

## PRONUNCIATION KEY

- a = **a** in **father**
- e = between **e** in **met** and **a** in **cake**
- ei = **ē**
- f = between **f** in **foot** and **h** in **hood**
- g = **g** in **gone** at the beginning of words  
**g** in **singer** in the middle of words
- i = **ee** in **meet**
- ii = **ī**
- n = **n** in **no**  
**m** in **empower** before **p**, **b**, or **m**
- r = between the **r** in **right** and the **l** in **light**
- ts = **ts** in **fits**
- u = **oo** in **boot**
- o = **oa** in **coat**

Long sounds are held twice as long as short sounds.

Short	Long	Short	Long
a	ā	t	tt
i	ī	p	pp
u	ū	k	kk
e	ē	d	dd
o	ō	g	gg
		ts	tts
		sh	ssh
		ch	tch



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Tom Gally

*Japan & Stuff Press*

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## WHO THIS BOOK IS FOR

This book contains everything you need to start speaking the Japanese language. It will show you how to say what you need to say in practical, conversational Japanese. You'll learn useful words and expressions, acquire the basics of Japanese grammar, and get pointers about the life and culture of Japan and the Japanese people. As you read and practice the simple lessons, you'll be able to use what you learn right way, and you will also build a foundation for more advanced study of this fascinating language.

While anyone can benefit from *Start Speaking Japanese Today*, this book is intended especially for you if you

- are visiting Japan, whether for travel, business, or study
- work or do business with Japanese people
- want to talk with Japanese friends or relatives in their own language
- are interested in manga, anime, or other aspects of Japan's rich culture
- just enjoy learning languages.

The words and sentence patterns presented in the book focus on everyday situations, from shopping and traveling to opening a bank account and visiting a Japanese home. Each short lesson begins with a simple sentence that can be used in such situations, and the rest of the lesson explains the grammar and vocabulary you need to say even more.

Short sample conversations are scattered through the text, and longer dialogues appear in the last ten lessons. Many of the lessons also contain pointers about aspects of Japanese that can cause problems for people learning the language.

The Appendices contain an introduction to the Japanese writing system, summaries of key grammatical points, and an outline of the audio accompaniment to the book. (You can download this audio for free from [www.japanandstuff.com](http://www.japanandstuff.com) or [www.gally.net](http://www.gally.net).) And the Japanese-English and English-Japanese indices contain all of the vocabulary used in the book plus a topic index.

This book won't tell you everything about the Japanese language—no single book can do that—but it will help you start speaking Japanese today.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

To learn to speak Japanese—or any language—you have to practice speaking. That’s why the best way to use this book is not simply to read it silently. You should also practice saying the words and sentences in it aloud—again and again, if necessary, until you practically have them memorized.

The first step, though, is to read through the Pronunciation Guide on pages 10 and 11 carefully to get an idea of what sound is represented by each letter. Then download and listen to the audio Pronunciation Practice, and try saying the sounds as you listen to the audio file and read the accompanying script. Don’t rush this part, as good pronunciation habits learned early will be a big help to you later when you want people to understand you. Then you can move on to Lesson 1, which begins with a sentence we all need to say sometimes. Practice reading that sentence aloud, as well as the later variations on it. When you can say them without looking at the book and can remember most of the vocabulary items, you’re ready to move ahead to the next lesson.

While a good way to learn from this book would be to work through the lessons in order, it’s also possible to skip around—either to jump ahead to lessons that cover expressions you need to know right away, or to go back to cover material you skipped or didn’t learn thoroughly the first time. The book has been designed to make that jumping around easy, with the key topics of each lesson listed along the margin of the right-hand page and numerous cross-references in brackets—such as [24] or [A3]—pointing to related material in other lessons or the appendices.

The audio files available as free downloads at [www.japanandstuff.com](http://www.japanandstuff.com) and [www.gally.net](http://www.gally.net) will help you improve your pronunciation, get used to hearing spoken Japanese, and practice again many of the expressions and vocabulary that appear in the book. The audio lessons were designed to be listened to on their own—in other words, without looking at the book—so feel free to load the files into your portable audio player and listen to them while walking, doing housework, or just sitting around. If you want to make sure that you have heard the Japanese correctly, refer to the summary of this audio portion that



appears in Appendix 5.

When you have mastered most of what this book has to offer and want to learn even more Japanese, check out the list of resources for further study at [www.japanandstuff.com](http://www.japanandstuff.com) or [www.gally.net](http://www.gally.net).

## PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

The Japanese in this book is written not in the Japanese writing system [A1] but in the English alphabet. While most of the letters represent nearly the same sounds as in English, there are some important differences, especially in the vowels.

