2: Wondering Person

「English」 は日本語で何ですか。

'English' wa Nihongo de nan desu ka.

What is 'English' in Japanese?



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Exercise 1



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Figures

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2 “[Wondering Person](#)” (untitled) by [Pavel Danilyuk](#). Pexels.
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4.4 HOW TO COUNT SMALL ITEMS

In this module, you will learn the essential technique of counting small objects in Japanese using the versatile counter つ (tsu).

When counting objects in Japanese, **specific counters are applied based on the type of object being counted**, unlike English which uses general numbers like 'one', 'two' and 'three'. We have already explored the counter for school year levels in [Module 3.5](#), which brings accuracy to counting.

In this module, we're focusing on the counter つ (tsu), versatile for counting small objects, abstract ideas, ordinal numbers and even young children's ages, among other things!

Here is a summary of how to count up to 10 small items using the counter つ:

1	一 (ひと) つ (hitotsu)	6	六 (むっ) つ (muttsu)
2	二 (ふた) つ (futatsu)	7	七 (なな) つ (nanatsu)
3	三 (みっ) つ (mittsu)	8	八 (やっ) つ (yattsu)
4	四 (よっ) つ (yottsui)	9	九 (ここの) つ (kokonotsu)
5	五 (いつ) つ (itsutsu)	10	十 (とお) (too)



Please note that the number 10 in Japanese has a special term, 十 (とお: too), and thus does not use the つ counter.

Now, let's learn how to use the counter to count small items up to 10 while enjoying this song created by [Myu Papa](#).



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japanese/?p=620#oembed-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=620#oembed-1)*

Here's an interesting detail – when counting small items beyond 10 in Japanese, the つ counter is not used. Instead, you switch to the こ (ko) counter. While つ is great for general counting up to 10, こ is versatile and can count items from one to 10 and beyond. For example:

- For one to 10 items, you can use either:
 - One item: 一つ (hitotsu) or 一 (いっ) こ (ikko)
 - Two items: 二つ (futatsu) or 二 (に) こ (niko)

- For items above 10, you exclusively use 'ko':
 - 11 items: 十一（じゅういっ）こ (juu ikko)
 - 12 items: 十二（じゅうに）こ (juu ni ko)
 - 13 items: 十三（じゅうさん）こ (juu san ko)

And this pattern continues for higher numbers.

We will cover the numbers 11 to 100 in [Module 5.3](#).


Exercise 1



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Figures

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11 “[Ten Fingers](#)” (untitled). Uncredited. PxHere. Licensed under [CC 0](#).

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4.5 THE PARTICLE と (TO) AND CONJUNCTION それから (SOREKARA)

This module will explain the usage of the particle と (to) and the conjunction それから (sorekara). Although both can be translated as 'and' in English, there is a functional difference between them.

To cut to the chase, **the particle と (to)** is used to connect nouns or noun phrases together, indicating a combination, addition or listing of items. In contrast, **the conjunction それから (sorekara)** is used to connect sentences or ideas in a sequential manner, indicating a progression or continuation of thoughts.

Now, let's take a closer look at the differences between these two language elements.

The particle と (to)

と is one of the most commonly used particles in Japanese, and it has several different functions. One key function is **to indicate a complete list of multiple items.**

For example, to order one coffee, one orange juice and two pancakes, you would say:



Figure 1: Pancake

コーヒー(こおひ
い)ひとつと、オレ
ンジジュース(おれ
んじじゅうす)ひと
つと、パンケーキ

(ばんけえき)ふたつをお願い (ねが) いします。

*Koohii hitotsu to, orenji juusu hitotsu to,
pankeeki futatsu o onegai shimasu.*

One coffee, one orange juice and two
pancakes, please.



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has been excluded from this
version of the text. You can view them
online here: [https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=624#audio-624-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=624#audio-624-1)

Here are the formulas for using the particle と with
multiple items:

× と Yをお願いします。

*X **to** Y o onegai shimasu.*

X **and** Y, please.

X と Y と Z をお願いします。

*X **to** Y **to** Z o onegai shimasu.*

X, Y **and** Z, please.

Here, the particle と is used to connect the items being ordered. It is important to note that **this particle can only be used to connect nouns**. In other words, it cannot be used to connect words that are not nouns, such as adjectives and verbs. It cannot not be used to connect clauses, phrases or sentences either.

The conjunction それから (sorekara)

The conjunction それから is used **to indicate a**

sequence of events or ideas. It is commonly translated as ‘and then’ or ‘in addition’ in English.

It is important to note that, unlike **the particle と**,
それから **does not directly connect nouns.**

Instead, it connects entire sentences or clauses,
indicating a continuation or progression in the
narrative. For example:

ラテ(らて)をください。
それから、パン
ケーキ(ぱんけえ
き)をお願いします。
す。



Figure 2: Latte

Rate o kudasai. Sorekara, pankeeki mo onegai shimasu.

Please give me a latte. And then, I will have a
pancake, too.

—



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version of the text. You can view them
online here: [https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=624#audio-624-2](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=624#audio-624-2)

Here is the formula for using the conjunction それから with multiple items:

それから、 X もお願いします。

Sorekara, X mo onegai shimasu.

And then, X as well, please.

In Japanese writing, it's common to use a comma

(、) after conjunctions like ‘それから’ (sorekara: and then). This punctuation helps to break the sentence into manageable segments, improving clarity and readability.

The phrase Xもお願いします is typically used when you’re asking for something additional, after an initial request has been made. To indicate that you want something ‘too’ or ‘as well’, replace the particle を in the standard expression Xをお願いします with the particle も. This changes the meaning to ‘X as well, please’. For a detailed explanation of the particle も, refer to [Module 3.4](#).

In conversational Japanese, particles are sometimes omitted for brevity and simplicity. Therefore, instead of saying Xをお願いします, you can simply say Xお願いします to make a request.

Exercise 1



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Figures

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2 “[Latte](#)” (untitled). Uncredited. PxHere. Licensed under [CC 0](#).

4.6 THE SENTENCE-ENDING PARTICLES ね (NE) AND よ (YO)

In this module, we will explore the nuances of the Japanese particles ね (ne) and よ (yo), adding a touch of friendliness or assertiveness to your conversations.

The particles **ね (ne)** and **よ (yo)** are commonly used at the end of a sentence to convey certain nuances in conversations.

While both are used as sentence-ending particles in Japanese, they serve different purposes:

- ね seeks agreement or confirmation and adds a friendly tone to the conversation.
- よ is used to highlight new information being conveyed by the speaker.

Now, let's take a closer look at how these sentence-ending particles are used in sentences via this short video created by [Learn Japanese with Puni Puni Japan](#).



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has been excluded from this
version of the text. You can view them*

online here: <https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=802#oembed-1>

So to recap, ね is used to seek agreement or confirmation, or to invite the listener's attention. It is often used to soften a statement or to make it sound more friendly and inclusive. Here are a few examples:

きょうはいい天気（てんき）ですね。

Kyou wa ii tenki desu ne.

It's a nice day today, **isn't it?**



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きょうは暑（あつ）いですね。

Kyou wa atsui desu **ne**.

It's hot today, **isn't it?**



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japanese/?p=802#audio-802-2](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=802#audio-802-2)*

In contrast, よ is used to emphasise or assert information, or to provide new information. It adds a

sense of confidence and assertiveness to a statement.

When pronounced with emphasis, it can give a strong command or suggestion, depending on the intonation, like an exclamation mark. So, using a soft intonation with a slight smile is the key to maintaining a friendly and approachable tone. Here are a few examples:

日本（にほん）の首都（しゅと）は東京（とうきょう）ですよ。

*Nihon no shuto wa Toukyou desu **yo**.*

The capital of Japan is Tokyo, **you know**.



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明日（あした）はテストですよ。

*Ashita wa tesuto desu **yo**.*

We have a test tomorrow, **you know**.



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Exercise 1



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Figures – Exercise

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- 4 “[Walking a Dog](#)” (untitled) by [Chilmars](#). Pexels. Licensed under [Pexels licence](#).