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### Vowels

- a = a in father
- i = ee in meet
- u = oo in boot
- e = between e in met and a in cake
- o = oa in coat

The letters ā, ī, ū, ē, and ō represent long vowels. These sounds should be held for about twice the length of time as the corresponding short vowels. This type of distinction between short and long vowels [13] does not exist in most dialects of English, but it can be learned with a little practice.

The vowel combination ei is pronounced the same as ē, and ii is pronounced the same as ī.

The vowels i and u become whispered or silent in some contexts. See [2].

Examples from [1] and their approximate pronunciations:

- depāto      deh-pahh-toe [department store] (The “ahh” sound is held long.)
- eki          eh-key [train/subway station]
- ginkō      ging-kohh [bank] (The “ohh” sound is held long.)
- o-furo      oh-foo-roe [bath]
- o-tearai    oh-teh-ah-rye [rest room]
- takushī     tah-koo-shee (The “ee” sound is held long.)

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### Consonants

- b = b in buy
- ch = ch in chime
- d = d in dog
- f = f in foot or h in hood. Instead of the lower lip being brought against the upper teeth (as in the English f), the upper and lower lips are pursed slightly to make a low hissing sound midway between the English f and h.

**g** = **g** in **gone**, at the beginning of words  
**g** in **singer**, in the middle of words and in the subject  
particle **ga** [16]  
**h** = **h** in **hat**  
**j** = **j** in **jar**  
**k** = **k** in **keep**  
**m** = **m** in **meat**  
**n** = **n** in **no**  
**p** = **p** in **speed**  
**r** = between the **r** in **right** and the **l** in **light**. See [16].  
**s** = **s** in **soap**  
**sh** = **sh** in **shot**  
**t** = **t** in **toe**  
**ts** = **ts** in **fits**  
**w** = **w** in **wide**  
**y** = **y** in **yolk**. See [18] for how **y** is used in clusters.  
**z** = **z** in **zone**

Double consonants such as **-tt-**, **-pp-**, **-ssh-**, or **-tch-** are held twice as long as single consonants [33].

Examples from [1] to [5] and their approximate pronunciations:

<b>furonto</b>	hoo-row-n-toe [front desk]
<b>happyaku</b>	hop-pyah-koo [800]
<b>migi</b>	mee-gee [to the right of]
<b>shitsurei</b>	she-tsoo-ray [excuse me]
<b>tisshu</b>	tish-shoo [tissue]

---

## Syllables

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Each vowel and each consonant + vowel combination represents a separate syllable. Thus **sake** is pronounced *sab-keh*, **naifu** *nab-ee-fu*, and **aoi** *ab-ob-ee*.

Long vowels and long consonants count as two syllables each, so **kōto** is three syllables (*kob-ob-toh*, with no break between *kob* and *ob*); **katto** is also three syllables (*kab-t-to*).

At the end of a word or before a consonant or apostrophe, the sound **n** is regarded as a separate syllable. Thus **kin'en** is four syllables (*kee-n-eh-n*), **genki** is three (*geb-n-kee*), and **ano** is two (*ab-nob*).

The syllabic **n** is written and pronounced **m** when it comes before **p**, **b**, or **m**, so **sampo** is *sa-m-poh* and **hambai** *hab-m-bah-ee*.

The **ny** combination is pronounced as a single consonant; the **n** is not treated as a separate syllable in this case. Thus **menyū** is three syllables: *meh-nyoo-oo* (with no break between *nyoo* and *oo*).

**O-tearai wa doko desu ka?***Where is the restroom?*o-tearai *restroom, toilet*wa *topic marker* You'll find wa in many sentences in this book, because it shows that the previous word is the main topic of the sentence. Here, the topic is o-tearai.doko *where*desu *to be (is, are, am)*ka *question marker* This word is like a question mark. To ask a question, put ka at the end of the sentence.

✓ **WHERE?:** To ask where something or someone is located, replace o-tearai with another word or phrase. Some examples:

**Eki** wa doko desu ka?*Where is the train station?***Takushī noriba** wa doko desu ka?*Where is a taxi stand?***Tōkyō Hoteru** wa doko desu ka?*Where is the Tokyo Hotel?***Resutoran** wa doko desu ka?*Where is the restaurant?*

Japanese doesn't have any words corresponding to *the*, *a*, or *an*, so this last sentence can mean either *Where is a restaurant?* or *Where is the restaurant?* There's almost never any confusion because the situation shows what the speaker wants to say.