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Learn Japanese with Puni Puni Japan. “Japanese Grammar—Japanese Particles yo (よ) and ne (ね).”

YouTube video, 2:33. January 10, 2013.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mxLBNw0AILI>.

4.7 REVIEW

In this chapter, you have delved into katakana and honed your Japanese conversational skills, equipping you for practical interactions in Japanese shops and beyond. Here is a summary of the knowledge and techniques you have acquired:



Katakana understanding

You have delved into the workings of the katakana script, enhancing your grasp of its function in sentences.



Personal identification

You have learned to write or type your name in katakana, personalising your Japanese writing experience.



Demonstrative pronouns

You have acquired the ability to use demonstrative pronouns for objects, adding versatility to your conversation.



Asking 'what' questions

You have mastered the usage of 何（なん）(nan: what) in the pattern 'XはYですか', allowing you to inquire about unfamiliar objects.



Counting mastery

You have developed the ability to count small items, a practical skill for daily situations.



Conjunctions and particles

You have understood the distinct roles of **それから** (sorekara: and then) and **と** (to: and), and applied them appropriately in sentences, enriching your knowledge of connective expressions.



Sentence-ending particles

You have grasped the nuances of the sentence-ending particles **ね** (ne) and **よ** (yo), and learned how to apply them, adding subtlety and emphasis to your speech.

These skills serve as crucial stepping stones for further growth in your Japanese language journey. Keep up the fantastic work!

Here's a revision exercise to solidify your grasp of this chapter's concepts. Use it to reinforce your learning and practise your skills. Enjoy, and revisit any section if you need more clarity.

Exercise 1




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japanese/?p=1717#h5p-68](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=1717#h5p-68)

カタカナ

For practising katakana, you may find this [activity by Steven Kraft](#) helpful.

Figures

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Kraft, Steven. “Hiragana / Katakana.” Accessed December 11, 2023. <https://steven-kraft.com/projects/japanese/kana/>.

CHAPTER 5: BRINGING JAPAN HOME (2)

5.0 BRINGING JAPAN HOME (2)



Figure 1: Colorful Papers Hanging on the Tree Branch



Learning goals

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

- Gain a clear understanding of the distinction between formal and informal speech, and confidently utilise formal speech when appropriate.
- Transform ‘XはYです’ into negative forms and using them appropriately in conversations.
- Read and count numbers from 11 to 100.
- Appropriately use the term 出身 (しゅっしん: shusshin) to describe your own or other people’s place of origin.
- Apply the conjunction でも (demo: however) in sentences effectively.

Words

Japanese	Romaji
(お) 会計 (かいけい)	(o)kaikei
(お) つり	otsuri
お母 (かあ) さん	okaasan
お父 (とう) さん	otousan
すごい	sugoi
出身 (しゅっしん)	shussbin

Expressions and phrases

Japanese	Romaji
Xでお願い（ねが）いします	<i>X de onegai shimasu</i>
ごちそうさま	<i>gochisou sama</i>
ごちそうさまでした	<i>gochisou sama deshita</i>
*ありがとうございました	<i>arigatou gozaimashita</i>
ところで	<i>tokorode</i>
へえ	<i>hee</i>
ほら	<i>bora</i>
でも	<i>demo</i>
*ぜんぜん	<i>zenzen</i>

* For more detailed information on how to use the phrases, please refer to the 'Further Resources' section at the end of the page.

Key grammar points

Japanese

Romaji

XはYじゃないです

X wa Y janai desu

Exercise 1

Guess which hiragana character needs to be filled in. To check the answer, click the 'turn' button. You can also listen to the sound of each word by clicking the audio icon.





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Model dialogue

Lina and Nao have enjoyed the food at a local Japanese café near their university in Australia. As they come to the end of their meal and settle the bill, their connection deepens, and they continue to learn more about each other.



Lina and Nao: ごちそうさま！

Nao: すみません。お会計（かいけい）お願い（ねが）いします。

Café staff: はい。ありがとうございます。二十六（にじゅうろく）ドル（どる）です。

Nao: じゃあ、三十（さんじゅう）ドルをお願いします。

Café staff: はい。四（よん）ドルのおつりです。ありがとうございます。

Lina and Nao: ごちそうさまでした！

Lina: なおさんの日本語（にほんご）はすごいですね。ところで、なおさんの出身（しゅっしん）は日本ですか。

Nao: 私（わたし）の出身はオーストラリア（おーすとらりあ）。でも、私のお母（かあ）さんの出身は日本。それから、お父（とう）さんの出身はオーストラリア。リナ（りな）さんは？出身はオーストラリア？

Lina: いいえ、オーストラリアじゃないです。中国（ちゅうごく）です。

Nao: へえ、じゃあ、リナさんの日本語と英語（えいご）もすごいね！

Lina: ありがとう。でも、ぜんぜん ...。

Nao: ほら、すごい！

Lina: ハハハ（ははは） ...。

English translation

Lina and Nao: Thanks for the nice meal!

Nao: Excuse me. Can we have the check, please?

Café staff: Yes, thank you. It's 26 dollars.

Nao: Then, here's 30 dollars.

Café staff: Okay, here's (your) change of 4 dollars. Thank you very much.

Lina and Nao: Thank you for the great food!

Lina: Nao, your Japanese is great. By the way, are you from Japan?

Nao: I'm from Australia. But my mum is from Japan. And then my dad is from Au

Lina: No, (I'm) not from Australia. I'm from China.

Nao: I see. Then, your Japanese and English are great, too!

Lina: Thanks, but not at all ...

Nao: See, that's great!

Lina: Haha ...

Exercise 2

Listen to the following audio files and repeat each Japanese phrase after the recording. Each phrase is read twice, first at a slow pace and then at a natural pace.

Lina and Nao: ごちそうさま！



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2042#audio-2042-1>

Nao: すみません。お会計（かいけい）
お願い（ねが）いたします。



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elements has been excluded
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japanese/?p=2042#audio-2042-2](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2042#audio-2042-2)

Café staff: はい。ありがとうございます。
す。二十六（にじゅうろく）ドル（ど
る）です。



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[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2042#audio-2042-3](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2042#audio-2042-3)

Nao: じゃあ、ぜんぶで三十（さんじゅ
う）ドルをお願いします。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2042#audio-2042-4>

Café staff: はい。四（よん）ドルのおつりです。ありがとうございました。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2042#audio-2042-5>

Lina and Nao: ごちそうさまでした！



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japanese/?p=2042#audio-2042-6](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2042#audio-2042-6)

Lina: なおさんの日本語（にほんご）は
すごいですね。ところで、なおさんの出
身（しゅっしん）は日本ですか。



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elements has been excluded
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japanese/?p=2042#audio-2042-7](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2042#audio-2042-7)

Nao: 私の出身はオーストラリア（おー
すとりあ）。でも、私のお母さんの出

身は日本。お父さんの出身はオーストラリア。リナさんは？出身はオーストラリア？



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2042#audio-2042-8>

Lina: いいえ、オーストラリアじゃないです。中国（ちゅうごく）です。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2042#audio-2042-9>

Nao: へえ、じゃあ、リナさんの日本語と英語（えいご）もすごいね！



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2042#audio-2042-10>

Lina: ありがとう。でも、ぜんぜん...



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Nao: ほら、すごい！



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2042#audio-2042-12>

Lina: * ハハハ（ははは）...。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2042#audio-2042-13>

* The onomatopoeic phrase ハハハ (hahaha) is used to represent laughter in written form, but it may not reflect the actual sound of a person's laugh!



Discussion points

Let's take a moment to reflect on these points and share our observations and thoughts!

1. While the phrase **ごちそうさま (gochisou sama)** or **ごちそうさまでした (gochisou sama deshita)** is used to express gratitude after finishing a meal in Japanese, do you happen to know the Japanese phrase used when starting a meal? Also, can you think of any phrases used before and after a meal in your own culture?
2. During the conversation between Nao and Lina, did you notice that Nao tends to use more casual and shorter sentences? Take some time to list down those sentences and consider the reasons behind their usage.
3. While Nao tends to use a more casual speech style, you may have noticed that Lina maintains her politeness by using **で**

す (desu). Why do you think Lina maintains a formal, polite speech style?