✓ **PLACES:** Here are some words that will come in handy. You can use any of them before *wa* in the sentences to the left.

eki	train/subway station
basu-tei	bus stop
takushī noriba	taxi stand
hoteru	hotel
furonto	front desk (of a hotel)
ryokan	Japanese inn
o-furo	bath
bijutsu-kan	art museum
shiro	castle
jinja	Shinto shrine
o-tera	Buddhist temple
depāto	department store
kombini	convenience store
ginkō	bank
resutoran	restaurant
kissaten	coffee shop
hon-ya	bookstore
kamera-ya	camera store
yakkyoku	drugstore

✓ **WORD ORDER:** Japanese is a fairly easy language for beginners. It's simple to pronounce, the grammar is not too complicated, and there are only a handful of irregular verbs.

For speakers of English, the biggest novelty about Japanese is the word order. In Japanese, the verb always comes at the end of the sentence. In the English sentence *I bought a new car*, the verb *bought* is in the middle, between the subject *I* and the object *a new car*. In Japanese, the word order would be *I a new car bought*, with the verb in the final position.

This explains the position of *desu* in the sentences on the opposite page. The word *desu* is a verb meaning *is*, *are*, or *am*, so it comes at the end, followed only by the question marker *ka*.

**Eki no naka ni arimasu.***It's inside the train station.*

no	<i>function word showing that preceding noun modifies following noun.</i>
naka	<i>inside</i>
ni	<i>in, at, to</i> Function words that show location, like <i>in, at, and behind</i> in English, come after the word they modify in Japanese.
arimasu	<i>to be located, to exist</i>

✓ **INSIDE, BEHIND...:** To say where something is located, use the following before **arimasu**:

eki <b>no naka ni</b> <i>inside the train station</i>	hoteru <b>no soto ni</b> <i>outside the hotel</i>
eki <b>no mae ni</b> <i>in front of the train station</i>	depāto <b>no ushiro ni</b> <i>behind the department store</i>
furonto <b>no hidari ni</b> <i>to the left of the front desk</i>	yakkyoku <b>no migi ni</b> <i>to the right of the drugstore</i>

Here are some useful location words to put between **no** and **ni**.

naka	inside	soto	outside
mae	in front of	ushiro	behind
hidari	to the left of	migi	to the right of
ue	above	shita	below
soba	next to	chikaku	near

Note that the sentence at the top doesn't say what is inside the station. In Japanese, the subject can be omitted when the meaning is clear. If you want to mention the subject, use the topic marker **wa** [1]. For example: **O-tearai wa** eki no naka ni arimasu. *The restroom is inside the station.*

✓ **OMITTING SUBJECTS:** Here are some sample conversations.

- O-tearai wa doko desu ka?  
*Where is the restroom?*  
Eki no naka ni arimasu.  
*It's inside the train station.*
- Hon-ya wa doko desu ka?  
*Where is the bookstore?*  
Kamera-ya no chikaku ni arimasu.  
*It's near the camera shop.*
- Ginkō wa doko desu ka?  
*Where is the bank?*  
Hoteru no ushiro ni arimasu.  
*It's behind the hotel.*
- Bijutsu-kan wa doko desu ka?  
*Where is the art museum?*  
O-tera no migi ni arimasu.  
*It's to the right of the temple.*

✓ **SILENT VOWELS:** The spelling system used in this book corresponds to the actual pronunciation of Japanese almost exactly. The only major difference concerns the short vowels *i* and *u*. In certain situations, these two vowels may be pronounced in a whisper:

- after the sounds *s*, *sh*, *ch*, *ts*, or *h* at the end of a word
- between *s*, *sh*, *ch*, *ts*, or *h* and *k*, *p*, or *t*

Here are some examples:

<u>Spelling</u>		<u>Sound</u>
arimasu	→	arimas
chikaku	→	chkaku
doko desu ka	→	doko des ka
resutoran	→	restoran
shita	→	shta

**Kore wa ikura desu ka?***How much does this cost?*

kore	<i>this (thing)</i>
ikura	<i>how much</i>

☑ **HOW MUCH?:** If you spend any time at all in Japan, you will need to communicate with store clerks. To ask the price of something, use the above sentence.

If you want to mention the name of a thing, use **kono** *this* instead of **kore**. For example, **kono shampū** means *this shampoo*:

**Kono shampū** wa ikura desu ka?  
*How much is this shampoo?*

You can substitute other nouns after **kono**. For example:

**Kono kamera** wa ikura desu ka?  
*How much is this camera?*

**Kono raitā** wa ikura desu ka?  
*How much is this cigarette lighter?*

**Kono shatsu** wa ikura desu ka?  
*How much is this shirt?*

**Kono sūtsukēsu** wa ikura desu ka?  
*How much is this suitcase?*

Of course, asking questions won't do you much good if you don't understand the answers. Don't be shy if you haven't mastered numbers yet [4]. If you look puzzled, the clerk will probably write the price down or show it to you on a calculator.



✓ **THIS & THIS:** Here are some useful words that you can use in the sentences to the left after *kono*. All of these words are taken from English.

shīdī	CD, compact disc
bideo	video, VCR
terebi	television
komyū tā	computer
pasokon	personal computer
dejikame	digital camera
bideo kamera	video camera
renzu	lens
nōto	notebook
pen	pen
tabako	cigarette
raitā	cigarette lighter
shēbā	shaver
shampū	shampoo
shatsu	shirt
taoru	towel
tisshu	tissue
toiretto pēpā	toilet paper
baggu	bag, handbag
sūtsukēsu	suitcase

✓ **ENGLISH WORDS:** In Japanese, all syllables and words end in a vowel or *n/m*. That's why *taoru*, for example, has an extra *u* at the end. There are few consonant clusters, so *stereo* with its *st* blend becomes *sutereo*. When you use English words that have been borrowed into Japanese, try to pronounce them in the Japanese fashion; otherwise, your Japanese listeners may not understand you. Note that English loan words are often abbreviated in Japanese. *Notebook* is shortened to *nōto*, and *personal computer* (*pasonaru kompyūtā*) is changed to *pasokon*.

**Yon-hyaku ni-jū en desu.***That's 420 yen.*en *yen*

☑ **NUMBERS:** Here are the numbers 1 through 10:

1	ichi	6	roku
2	ni	7	shichi <i>or</i> nana
3	san	8	hachi
4	shi <i>or</i> yon <i>or</i> yo	9	ku <i>or</i> kyū
5	go	10	jū

The numbers 11 through 19 are formed by putting jū (10) before the numbers 1 through 9.

11	jū ichi (= 10 + 1)	16	jū roku
12	jū ni (= 10 + 2)	17	jū shichi <i>or</i> jū nana
13	jū san	18	jū hachi
14	jū shi <i>or</i> jū yon <i>or</i> jū yo	19	jū ku <i>or</i> jū kyū
15	jū go		

The numbers 20 through 99 are similar. For example, 21 = 2 x 10 + 1.

20	ni-jū (= 2 x 10)	60	roku-jū
21	ni-jū ichi (= 2 x 10 + 1)	70	nana-jū <i>or</i> shichi-jū
30	san-jū	80	hachi-jū
40	yon-jū	90	kyū-jū
50	go-jū	99	kyū-jū kyū

The word for 100 is *hyaku*. In some cases, it is pronounced *byaku* or *pyaku*:

100	hyaku	400	yon-hyaku	700	nana-hyaku
200	ni-hyaku	500	go-hyaku	800	happyaku
300	sam-byaku	600	roppyaku	900	kyū-hyaku

✓ **PRICES:** In English, the names for large numbers increase by a factor of 1,000. Thus one million is 1,000 times larger than one thousand, and one billion is 1,000 times larger than one million.

In Japanese, the factor is 10,000. Observe the following:

1,000	sen or issen	
2,000	ni-sen	
3,000	san-zen	
8,000	hassen	
10,000	ichi-man	(= 1 x 10,000)
20,000	ni-man	(= 2 x 10,000)
100,000	jū-man	(= 10 x 10,000)
1,000,000	hyaku-man	(= 100 x 10,000)
10,000,000	issen-man	(= 1,000 x 10,000)
100,000,000	ichi-oku	(= 1 x 100,000,000)

The following are examples of big numbers.

1,280	sen ni-hyaku hachi-jū
8,644	hassen roppyaku yon-jū yon
12,379	ichi-man ni-sen sam-byaku nana-jū kyū
4,100,520	yon-hyaku-jū-man go-hyaku ni-jū
352,650,009	san-oku go-sen-ni-hyaku-roku-jū-go-man kyū

✓ **4, 7, 9:** Note the alternate forms for numbers ending in 4, 7, and 9. In some cases, you can use any form. Often, though, one or the other is more common. At the ends of prices, use *yo en* 4 *yen*, *nana en* 7 *yen*, and *kyū en* 9 *yen*. Some more examples:

¥60	roku-jū en
¥494	yon-hyaku kyū-jū yo en
¥3,907	san-zen kyū-hyaku nana en
¥300,809	san-jū-man happyaku kyū en

Other number matters appear in later chapters: phone numbers [20], times [7], dates [14], and counting things [17, 25] and people [25].