4. In Japanese-speaking contexts, some might use the term ハーフ (haafu), from the English word ‘half’, to describe someone like Nao, whose birth parents are of different national or ethnic backgrounds. While ハーフ may appear straightforward, it is deeply embedded in debates surrounding identity, culture and the changing dynamics of Japanese society. Watch the documentary (about 17 minutes long) created by [Shugo Kawok](#) below and explore the societal and cultural implications of the term, as well as its contentious nature.
5. Nao said ほら、すごい！ and praised Lina’s Japanese skills after Lina responded to Nao’s compliment with the phrase でも、ぜんぜん. What factors do you think prompted Nao to reiterate her praise? Which aspects of Lina’s response contributed to this?

'A DIVE INTO HAFU' – The Hafu Phenomenon In Japan (Full Documentary)



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japanese/?p=2042#oembed-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2042#oembed-1)*

Further resources

The following resource created by [Shiro](#)

[Neko Japanese](#) will explain when to use **ありがとうございます** (arigatou gozaimasu) and **ありがとうございました** (arigatou gozaimashita).



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In Japanese communication, **humility** is valued. People downplay their abilities and achievements, using phrases like **ぜんぜんそんなことないです** (zenzen sonnakoto naidesu: literally, 'it's not like that at all'),

or simply **ぜんぜん** (zenzen: not at all), to express modesty. It is a way of showing humility and respect, avoiding arrogance. This cultural value fosters harmonious relationships in Japanese society.

For more examples and a deeper understanding, you may find the following resource created by [Aki from Japan](#) helpful.





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Figures

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5.1 FORMAL AND INFORMAL SPEECH STYLES

This module will provide you with an overview of the distinction between formal and informal speech styles in Japanese. Join us to discover the subtle nuances that shape communication in the language!

When it comes to speaking Japanese, there are two main speech styles: **formal and informal**.

These styles, shaped by social dynamics and relationships, hold the key to successful communication in Japanese.

For the young adult and adult beginners embarking on their language learning journey, focusing on mastering formal speech style is a wise choice. It unlocks the gates to professional settings, where

respect and politeness are particularly important.

What are the key differences?

In formal speech – when talking to a stranger or someone who is older or in a senior position – it is important to show respect by using polite forms. This includes the polite form **です** (desu) at the end of sentences, which we have emphasised so far.

* Please note that the polite form **ます** (masu) is also essential in formal speech. However, we will continue to focus on the polite form **です** for now. More information about the polite form **ます** will be covered in [Module 6.1](#).

Conversely, **in informal speech** – when talking to a close friend or family member – you can be more relaxed and casual. You can use shorter sentences without the polite form **です** and even leave out certain particles.

The resource from [Learn Japanese with Dokidokicomics](#) presents both formal and informal versions of various phrases. While it's not necessary to watch the entire video or grasp all the content, as it may include unfamiliar words, phrases and grammar, the aim is to give you an overview of the differences between formal and informal speech styles.



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online here: [https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=853#oembed-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=853#oembed-1)*

Why is it important to learn the formal speech style?

Understanding the distinction between formal and informal speech is important for confidently navigating different social situations. For beginners, we recommend starting with a solid understanding of the formal speech style. This is because you are more likely to encounter new people in Japanese-speaking contexts. As a young adult or adult, you are expected to use polite and formal speech initially when building social and professional relationships.

At the same time, maintaining a balance in your Japanese learning journey is also crucial. We encourage you to become comfortable using polite forms and expressions, while also exploring the nuances and flexibility of informal speech. Achieving this balance is a key aspect of mastering the language!

Exercise 1

This is a quick review exercise on formal and informal speech styles. Read the following questions and select either the ‘true’ or ‘false’ button to respond.



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=853#h5p-56>

References

Learn Japanese with Dokidokicomics. “Informal and Formal Japanese Phrases! (Casual vs Polite).” YouTube video, 12:01. April 30, 2022. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDIC_Vso5Eg.

5.2 Xは(WA) Yじゃないです (JANAI DESU)。 (X IS NOT Y.)

This module will introduce you to the negative forms of the 'XはYです' sentence pattern, building on your understanding of the affirmative and question forms.

Do you remember the phrase we learned in [Module 3.3](#)?

XはYがあまり好(す) きじゃないです。

X wa Y ga amari suki janai desu.

X doesn't like Y very much.

To negate the XはY です sentence pattern, you can use the same ending form **じゃないです** (janai desu):

XはYです。

X wa Y desu.

X is Y.

↓

XはYじゃないです。

X wa Y janai desu.

X is not Y.

Alternatively, for a more formal tone than **じゃないです** (janai desu), you can use **じゃありません** (ja arimasen) or the even more formal **ではありません** (de wa arimasen) to express 'X is not Y'.

Here's how they align in terms of formality:

Polite yet conversational	じゃないです	janai desu
Formal	じゃありません	ja arimasen
More Formal	ではありません	de wa arimasen

It's important to recognise that **ではありません** is typically used in written language or formal speech rather than daily conversation. Additionally, there are other formal negation expressions that you will encounter beyond this textbook.

Exercise 1



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japanese/?p=610#h5p-41](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=610#h5p-41)

5.3 NUMBERS 11 TO 100

Now that you have a basic understanding of numbers from 0 to 10, you are well equipped to tackle larger numbers. In this module, we will guide you through the process of counting and expressing larger numbers with confidence. Let's dive in and expand your counting skills!

Once you have learned how to count from 0 to 10 in Japanese, you can apply that knowledge to count from 11 to 99 using the following method.

Numbers 11 to 19

You simply add a number to 10 (十: じゅう: juu).

For example, 11 is 十一 (じゅういち: juu-ichi), that is, '10' and '1'.

Here are the numbers from 11 to 19, so you can see this method in action:

Kanji (Hiragana)	English
十一 (じゅういち)	eleven
十二 (じゅうに)	twelve
十三 (じゅうさん)	thirteen
十四 (じゅうよん)	fourteen
十五 (じゅうご)	fifteen
十六 (じゅうろく)	sixteen
十七 (じゅうなな) or (じゅうしち)	seventeen
十八 (じゅうはち)	eighteen
十九 (じゅうきゅう)	nineteen

Please note that when the numbers 4 or 9 are used at the end of a larger number, they should be pronounced as 四 (よん: yon) and 九 (きゅう: kyuu), respectively. The number 7, however, can be either 七 (なな: nana) or (しち: shichi) at the end of a larger number.

Numbers 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80 and 90

Easy, isn't it?

Now, let's move on to double-digit numbers beyond 19. We will begin with multiples of 10, which are the numbers that end in 0, such as 20, 30, 40 and so on.

Forming these larger numbers is straightforward.

We just need to say the first number followed by 十 (じゅう: juu), which means ten.

For example, 20 is 二十 (にじゅう: ni-juu), or '2' and '10'.

	Kanji (Hiragana)	Romaji
20	二十 (にじゅう)	ni-juu
30	三十 (さんじゅう)	san-juu
40	四十 (よんじゅう)	yon-juu*
50	五十 (ごじゅう)	go-juu
60	六十 (ろくじゅう)	roku-juu
70	七十 (ななじゅう)	nana-juu*
80	八十 (はちじゅう)	hachi-juu
90	九十 (きゅうじゅう)	kyu-juu*
100	百 (ひゃく)	hyaku



Please note that when the numbers 4, 7 or 9 are used before 十 (じゅう: juu), they should be pronounced as 四 (よん: yon), 七 (なな: nana) and 九 (きゅう: kyuu), respectively.

Numbers 21 to 99

Last but not least, let's explore how to form double-digit numbers that do not end in 0.