**O-hayō gozaimasu.***Good morning.*

o-hayō	<i>good morning</i>	Informally, o-hayō by itself is enough.
gozaimasu	<i>polite word</i>	This word makes the greeting more polite and should be used in formal situations.

✓ **GOOD MORNING:** Japanese has a rich collection of greetings and stock phrases for every social situation. Here are some with close equivalents in English:

Konnichi wa.	<i>Good day. Or Good afternoon.</i>
Komban wa.	<i>Good evening.</i>
O-yasumi nasai.	<i>Good night. Or Good-bye (in the evening).</i>
Sayonara.	<i>Good-bye.</i>
Arigatō.	<i>Thank you.</i>
Dōmo arigatō.	<i>Thank you very much.</i>
Arigatō gozaimasu.	<i>Thank you very much.</i>
Dōmo arigatō gozaimasu.	<i>Thank you very, very much (polite).</i>
Dō itashimashite.	<i>You're welcome.</i>

The following is a typical exchange between two people who haven't seen each other for a while:

A O-genki desu ka?	<i>How have you been?</i>
B O-kage sama de.	<i>Fine, thanks.</i>

Here *genki* (with its polite prefix *o-* [11]) means *healthy*, so *O-genki desu ka?* is literally *Are you healthy?* The reply *O-kage sama de* means something like *Thanks to your kindness (I am healthy)*.

The expressions *O-hayō gozaimasu* and *Konnichi wa* are once-a-day greetings; you don't say them to the same person twice on the same day. And *O-genki desu ka?* differs from *How are you?* in that you should use it only after not having seen the other person recently.

☑ **EXCUSE ME:** There are several ways to say *excuse me* in Japanese depending on the situation. To attract somebody's attention, try:

Sumimasen. *Excuse me!*

This word can also mean *I'm sorry*. You can say **Sumimasen** if you step on someone's toe or break a dish by mistake. Another phrase with this meaning is:

Gomen nasai. *I'm sorry. / Pardon me.*

If you want to make a request, a useful phrase is:

O-negai shimasu. *Excuse me, please.*

The basic meaning of this phrase is *I am making a request*. For example, you can use **o-negai shimasu** to let a store clerk know that you want to buy something.

Kono sūtsukēsu o-negai shimasu.

*I'd like to buy this suitcase.*

In a coffee shop or restaurant, you can use this phrase after your order.

Biru o-negai shimasu. *Beer, please.*

Another phrase that can be translated as *Excuse me* is:

Shitsurei shimasu. *Please excuse me.*

You can say **Shitsurei shimasu** when you enter or leave another person's home or office. In that case, it means something like *I'm sorry to trouble you* or *Thank you for your time and attention*.

☑ **YES & NO:** The word for *yes* is *hai* and the word for *no* is *ie*. When responding *yes* to a question, people often tack on the phrase **sō desu**, which means *That is correct*.

A Kore wa hyaku en desu ka? *Does this cost 100 yen?*

B Hai, sō desu. *Yes, that's right.*

When answering *no*, you can add **chigaimasu**, which literally means *That is not correct* or *It's different from that*.

A Sumisu-san desu ka? *Are you Ms. Smith?*

B Ie, chigaimasu. *No, I'm not.*

**Shinjuku made ikura desu ka?***What is the fare to Shinjuku?*made    *up to, as far as, until*

✓ **FARES:** For short- and medium-distance train trips in Japan, unless you have a prepaid card, you need to buy a ticket before you board. The fare to each destination appears on a map above the ticket machines, but the names of the stations are usually written in Japanese characters. To ask someone the fare, replace **Shinjuku** in the above example with the name of your destination. Here's a sample conversation.

A Sumimasen. Maihama made ikura desu ka?

*Excuse me. What is the fare to Maihama?*

B Ni-hyaku jū en desu.

*210 yen.*

A Dōmo arigatō.

*Thank you very much.*

You might want to repeat the number to make sure you heard correctly:

A Honchō made ikura desu ka?

*What is the fare to Honchō?*

B Sam-byaku san-jū en desu.

*330 yen.*

A Sam-byaku yon-jū en?

*340 yen?*

B Īe, chigaimasu. Sam-byaku san-jū en.

*No, 330 yen.*

A Dōmo arigatō.

*Thank you very much.*

✓ **THE RIGHT TRAIN:** Buying a ticket is easier than getting on the right train. While some lines are simple there-and-back affairs, others offer a bewildering choice of branch lines, transfer points, and local and express trains. When in doubt, ask.

Kono densha wa Takamatsu ni ikimasu ka?  
*Does this train go to Takamatsu?*

The word *densha* means *train* and *ikimasu* is a verb meaning *go*.

✓ **THE TRAIN TO...:** To ask where a train is going, substitute *doko ni where to* in place of *Takamatsu ni* in the above sentence:

Kono densha wa **doko ni** ikimasu ka?  
**Where** *does this train go?*

At large train stations, you may have trouble finding the right track. Just use *doko where* as in the following:

Chūō Sen wa **doko** desu ka? [sen = line, route]  
**Where** *is the Chuo Line?*

Ōsaka yuki wa **doko** desu ka?  
**Where** *is the train for Osaka?*

The word *yuki* indicates the destination:

Tōkyō yuki *(the train) for Tokyo*

The word *yuki* can also be used with buses, boats, etc.:

**Nagoya yuki** wa doko desu ka?  
*Where is (the bus) for Nagoya?*

**Kōbe yuki** wa doko desu ka?  
*Where is (the ferry) to Kobe?*

**Tsugi no densha wa nan ji desu ka?***What time is the next train?*

tsugi no	<i>the next</i>
densha	<i>train</i>
nan	<i>what</i>
ji	<i>time, hour</i>

✓ **WHAT TIME?:** In the major urban areas of Japan, commuter trains run so frequently that the next one is likely to arrive before you have time to ask the above question. In suburbs and rural areas, though, it's nice to know how long you must wait. You may have enough time for a leisurely cup of coffee before the train departs.

You can also ask about specific trains:

**Fukuoka yuki wa nan ji desu ka?**

*What time is (the train) to Fukuoka?*

**Tsugi no Hikari wa nan ji desu ka?**

*What time is the next Hikari (bullet train)?*

To say the hour, use the appropriate number with the word *ji hour*:

ichi ji	one o'clock	shichi ji	seven o'clock
ni ji	two o'clock	hachi ji	eight o'clock
san ji	three o'clock	ku ji	nine o'clock
yo ji	four o'clock	jū ji	ten o'clock
go ji	five o'clock	jū ichi ji	eleven o'clock
roku ji	six o'clock	jū ni ji	twelve o'clock

Both 12- and 24-hour clocks are used in Japan. To specify A.M. or P.M. on the 12-hour clock, use *gozen morning (before noon)* or *gogo afternoon* before the time: *gozen ichi ji 1:00 A.M.*, *gogo san ji 3:00 P.M.* Noon is either *jū ni ji 12:00* or *rei ji 0:00*. On the 24-hour clock, midnight is either *ni-jū yo ji 24:00* or *rei ji 0:00*.



✓ **HOURS & MINUTES:** The word for *minute* is pronounced either *fun* or *pun* depending on the number that comes before it.

ip-pun	one minute	kyū fun	nine minutes
ni fun	two minutes	jup-pun	ten minutes
san pun	three minutes	jū ip-pun	eleven minutes
yon pun	four minutes	jū ni fun	twelve minutes
go fun	five minutes	ni-jup-pun	twenty minutes
rop-pun	six minutes	yon-jū nana fun	forty-seven minutes
nana fun	seven minutes	go-jū rop-pun	fifty-six minutes
hachi fun <i>or</i> hap-pun	eight minutes		

Here are some examples of times.

ichi ji go fun	1:05	yo ji jup-pun	4:10
shichi ji san-jū nana fun	7:37	jū ni ji go-jū kyū fun	12:59
gozen go ji san-jup-pun	5:30 A.M.		
gogo hachi ji ni-jū hap-pun	8:28 P.M.		
rei ji san pun	00:03	(12:03 A.M. or P.M.)	
jū san ji rop-pun	13:06	(1:06 P.M.)	
ni-jū san ji go-jū kyū fun	23:59	(11:59 P.M.)	

✓ **LEARNING JAPANESE:** If you started at the beginning of this book and are working your way conscientiously through the chapters, you're probably ready to scream, "There's no way I can remember all this stuff!" Well, that's true. You can't remember it all, at least not all at once. Learning to speak a language requires time and practice. But here are some hints to help things go a bit more smoothly:

- Practice saying the words and phrases out loud. Don't try to remember them all just by reading silently. Languages are far more spoken than written, and they are best learned by speaking.
- Quiz yourself. To learn the numbers, try counting from one to a thousand. Whenever you notice a clock, read the time aloud in Japanese. Practice the word lists by looking only at the English side and trying to remember the Japanese equivalent for each word.
- Be fearless. If you have a chance to use Japanese, then speak!