The concept is similar to the numbers from 11 to 19. Here are a few examples:

- **21:** 2-10-1 = 二十一 (にじゅういち: ni-juu-ichi)
- **34:** 3-10-4 = 三十四 (さんじゅうよん: san-juu-yon)
- **47:** 4-10-7 = 四十七 (よんじゅうなな: yon-juu-nana or よんじゅうしち: yon-juu-shichi)
- **59:** 5-10-9 = 五十九 (ごじゅうきゅう: go-juu-kyuu)

Number 100

The only exception is 100, which is 百 (ひゃく: hyaku). You will just need to memorise this one!

Exercise 1

In the video created by [Bocchi & Pocchi](#), there is a review quiz at around the 3:15 mark. Additionally, the first half of the video covers how to count from 0 to 100, which you can also use for review.



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Figures



- 1 “[Exclamation sign font awesome](#)” by Dave Gandy. [Wikimedia Commons](#). Licensed under [CC by SA 3.0](#).

References

Bocchi & Pocchi. “Learn Japanese for Kids with Bocchi & Pocchi | Numbers 11-100.” YouTube video, 5:58. March 18, 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZqxI9FIH460>.

5.4 HOW TO DESCRIBE WHERE YOU ARE FROM

Describing your place of origin in Japanese is a simple and friendly way to connect with others. To express your home country or home town, you can use the word 出身（しゅっしん）.

You can use 出身（しゅっしん） either as a stand-alone word or attach it to the place you're from, as in オーストラリア出身 for 'Australia-born'.

One of the easiest ways to use this word is within the sentence structure 'XはYです' (X is Y). For example, you can say:

私（わたし）の出身はオーストラリアです。

Watashi no shusshin wa Oosutoraria desu.

My home country is Australia.



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has been excluded from this
version of the text. You can view them
online here: [https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=868#audio-868-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=868#audio-868-1)*

Or

私はオーストラリア出身です。

Watashi wa Oosutoraria shusshin desu.

I'm from Australia.



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has been excluded from this
version of the text. You can view them*

online here: <https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=868#audio-868-2>

Sharing where you're from with friends or new acquaintances can be an enjoyable experience. It not only reveals a piece of your personal background but also provides an opportunity to discuss culture and customs.

For example, you might say:

私の出身はブラジルです。

Watashi no shusshin wa Burajiru desu.

My home country is Brazil.



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japanese/?p=868#audio-868-3](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=868#audio-868-3)*

**ブラジルの人（ひと: people or person）は
音楽（おんがく: ongaku）が大好（だい
す）きです。**

Burajiru no hito wa ongaku ga daisuki desu.

People in Brazil love music.



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online here: [https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=868#audio-868-4](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=868#audio-868-4)*

**食べ物（たべもの: food）もおいしいです
よ。**

Tabemono mo oishii desu yo.

The food is also good.



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online here: [https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=868#audio-868-5](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=868#audio-868-5)*

This kind of conversation can arouse the interest of the person you're talking to, sparking engaging discussions.

In addition, now that we've learned how to turn 'XはYです' into a question, you can ask about someone's place of origin with the question word どこ (doko: where). The typical question is:

出身はどこですか。

Shusshin wa doko desu ka.

Where are you from?

So, when describing your place of origin, don't hesitate to use 出身 and engage in friendly conversations. It's an excellent opportunity to make new friends and share the unique aspects of your background!

出身 or -人(じん)?

In Japanese, discussions about origins can be quite intriguing. There are several ways to describe where you're from in Japanese. While 出身 is commonly used, people often use the term 人 (jin: じん), indicating nationality. In this context, 人 is not a standalone word; it's combined with a country's name. For example, オーストラリア人 (Ōsutoraria-jin) means 'Australian'.

However, in today's diverse world, people's backgrounds are often multifaceted. Thus, 出身 can be more descriptive than simply using -人, which primarily denotes nationality but might overlook the complexity of one's cultural identity.

Understanding the distinction between 出身 and -人 is crucial for recognising and expressing the rich diversity of our global community, acknowledging that people's identities extend beyond mere nationality.

Exercise 1



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=868#h5p-42>

5.5 THE CONJUNCTION でも (DEMO)

Discover the power of the conjunction **でも** (demo), which will bring depth and complexity to your Japanese conversations.

The conjunction **でも (demo)** in Japanese means 'but' or 'however'. It is used to express a contrast between two ideas or to introduce a contrasting thought. It is used to link two contrasting sentences, but it cannot be used to link nouns or other non-sentential elements.

For example, you could use **でも** to connect two contrasting sentences, such as 'I like sashimi' and 'I don't like wasabi' in Japanese. The sentence would be:

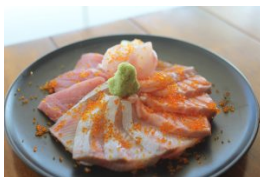


Figure 1: Sashimi and Wasabi

さしみが好（す）
きです。でも、わさ
びは好きじゃないで
す。

*Sashimi ga suki
desu. **Demo**, wasabi
wa suki janai desu.*

I like sashimi, **but** I don't like wasabi.



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has been excluded from this
version of the text. You can view them
online here: [https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=859#audio-859-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=859#audio-859-1)

Here, **でも** is used to connect the contrasting ideas of liking sashimi but not liking wasabi.

Just a quick note: If you are wondering about when to use the particles **は** and **が** with the adjectives **好**

(す) き (な) and 嫌 (きら) い (な) , you will find the explanation in [Module 3.3](#).

Exercise 1



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=859#h5p-43>

Figures

1 “[Sashimi and Wasabi](#)” by [pelambung](#). PxHere.
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5.6 REVIEW

In this chapter, you have made some fantastic strides in enhancing your Japanese conversational skills! Here is a quick look at the awesome milestones you have achieved:



Formality mastery

You now understand the distinction between formal and informal speech, making sure you sound just right for the occasion.



Sentence transformation

You have mastered the negative form of X

はYです, seamlessly incorporated into dialogues.



Numerical fluency

You can now count from 11 to 100 in Japanese. Great progress!



Talking about where you are from

With the useful term 出身 (しゅっしん: shusshin), you are now all set to talk about your places of origin and others'.



Conjunction application

You have added でも (demo: however) to your toolkit, connecting your thoughts effectively in Japanese.

These skills will serve as valuable tools as you

continue to explore and engage with the language. Fantastic effort!

To reinforce your skills and understanding, here is a review exercise for you.


Exercise 1



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Figures

- 1  “[Tick Icon](#)” by [Mrmw](#). Wikimedia Commons. Licensed under [CC 1.0](#).

CHAPTER 6: EXPANDING YOUR JAPANESE TOOLKIT (1)

6.0 EXPANDING YOUR JAPANESE TOOLKIT (1)



Figure 1: Houses Near Trees

Congratulations on learning the fundamental sentence structure of Japanese using hiragana

and katakana! By mastering the sentence pattern of ‘XはYです’, you have taken the first step in communicating with others in Japanese.

Now that you have a strong foundation in sentence structure, you can expand your communication skills even further by learning how to use verbs with the **ます**-form.

Learning how to use verbs with the **ます**-form is a valuable skill for anyone who wants to communicate effectively in Japanese. Keep up the excellent work, and continue to explore the rich language and culture of Japan!



Learning goals

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

- Understand the difference between です (desu) and ます (masu)
- Comprehend the fundamental principles of Japanese verb conjugation.
- Apply the Topic +Object +Verb sentence pattern using verbs conjugated in the ます-form.
- Learn about the various first-person pronouns in Japanese, aside from 私 (わたし: watashi), and how to use them.

Words

Japanese	Romaji	English
Verbs		
読（よ）む	<i>yomu</i>	to read
読みます	<i>yomi masu</i>	
会（あ）う	<i>au</i>	to meet
会います	<i>ai masu</i>	
来（く）る	<i>kuru</i>	to come
来（き）ます	<i>ki masu</i>	
見（み）る	<i>miru</i>	to watch/see/look
見ます	<i>mi masu</i>	
食（た）べる	<i>taberu</i>	to eat
食べます	<i>tabe masu</i>	
使（つか）う	<i>tsukau</i>	to use
使います	<i>tsukai masu</i>	
行（い）く	<i>iku</i>	to go
行きます	<i>iki masu</i>	
Nouns		

僕（ぼく）	<i>boku</i>	I/me
留学生（りゅうがくせい）	<i>ryuu gakusei</i>	international students
社会学（しゃかいがく）	<i>shakai gaku</i>	sociology
毎日（まいにち）	<i>mainichi</i>	everyday
まんが		
ライブラリー（らいぶらりい）	<i>Manga raiburarii</i>	Manga library
明日（あした）	<i>ashita</i>	tomorrow
イベント（いべんと）	<i>ibento</i>	event
映画（えいが）	<i>eiga</i>	movie
お菓子（かし）	<i>okashi</i>	snack
Adverbs		
一緒（いっしょ）に	<i>isshoni</i>	together
もちろん	<i>mochiron</i>	of course

本当（ほんとう）に	<i>bontouni</i>	very/really
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Adjectives

難（むずか）しい	<i>muzukashii</i>	difficult
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Expressions and phrases

Japanese	Romaji	English
ところで	<i>tokorode</i>	by the way

Key grammar points

Japanese	Romaji	English
- よね	<i>yone</i>	..., isn't it
に	<i>ni</i>	to/toward
へ	<i>e</i>	to/toward

Exercise 1

Guess which hiragana letter needs to be filled in! To check the answer, click the 'turn' button. You can also listen to the sound of each word by clicking the audio

icon.



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Model dialogue

Kevin, eager to immerse himself further in Japanese language and culture, pays a visit to the Manga Library. His intention? To discover the latest additions to the library's collection and to

find a language exchange partner. After a busy day attending his Japanese class, Kevin has an exciting encounter with someone from Japan who also happens to be a member of the Japanese Club at the Manga Library.

Ren: あ、こんにちは。それ、『ブラック・ジャック（ぶらっく・じゃっく）』ですね。	<i>A, konnichiwa. Sore <u>Burakku Jakku</u> desu yone.</i>
Kevin: あ、はい...。	<i>A, hai ...</i>
Ren: 手塚治虫（てづかおさむ）のまんがが好（す）きですか。	<i><u>Tezuka Osamu</u> no manga o yomimasu ka.</i>
Kevin: はい。でも、大友克洋（おおともかつひろ）のまんがも読（よ）みます。	<i>Hai. Demo, <u>Katsuhiko Ootomo</u> no manga mo yomimasu.</i>
Ren: ああ、『アキラ（あきら）』ですね！僕（ぼく）も読みます！ところで、よく会（あ）いますよね。毎日（まいにち）まんがライブラリー（らいぶらりい）に来（き）ますよね。	<i>Aa, '<u>Akira</u>' desu yone! Boku mo yomimasu! Tokorode, yoku aimasu yone. Mainichi Manga Raiburarii ni kimasu yone.</i>
Kevin: あ、はい...。	<i>A, hai ...</i>
Ren: えーと、はじめまして。僕はれんです。	<i>Eeto, hajime mashite. Boku wa Ren desu.</i>
Kevin: あ、ケビン（けびん）です。よろしく。	<i>A, Kebin desu. Yoroshiku.</i>
Ren: よろしく。僕は留学生（りゅうがくせい）です。出身（しゅっしん）は日本（にほん）です。	<i>Yoroshiku. Boku wa ryuu gakusei desu. Shussbin wa Nihon desu.</i>

Kevin: ああ、そうですか！専攻（せんこう）は何（なん）ですか。	<i>Aa, soudesu ka! Senkou wa nan desu ka.</i>
Ren: 社会学（しゃかいがく）です。	<i>Shakai gaku desu.</i>
Kevin: 社会学…。すみません。社会学は英語（えいご）で何ですか。	<i>Shakai gaku... Sumimasen. Shakai gaku wa Eigo de nan desu ka.</i>
Ren: Sociology です。ケビンさんは？	<i>Soshiorojii desu. Kebin-san wa?</i>
Kevin: あ、えーと、専攻はIT（あいてい）です。	<i>A, ecto, senkou wa ai-thii desu.</i>
Ren: へえ。ところで、明日（あした）日本語（にほんご）クラブ（くらぶ）のイベント（いべんと）に来（き）ますか。	<i>Hee. Torokode, ashita Nihongo Kurabu no ibento ni kimasu ka.</i>
Kevin: 明日ですか。	<i>Ashita desuka.</i>
Ren: はい。みんなで日本語の映画（えいが）を見（み）ます。それから、一緒（いっしょ）に日本のお菓子（かし）も食（た）べますよ。もちろん、日本語も使（つか）います。ケビンさんも来（き）ますか。	<i>Hai. Minna de Nihongo no eiga o mimasu. Sorekara, issboni Nihon no okashi mo tabemasu yo. Mochiron, Nihongo mo tsukaimasu. Kebin-san mo kimasu ka.</i>

Kevin: ああ、はい。来ます！ Oh, wait, 行（い）きます？	<i>Aa, hai. Kimasu! ... ikimasu?</i>
Ren: えーと、「行きます」ですね。難（むずか）しいですね。	<i>Eeto, 'ikimasu' desu ne. Muzukashii desu yone.</i>
Kevin: はい、日本語は本当（ほんとう）に難しいです...。	<i>Hai, Nihongo wa hontou ni muzukashii desu ...</i>

English translation

Ren: Ah, hi. That's *Black Jack*, right?

Kevin: Yes...

Ren: Do you read Osamu Tezuka's comics?

Kevin: Yes. But, I read Katsuhiro Otomo's comics, too.

Ren: *Akira*, right? So do I! By the way, we see each other often. You come to the Mar

Kevin: Ah, yes...

Ren: Well, nice to meet you. I'm Ren.

Kevin: I'm Kevin. Nice to meet you, too.

Ren: *Yoroshiku*. I'm an international student. I'm from Japan.

Kevin: Ah, right! What is your major?

Ren: It's *shakai gaku*.

Kevin: ... Sorry, what is '*shakai gaku*' in English?

Ren: Sociology. What about you, Kevin?

Kevin: Oh, um, my major is IT.

Ren: I see. By the way, are you coming to the Japanese Club event tomorrow?

Kevin: Tomorrow?

Ren: Yeah. We will watch a Japanese movie together. And then we will have Japanese food. Are you coming?
Kevin:

Kevin: Ahhhh, well, yes, I will come! Oh, wait, (should I say) 'I will go'?

Ren: Umm, 'I will go'. It's difficult, isn't it?

Kevin: Yes, Japanese is really difficult.

Exercise 2

Listen to the following audio files and repeat each Japanese phrase after the recording. Each phrase is read twice, first at a slow pace and then at a natural pace.

Ren: あ、こんにちは。それ、『ブラッ

ク・ジャック（ぶらっく・じゃっく）』
 ですよ。



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 japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-1)

Kevin: あ、はい...。



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 japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-2](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-2)

Ren: 手塚治虫（てづかおさむ）のまん
 がが好（す）きですか。



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japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-3](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-3)

Kevin: はい。でも、大友克洋（おおとも
かつひろ）のまんがも読（よ）みます。



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japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-4](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-4)

Ren: ああ、『アキラ（あきら）』です
よね！僕（ぼく）も読みます！ところ
で、よく会（あ）いますよね。毎日（ま

いにち) まんがライブラリー (らいぶら
りい) に来 (き) ますよね。



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japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-5](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-5)

Kevin: あ、はい....。



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japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-6](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-6)

Ren: えーと、はじめまして。僕はれんで
す。



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elements has been excluded
from this version of the text. You can
view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-7](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-7)

Kevin: あ、ケビン（けびん）です。よろしく。



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view them online here:*
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-8](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-8)

Ren: よろしく。僕は留学生（りゅうがくせい）です。出身（しゅっしん）は日本（にほん）です。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-9>

Kevin: ああ、そうですか！専攻（せんこう）は何（なん）ですか。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-10>