## EVERYDAY OBJECTS

### Chizu arimasu ka?

*Do you have a map?*

chizu            *map*  
arimasu        *to have, to be*

☑ **DO YOU HAVE...?:** To ask for something, replace **chizu** in the above sentence. For example:

**Pen arimasu ka?**

*Do you have a pen?*

If the answer is *yes*, then the other person may use the word *hai yes* [5]. Often the verb **arimasu** is repeated back as confirmation.

**Hai, arimasu.**

*Yes, I do.*

If the answer is *no*, then you may hear the following. The word **arimasen** is the negative form [35, 37] of the verb **arimasu**.

**Īe, arimasen.**

*No, I don't.*

Another possible reply uses **sumimasen** *I'm sorry* and **nai**, the plain form [34] of the negative verb **arimasen**. The word **n**, pronounced as a syllable by itself, is the short form of the function word **no**. (The combination **nai n** sounds like *nine*.)

**Sumimasen, nai n desu.**

*I'm sorry, I don't.*

☑ **PAPER, COMB, SLIPPERS:** The following are words for everyday objects. Substitute them for **chizu** in the sentence above.

kami	paper	hasami	scissors
binsen	writing paper, stationery	shimbun	newspaper
hagaki	postcard	zasshi	magazine
fūtō	envelope	hon	book
kitte	stamp		

tokei	watch, clock		
mezamashi-dokei	alarm clock		
burashi	hairbrush	beddo	bed
kushi	comb	futon	mattress, futon
ha-burashi	toothbrush	shitsu	bed sheet
ha-migaki	toothpaste	mōfu	blanket
kuchi-beni	lipstick	kakebuton	quilt, top futon
sekken	soap	makura	pillow
		zabuton	floor cushion
surippa	slippers	isu	chair
kutsu	shoes	tēburu	table
kutsu-shita	socks	o-miyage	souvenir, gift
sutokkingu	stockings	kimono	kimono
tebukuro	gloves	ningyō	doll
bōshi	hat	shikki	lacquerware
		tōjiki	porcelain
naifu	knife	kinu	silk
fōku	fork	omocha	toy
supūn	spoon	shinju	pearl
sara	plate, dish		
koppu	drinking glass		
kappu	cup		
napukin	napkin		
o-shibori	moistened washcloth		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COINS: & BILLS	o-kane	money	
	ichi en dama	¥1 coin	
	go en dama	¥5 coin	
	jū en dama	¥10 coin	
	go-jū en dama	¥50 coin	
	hyaku en dama	¥100 coin	
	go-hyaku en dama	¥500 coin	
	sen-en satsu	¥1,000 bill	
	go-sen en satsu	¥5,000 bill	
	ichi-man en satsu	¥10,000 bill	
	terehon kādo	prepaid telephone card	
	kurejitto kādo	credit card	
	aishī kādo	smart card	

**Pasupōto o nakushimashita.***I've lost my passport.*

pasupōto	<i>passport</i>	
o	<i>object marker</i>	The function word <i>o</i> shows that the previous word is the direct object of the verb.
nakushimashita	<i>lost</i>	This is the polite past tense of the verb <i>nakusu</i> <i>to lose</i> .

☑ **LOST, STOLEN, BROKEN:** If you want to tell someone that you've lost something, substitute the name of the object for *pasupōto* in the above sentence.

**Megane** o nakushimashita.

*I've lost my glasses.*

**Kippu** o nakushimashita.

*I've lost my ticket.*

You may be asked where the object was lost. In that case, the function word *de* is used to show the location.

A Doko **de** nakushimashita ka?

*Where did you lose it?*

B Densha **de**.

*On the train.*

Three other verbs that you can substitute for *nakushimashita* in the above sentence are *wasuremashita* *forgot*, *toraremashita* *stolen*, and *kowashimashita* *broke*.

Pasupōto o **wasuremashita**.

*I forgot my passport.*

Eki de kaban o **toraremashita**.

*My bag was stolen at the station.*

O-furo de megane o **kowashimashita**.

*I broke my glasses in the bath.*

☑ **HELP!**: You never know when you might need assistance, so here's a good word to remember:

**Tasukete!**  
*Help!*

While effective in attracting attention, *tasukete* is vague about what kind of help you need. If you need the police, try this:

**Keisatsu o yonde kudasai.**  
*Please call **the** police.*

Here *yonde* is the imperative form [21] of the verb *yobu to call*. The word *kudasai* makes the request more polite.