Ren: 社会学（しゃかいがく）です。ケビンさんは？



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-11>

Kevin: 社会学…。すみません。社会学は英語（えいご）で何ですか。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-12>

Ren: Sociologyです。ケビンさんは？



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-13>

Kevin: あ、えーと、専攻はITです。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-14>

Ren: へえ。ところで、明日（あした）日本語（にほんご）クラブ（くらぶ）のイベント（いべんと）に来（き）ますか。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-15>

Kevin: 明日ですか。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-16>

Ren: はい。みんなで日本語の映画（えいが）を見（み）ます。それから、一緒（いっしょ）に日本のお菓子（かし）も食（た）べますよ。もちろん、日本語も

使（つか）います。ケビンさんも来（き）ますか。



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-17>

Kevin: ああ、はい。来ます！ Oh, wait, 行（い）きます？



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-18>

Ren: えーと、「行きます」ですね。難
(むづか) しいですね。



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elements has been excluded
from this version of the text. You can
view them online here:*

[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-19](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-19)

Kevin: はい、日本語は本当（ほんとう）
に難しいです...。



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elements has been excluded
from this version of the text. You can
view them online here:*

[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-20](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#audio-2045-20)



Discussion points

Let's reflect on these points and share our observations and thoughts!

1. Kevin seems a bit hesitant and reserved, doesn't he? This kind of interaction might feel familiar to some and completely foreign to others. In many cultures, it's quite common for people to be a little guarded when meeting someone new. Do you recognise this behaviour? If not, why do you think that is? Could it be influenced by cultural customs or personal upbringing? Feel free to share your thoughts on those initial interactions with strangers in class!
2. When you come across unfamiliar words in Japanese conversations, how do you react? It is a situation many language learners find themselves in, and the response can vary widely. Do you feel a bit

hesitant to ask for clarification? If so, why? If not, why not? When engaging with someone who is learning your native language, how do you feel when they pause to ask you for clarification on something you have said?

Further resources

Asking questions for clarification is a common part of the language-learning process! In the dialogue, Kevin demonstrates one such method with the following pattern:

XはYで 何（なん）ですか。

X wa Y de nan desu ka.

How do you say X in Y?

Here, you can insert the word you are asking about in place of X, and add the language into which you want the word translated at the position marked by Y.

But that is just one way to seek clarification in Japanese. There are various other techniques, each suitable for different contexts and levels of formality. To explore another method, you might want to check out a video created by [Learn Japanese with JapanesePod101.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2045#oembed-1).





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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=2045#oembed-1>

Figures

1 “[Houses Near Trees](#)” by [WW](#). Pexels. Licensed under [Pexels licence](#).

2  “[Goal Icon](#)” by [faisalovers](#). Wikimedia Commons. Licensed under [CC by 3.0](#).

3  “[Speech Bubble Icon](#)” by [Jeremy Good](#). Wikimedia Commons. Licensed under [CC 0](#).

4  “[Lightbulb Icon](#)” by [Maxim Kulikov](#). Wikimedia Commons. Licensed under [CC by 3.0](#).

References

Learn Japanese with JapanesePod101.com. “Learn How to Ask for a Word in Japanese | Can Do #14.” YouTube video, 19:33. November 29, 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=er7uYhADMtA>.

6.1 です (DESU) AND ます (MASU)

Having progressed through the preceding modules and gained mastery over the です (desu) form, our focus in this module will shift towards another crucial sentence-ending form ます (masu), which is used to express politeness and formality in speech.

Congratulations, you are advancing to the next level!

Learning the ます-form opens up exciting opportunities to express more intricate details within a sentence.

Unlike the 'XはYです' sentence pattern you have learned, with the ます-form, you can now discuss when, where, what, how often and with whom something is happening all in one sentence.

What is the ます-form?

ます (masu) is used to convey a polite present or future tense action, while です serves as a polite copula to link the subject and predicate.

So, let's say you are a coffee enthusiast who wants to say 'I drink coffee'.

Here, you use the verb 飲 (の) む (nomu: to drink) to describe the action 'to drink'.

のむ is the dictionary form of the verb, commonly used in casual conversations with close friends, family members or individuals who are younger than you.

To make it polite, you need to change the dictionary form into the ます-form.

So, 飲む becomes 飲みます (nomi masu).

What sentence patterns can I use with the ます-form?

Now, how can we construct the sentence 'I drink coffee' with 飲みます?

Here is the sentence pattern you can use:

**Topic + Particle は + Object + Particle を +
Verb + ます。**

So to say 'I drink coffee' or 'I will drink coffee' in Japanese:

私（わたし）はコーヒー（こおひい）を飲み
ます。

Watashi wa koohii o nomi masu.

I drink coffee or I will drink coffee.

What is the tense of the ます -form?

This is another vital aspect of using ます -forms: the ending itself can indicate **both present and future tenses**.

To identify the intended tense, it is important to pay attention to time reference words, such as 毎日（まいにち）(mainichi: every day) and 明日（あした）(ashita: tomorrow). Listeners can determine the speaker's intended tense based on these time reference words, as the ます -form itself does not inherently specify whether it refers to the present or future.

When you want to add these time reference words, you can use the following sentence pattern:

**Topic + Particle は + Time reference word
+ Object + Particle を + Verb + ます。**

Time reference words usually come after the topic and the appropriate topic particle.

So, to say 'I will drink coffee tomorrow' in Japanese:

私は明日（あした）コーヒーを飲みます。

*Watashi wa **ashita** koohii o nomi masu.*

I will drink coffee **tomorrow**.

We will explore this sentence structure with other modifiers, including frequency words, in more depth

in Chapter 7. For now, it is enough to know that sentences ending in the ます-form can include objects and time reference words.

Exercise 1



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=883#h5p-52>

6.2 VERB CONJUGATION

In this module, we will guide you through a step-by-step process of transforming the dictionary forms of verbs, enabling you to politely express actions in both present and future tenses.

When you want to talk about present and future actions in a polite way in Japanese, you need to change the verb from its **dictionary form** – the basic, unmodified version found in dictionaries – to **its polite form (ます-form)**.

This process is known as **conjugation**, which allows you to effectively convey politeness and formality in your speech.

You might be unfamiliar with the concept of verb conjugation, but don't worry!

The good news is that there are clear patterns to follow based on the type of verb you're using. In

Japanese, we will explore three types of verbs, each with its own conjugation rules:

1. U-verbs: Verbs ending in the /u/ sound, except for those in (2) and (3)
2. Ru-verbs: Verbs ending in る (ru)
3. Irregular verbs: 来 (く) る (kuru: to come) and する (suru: to do)

Now let's take a look at the following video (about 5 minutes long) created by [Shiro Neko Japanese](#) to learn how each type of verb follows a unique conjugation pattern.





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version of the text. You can view them
online here: [https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=886#oembed-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=886#oembed-1)*

As highlighted in the video, some u-verbs end in る.

To differentiate between ru-verbs and u-verbs that end in る, pay attention to **the vowel sound just before る**.

Ru-verbs ending in る

Typically, when the vowel sound preceding る is /i/ or /e/, the verb classifies as a ru-verb **in most cases**.

For example, 見（み）る is a ru-verb because the vowel sound preceding る is /i/.

Nonetheless, exceptions to this rule are detailed at the conclusion of this section.

U-verbs ending in る

Conversely, if the preceding vowel sound is /a/, /u/ or /o/, the verb is consistently classified as an u-verb.

Now, let's test your understanding:

Consider the verbs 食（た）べる (taberu) and 分（わ）かる (wakaru).

Which category do each of these belong to?

Here's the answer:

食べる (taberu), meaning 'to eat', is a ru-verb, due to the preceding vowel sound /e/. On the other hand, 分かる (wakaru), meaning 'to understand', is an u-verb, as its preceding vowel sound is /a/.

Consequently, their polite forms (ます-form) are 食べます and 分かります, respectively (not 分かます).

Exceptional cases of u-verbs ending in る

It's important to remember that while verbs

preceding る with /i/ or /e/ are generally ru-verbs, there are exceptions. Notable beginner-level exceptions among u-verbs ending in る, which precede an /i/ or /e/ sound, include:

U-Verb	Romaji Reading	Meaning	ます-form
帰 (かえ) る	kaeru	to return	帰ります
知 (し) る	shiru	to know	知ります
入 (はい) る	hairu	to enter	入ります
要 (い) る	iru	to need	(...が) 要ります
切 (き) る	kiru	to cut	切ります
走 (はし) る	hashiru	to run	走ります
しゃべる	shaberu	to chat	しゃべります
減 (へ) る	heru	to decrease	減ります

Here are more tips for changing dictionary form to **ます**-form quickly:

- Memorise the patterns for each type of verb by using resources, such as verb conjugation charts or apps.
- Practise regularly to get used to the patterns.
- Read the verbs aloud in their **ます**-form to describe activities or actions you engage in. For example, if you regularly read books, you might say **本（ほん）を読（よ）みます** for 'I read books'.

Exercise 1

Use the resource provided by [Steven Kraft](#) to practise the conjugation of basic verbs. Visit [this page](#) and type in the **ます**-form of verbs for practice.

To help get you started without much

difficulty, you can also refer to the **ます**-form conjugation chart below.

1. U-verbs (or go-dan verbs)

For most u-verbs, replace the final /u/ sound with an /i/ sound and then add **ます**.

Dictionary Form	ます-form
飲む (to drink)	飲みます
読む (to read)	読みます
帰る (to return: X 'returns')	帰ります

2. Ru-verbs (or ichi-dan verbs)

For ru-verbs, simply replace **る** with **ます**.

Dictionary Form
食 (た) べる (to eat)
見 (み) る (to see)
起 (お) きる (to wake up)

3. Irregular verbs

There are two main irregular verbs, くる (come) and する (do), that have unique conjugations in the ます-form.

Dictionary Form


来 (く) る (to come)

する (to do)



する is also used to form many compound verbs. Any verb that ends with する, such as 勉強 (べんきょう) する (benkyou suru: to study), is considered an irregular verb. These verbs conjugate in the same way as the verb する itself. So 勉強する is conjugated to 勉強します in its ます-form.

Figures

- 1  “[Exclamation Icon](#)” by Dave Gandy. [Wikimedia Commons](#). Licensed under [CC by SA 3.0](#).

References

Kraft, Steven. “Polite Form Practice.” Accessed December 12, 2023. <https://steven-kraft.com/projects/japanese/politeform/>.

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Shiro Neko Japanese. “Japanese [#3-6] [GENKI L3]—Conjugate from DICTIONARY Form to MASU Form (Verb Conjugation #3).” YouTube video, 4:51. September 10, 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=su0kg2-BI6E>.

6.3 QUESTION SENTENCE: ますか。 (MASU KA)

Like the 'XはYです' sentence pattern, it is easy to form questions with the ます-form. Let's explore this further!

ます-Form questions

To form a question in the ます-form, simply add か to the end of the sentence, exactly in the same way as we do to form questions in the です-form!

For example, to make the sentence 'まんが

を読（よ）みます' (manga o yomi masu)
into a question, you would say:

まんがを読ますか。

*Manga o yomi masu **ka**.*

Do you read manga?

Affirmative response

To answer this question affirmatively, you
can say politely:

はい、読みます。

***Hai**, yomi **masu**.*

Yes, I do [literally, Yes, I read].

Here, you simply use the key verb **読みます**, and there is usually no need to repeat the object **まんが** and the object particle **を**. This avoids redundancy, as the context is clear.

Negative response

Now, how would you say 'No, I don't'?

While you could simply say **いいえ** (iee) for 'no', it is considered more polite to use a complete sentence by employing the negative form of **読みます**, which is **読みません** (nomi masen). To create the negative version of the **ます**-form, you merely replace **ます** with **ません**.

So, you can reply that you don't read manga like this:

いいえ、読みません。

lie, yomi masen.

No, I don't [literally, No, I don't read].

We will delve deeper into the usage of ません in Chapter 7.

Exercise 1



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[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=1349#h5p-57](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=1349#h5p-57)

6.4 COME AND GO

The verbs 来（く）る (kuru: to come) and 行（い）く (iku: to go) are among the most frequently used verbs in Japanese. In this module, we will explore their usage, some aspects of which differ from their English counterparts.

Understanding how to use 来（く）る and 行（い）く in Japanese can be straightforward once you get the hang of it, as they mostly align with their English counterparts.

For example, if you want to say ‘the bus is coming’ politely, you would use the ます-form of 来る, which is 来ます (ki masu), as follows:

バス（ばす）が来（き）ます。

*Basu ga **ki masu**.*

The bus is **coming**.

Note that the particle が is used instead of the particle は, since the emphasis is placed on バス (bus) rather than 来ます (comes).

If you want to say 'the bus is going' politely, you would use the ます-form of 行（い）く, which is 行きます (iki masu), as follows:

バスが行きます。

*Basu ga **iki masu**.*

The bus is **going**.

So, Japanese functions similarly to English, but this is only the case **when the speaker and listener have the same perspective regarding movement.**

In other words, this means that different rules apply in Japanese when their perspectives regarding movement differ!

Imagine that you and your friend are at each other's homes. In English, if your friend asks you to come to their place, you'd simply say, 'I'm coming'. So, you might think to use 来（く）る to express the same thing in Japanese, and say: 来（き）ます.

However, that's not the case! Instead of saying 来ます, you would say:

行きます。

Iki masu.

I'm **coming**.

Here's where **perspectives matter**.

The basic rule is:

- Use 来る when you are talking about **something or someone coming (back) to your current location.**
- Use 行く when you are talking about **something or someone moving away from your current location.**

And the 'someone' can even be you, the speaker!

In the example above, you say 行きます because you, as the speaker, are talking about yourself moving away from where you are now and going towards where your friend is.

However, if you and your friend are in the same location and your friend asks you whether you are coming back to where you both are now tomorrow, you would use 来 (く) る and say:

はい、来（き）ます。

*Hai, **ki masu.***

Yes, I'm **coming.**

So, it is all about perspective – considering where you are and where you are going. Once you grasp this concept, these two verbs become a lot more manageable!

For further detail, please watch the following video (about 4 minutes long) created by [Shiro Neko Japanese](#) useful to reinforce your understanding of how to use 来ます (the ます form of 来る) and 行きます (the ます form of 行く):



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Exercise 1



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=890#h5p-51>

References

Shiro Neko Japanese. “Japanese [#3-4] [GENKI L3]—I’ll Come (kimasu) or I’ll Go (ikimasu)?” YouTube video, 4:24. December 1, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vpKPOrjuMcg>.

6.5 PARTICLES に (NI) AND へ (E)

This module helps you learn the nuances of the Japanese particles に (ni) and へ (e), both of which are instrumental in indicating direction or destination.

The Japanese particles に (ni) and へ (e) both indicate the direction or destination towards which someone or something is moving. Note that although the particle へ is written as ‘へ’, it is pronounced ‘e’, not ‘he’.

Although these particles can be used interchangeably, they convey a slight difference in nuance:

に is commonly used in both spoken and written language.

へ, with a slightly more formal tone, is more frequently used in written contexts.

With this foundation, let's explore practical examples to master the use of these particles in constructing sentences.

The particles に and へ indicating direction or destination are often accompanied with the following verbs:

行 (い) く (iku: to go)

来 (く) る (kuru: to come)

帰 (かえ) る (kaeru: to return, to go home)

These verbs signify movement between locations and are therefore paired with either に or へ, indicating the destination to which someone or something goes, comes or returns.

Here are some example sentences:

- 学校（がっこう）に行きます。
(Gakkou ni ikimasu) – I (will) go to school.
- クラス（クラス）に来ます。(Kurasu ni kimasu) – I (will) come to the class.
- 家（いえ）に帰ります。(Ie ni kaerimasu) – I (will) return home.