Other words you can substitute for *keisatsu* *police* in this sentence are *isha* *doctor* and *kyūkyū-sha* *ambulance*:

**Isha o yonde kudasai.**  
*Please call **a** doctor.*

**Kyūkyū-sha o yonde kudasai.**  
*Please call for **an** ambulance.*

☑ **PAST TENSE**: The words *nakushimashita*, *toraremashita*, *wasuremashita*, and *kowashimashita* all end in *-mashita*. That's because these are past tense verbs, and *-mashita* is the polite past tense ending for all verbs except *da/desu*. The following are the plain forms [15, 34], polite present tense forms [29], and polite past tense forms of all the verbs we have seen so far. Complete verb tables appear in [A2, A3].

Plain	Polite Present	Polite Past	Meaning
aru	arimasu	arimashita	to be, to have
da	desu	deshita	to be
iku	ikimasu	ikimashita	to go
kowasu	kowashimasu	kowashimashita	to break
nakusu	nakushimasu	nakushimashita	to lose
suru	shimasu	shimashita	to do
torareru	toraremasu	toraremashita	to be stolen
wasureru	wasuremasu	wasuremashita	to forget
yobu	yobimasu	yobimashita	to call

**Hajimemashite. Maria Gomesu desu.***I'm pleased to meet you. I'm Maria Gomez.*

hajimemashite	<i>I'm pleased to meet you. How do you do?</i> Use this word when you meet someone for the first time.
desu	Here, <b>desu</b> means <i>I am</i> . If you were introducing Ms. Gomez to another person, you would also say <b>Maria Gomesu desu</b> , meaning <i>This is Maria Gomez</i> .

☑ **How Do You Do?:** Another standard first-time greeting is *dōzo yoroshiku*. To be even more polite, people often tack *o-negai shimasu* [5] onto the end:

Hajimemashite. Maria Gomesu desu.

Dōzo yoroshiku o-negai shimasu.

*How do you do? I'm Maria Gomez.*

*It's a pleasure to make your acquaintance.*

You might want to mention your country, where you work, or other information about yourself. Use the function word *no*:

**Amerika no** Firu Jonson desu.

*I'm Phil Johnson from America.*

**Fuiripin Taishi-kan no** Maria Gomesu desu.

*I'm Maria Gomez of the Philippine Embassy.*

**Rondon ofisu no** Paueru desu.

*I'm Powell from the London office.*

☑ **THE ALMIGHTY DŌMO:** A useful word not only during introductions but in practically any situation is *dōmo*. It can mean *thank you* or substitute for *hello*, *good-bye*, and much else. During introductions, people often say *Dōmo, hajimemashite*. You can say *dōmo* when a store clerk hands you your purchases, when you run into an acquaintance, or when you are about to hang up the telephone. And it's part of *Dōmo arigatō* *Thank you very much* [5].

Here are some typical introductions. Ms. Gomez begins by introducing herself to Mr. Watanabe.

G Maria Gomesu desu. Hajimemashite.

*I'm Maria Gomez. How do you do?*

W Hajimemashite. Watanabe desu. Dōzo yoroshiku.

*How do you do? I'm Watanabe. I'm pleased to meet you.*

Then Ms. Gomez introduces her assistant, Ricardo Ramos.

G Kare wa Rikarudo Ramosu desu. (kare = he [30])

*He is Ricardo Ramos.*

R Hajimemashite. Fuiripin Taishi-kan no Ramosu desu. Dōzo yoroshiku o-negai shimasu.

*How do you do? I'm Ramos from the Philippine Embassy. I'm very pleased to make your acquaintance.*

W Dōmo, hajimemashite. Yoroshiku o-negai shimasu.

*How do you do? The pleasure is mine.*

Note that Mr. Watanabe dropped the word *dōzo* from in front of *yoroshiku*. In this situation, *dōzo* has no particular meaning. It just adds a little extra politeness, and people often omit it.

**LAST NAMES:** In Japanese, the family name always comes first. If a man is called Kurokawa Yasushi, then his family name is Kurokawa and his given name is Yasushi. When Japanese people use English, they often reverse the order. Thus Mr. Kurokawa's English business card might show his name as Yasushi Kurokawa.

How should you say your name in Japanese? If you're Chinese, Korean, or another nationality that puts the family name first, then just keep the same order as in your home country. Otherwise, though, you may run into snags. Some years ago, I noticed that I was being called Tomu-san *Mr. Tom* in situations where Japanese use only family names [20]. I tried reversing my name to Garī Tomu, but then people who knew English assumed that my family name was Tomu. Before I knew it, I was back to Tomu-san again. Now I stick to Tomu Garī and let people call me whatever they want.