Exercise





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japanese/?p=3095#h5p-75](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=3095#h5p-75)

6.6 THE SENTENCE-ENDING PARTICLE よね (YONE)

The sentence-ending particle よね (yone) combines the nuances of the sentence-ending particles よ (yo) and ね (ne), adding a specific nuance to the entire sentence. In this module, we explore its usage.

As we have discussed before in [Module 4.6](#), よ indicates the speaker's belief in providing new information, while ね suggests a shared understanding with the listener. Therefore, よね falls somewhere in between, often used to **seek confirmation and agreement when the speaker is reasonably sure, but not entirely certain, that the listener agrees.**

The usage of よね is similar to other sentence-

ending particles like よ and ね. It is usually added right after the です and ます verb endings in formal speech.

Now, let's take a look at some examples to get a better grasp of it!

Confirmation

For example, if you are fairly certain that your friend in a higher year level will come to university tomorrow, but you want to confirm it with her, you would say:

明日（あした）大学（だいがく）に来（き）
ますよね。

Ashita daigaku ni kimasu yone.

You're coming to university tomorrow, **right?**

—



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japanese/?p=893#audio-893-1](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=893#audio-893-1)*

Agreement

For example, if you notice that it is colder than usual and you want to seek agreement with your teacher, you would say:

今日（きょう）は寒（さむ）いです**よね**。

*Kyou wa samui desu **yone**.*

It's cold today, **isn't it?**



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online here: [https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=893#audio-893-2](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=893#audio-893-2)*

Alternatively, you can use ね and say:

今日は寒いですね。

Kyou wa samui desu ne.

It's cold today, **isn't it?**



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version of the text. You can view them
online here: [https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=893#audio-893-3](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=893#audio-893-3)*

Both expressions convey a similar meaning, but the former emphasises slightly more that it is unusually cold compared to other days.

The selection of sentence-ending particles よ, ね or よね depends on several factors, including the context, the relationship between speakers, and the desired tone of the conversation.

The following exercise will assist you in gaining a better understanding of how to consider these factors in order to effectively convey your intentions and foster meaningful communication.

Exercise 1



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<https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=893#h5p-55>

6.7 GENDER AND FIRST-PERSON PRONOUNS

So far, we've used 私（わたし） as a first-person pronoun, which is formal and gender-neutral. However, in Japanese, there are other first-person pronouns you may choose based on your gender, preference and the level of formality. Let's delve deeper into this topic.

In the Japanese language, you'll find a variety of first-person pronouns, and individuals choose them based on their gender identity or personal preference, and the formality of the situation.

Now, here's the thing to remember: some of these pronouns, like 僕（ぼく: boku）, 俺（おれ:

ore) and あたし (atashi) , come with established gender associations. Because these pronouns carry traditional gendered meanings, explaining unconventional usage, especially for non-binary individuals, can sometimes be a bit tricky.

But don't worry, there's a friendly approach you can take. When you first meet someone, you can start by using a gender-neutral and formal first-person pronoun like 私 (わたし: watashi) . As you get to know each other better and build a connection, you can comfortably chat about your choice of pronoun for more relaxed situations. Now, let's explore these pronouns and see what sets them apart:

私 (わたし: Watashi)

- **Usage:** 私 is a gender-neutral and formal first-person pronoun. It is widely used by anyone of any gender identity or expression in formal or polite settings, but is also common in informal and casual settings.
- **Example:** 私は学生 (がくせい) です。
(Watashi wa gakusei desu.) – I am a student.
(Formal)

- **Cultural notes:** In Japan, older generations often have traditional views about language and gender. They might be unfamiliar with unconventional ways of using pronouns. So, it is usually a good idea to start with a more neutral pronoun like 私, which is widely accepted and doesn't specify gender. This approach is gentle and respectful, allowing time to build understanding and rapport with those who may not be as accustomed to the idea of diverse gender identities and gender expressions. Japanese business culture really puts an emphasis on formality and following established norms. So, in these environments, everyone might find it easier to stick with the formal, neutral 私, as it helps to avoid any confusion or misinterpretations.

僕 (ぼく: Boku)

- **Usage:** 僕 typically conveys a sense of informality while maintaining a respectful tone. It is commonly preferred by young boys and men.
- **Example:** 僕はサッカー (さっかあ) が好き (す) ですよ。(Boku wa sakkaa ga suki desu.)

desu) – I like soccer. (Casual)

俺 (おれ: Ore)

- **Usage:** 俺 is traditionally used by older boys and men and is seen as more casual and assertive than 僕 (boku). It is often associated with masculinity and can convey a sense of confidence or assertiveness.
- **Example:** 俺、今日（きょう）はあまり元気（げんき）じゃない。(Ore, kyou wa amari genki janai) – I’m not so well today. (Casual)

あたし (Atashi)

- **Usage:** Traditionally, あたし is a more feminine form of the first-person pronoun, often used by young women and perceived as softer or more casual compared to 私.
- **Example:** あたし、これが好き！(Atashi, kore ga suki!) – I like this one!

自分 (じぶん: Jibun)

- **Usage:** 自分 literally translates to ‘oneself’ or ‘self’. It is often used in contexts where the speaker is reflecting on their own actions or thoughts, emphasising a sense of self-

reference. Unlike 僕 or あたし, which are traditionally associated with masculinity and femininity respectively, 自分 doesn't carry any inherent gender implication. This makes it a particularly useful pronoun for non-binary individuals or those who prefer not to express gender through their choice of pronoun. However, please note that its usage can sometimes feel less personal or direct compared to other first-person pronouns, given its literal meaning of 'oneself'.

- **Example:** 自分は悪（わる）くない。(jibun wa waruku nai.) – I'm not in the wrong.
(Casual)

Using these pronouns is more than just a linguistic preference; it is an avenue for gender expression. These pronouns resonate with their sense of self and also contribute to challenging and reshaping conventional perceptions of gender within Japanese society.

Here's a helpful hint: the way people react to these pronouns can vary greatly depending on your audience. In more casual settings, you're likely to

find a warmer reception to different forms of gender expression. However, in formal business settings, as well as conservative or rural areas, using these pronouns in non-traditional ways can be perceived as quite a daring move.

A thoughtful strategy might be to initially use the gender-neutral pronoun 私 as a respectful starting point. As you grow more comfortable and familiar with those around you, you can then transition to the pronoun that truly reflects 'you', be it the casual vibe of 俺 or 僕, or the gentler connotations of あたし. Adopting this step-by-step approach helps you navigate social interactions with care, all while staying true to your personal identity.

6.8 REVIEW

In this chapter, we delved into the **ます**-form verb structure and other pivotal Japanese grammatical elements that boost your conversational fluency. Highlights of your progress include:



Understanding です vs. ます

You have unravelled the differences between **です** (desu) and **ます** (masu), building a solid foundation for understanding Japanese sentence structures.



Mastering verb conjugation

You have grasped the fundamental principles of Japanese verb conjugation, a pivotal aspect that adds depth and variety to your expressions.



Implementing the T+O+V sentence pattern

You have learned to apply the Time+Object+Verb (T+O+V) sentence pattern using verbs in the **ます**-form, empowering you to craft more complex and precise sentences.



Understanding the usages of different first-person pronouns

You have learned the diverse variations of

first-person pronouns and their significant gender dimensions.

These grammar points not only broaden your understanding of the language but also enable you to engage in more nuanced and sophisticated conversations in Japanese. Keep up the fantastic progress!

Let's proceed with the review exercise to reinforce your grasp of the chapter's content.

Exercise 1




*An interactive H5P element
has been excluded from this*

version of the text. You can view it
online here:

[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/
japanese/?p=1726#h5p-70](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/japanese/?p=1726#h5p-70)

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CHAPTERS 7-13 TO BE PUBLISHED IN LATE 2024

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The author and the publication team would like to thank the reviewers for the time, care, and commitment they contributed to the project. We recognise that peer reviewing is a generous act of service on their part. This book would not be the robust, valuable resource that it is were it not for their feedback and input.

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