



japanese conversation
helen gilhooly

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Recorded at Alchemy Studios, London.

Cast: Masashi Fujimoto, Megumi Kubota, Eiji Kusuhara,
Sarah Sherborne, You-ri Yamanaka.

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If you want to learn Japanese script, try *Beginner's Japanese Script* in the **teach yourself** range.

Track listing

1

CD1

track 1: introduction

tracks 2–10: conversation 1: introductions and greetings

tracks 11–17: conversation 2: making phone calls

tracks 18–24: conversation 3: eating out

tracks 25–31: conversation 4: shopping

tracks 32–38: conversation 5: buying food and drink to take home

CD2

tracks 1–7: conversation 6: asking for directions

tracks 8–14: conversation 7: sightseeing

tracks 15–21: conversation 8: feeling ill

tracks 22–28: conversation 9: on the move

tracks 29–35: conversation 10: visiting

CD3

track 1: introduction and survival phrases

tracks 2–5: conversation 1: introductions and greetings

tracks 6–9: conversation 2: making phone calls

tracks 10–13: conversation 3: eating out

tracks 14–18: conversation 4: shopping

tracks 19–21: conversation 5: buying food and drink to take home

tracks 22–24: conversation 6: asking for directions

tracks 25–27: conversation 7: sightseeing

tracks 28–30: conversation 8: feeling ill

tracks 31–33: conversation 9: on the move

track 34: conversation 10: visiting

track 35: congratulations!

Conversation 1: Introductions and greetings

Part 1: Arriving at the airport

- Miyuki** Aa*! Sarah-san! **Nihon e yōkoso.**
- Sarah** Miyuki-san! **Konnichiwa.**
- Miyuki** Chris-san **desu ka. Hajimemashite,** Tanaka Miyuki desu.
- Chris** Hajimemashite, Chris Adams desu.
Dōzo yoroshiku.
- Miyuki** Dōzo yoroshiku.

Part 2: Meeting and greeting

- Sarah** **Ohayō gozaimasu.**
- Japanese guest** Ohayō gozaimasu.
(Sarah gestures for the Japanese guest to go first.)
- Sarah** **Dōzo.**
- Japanese guest** **Aa, sumimasen.**
- ***
- Chris** **Konbanwa.**
- Miyuki** Konbanwa. Dōzo.
(Miyuki hands the information to Chris.)
- Chris** **Arigatō gozaimasu.**
- ***
- Chris** Hajimemashite. Chris Adams desu.
Dōzo yoroshiku.
- Husband** Hajimemashite. Tanaka Ken'ichi desu.
Dōzo yoroshiku.

*The keywords for each conversation are written in **bold**.

Miyuki *Hey, Sarah! Welcome to Japan.*
Sarah *Miyuki! Hello!*
Miyuki *Are you Chris? How do you do? I am Miyuki Tanaka.*
Chris *How do you do? I am Chris Adams.
I'm pleased to meet you.*
Miyuki *Pleased to meet you.*

Sarah *Good morning.*
Japanese guest *Good morning.*
(Sarah gestures for the Japanese guest to go first.)
Sarah *Go ahead, after you.*
Japanese guest *Oh, excuse me (thank you for your trouble).*

Chris *Good evening.*
Miyuki *Good evening. There you are.*
(Miyuki hands the information to Chris.)

Chris *Thank you.*

Chris *How do you do? I am Chris Adams,
pleased to meet you.*
Husband *How do you do? I am Ken'ichi Tanaka.
Pleased to meet you.*

Conversation 2: Making phone calls

Part 1: Receiving a message

- Chris** Konnichiwa.
Receptionist Konnichiwa. Adams-san desu **ne**.
Chris **Hai, sō desu.**
Receptionist Tanaka Miyuki-san ni **denwa shite kudasai**.
Denwa **bangō** wa 232 1321 desu.
Chris Sumimasen, **mō ichido itte kudasai**.
Receptionist 232 1321 desu.
Chris Arigatō.

Part 2: Speaking on the phone

- Chris** **Moshi moshi**. Miyuki-san desu ka.
Woman Sumimasen. Miyuki-san wa **ima rusu** desu.
Chris Aa, sō desu ka.
Woman **Keitai denwa** bangō wa 07792 – 323245 desu.
Chris Arigatō gozaimasu. **Shitsurei shimasu**.

Chris *Hello.*
Receptionist *Hello, It's Mr Adams, isn't it?*
Chris *Yes, that's right.*
Receptionist *Please phone Miyuki Tanaka.*
 Her number is 232 1321.
Chris *Sorry, could you repeat that?*
Receptionist *It's 232 1321.*
Chris *Thanks.*

Chris *Hello. Is that Miyuki?*
Woman *Sorry, Miyuki isn't in at present.*
Chris *Aah, is that right?*
Woman *Her mobile phone number is 07792 – 323245.*
Chris *Thank you. Sorry for disturbing you.*

Conversation 3: Eating out

Part 1: In a coffee shop

Waiter O-kimari desu ka.

Sarah Hai. **Hamu sandoitchi to kōhii o kudasai.**

Chris **Boku wa chiizu sandoitchi to kōhii o kudasai.**

Waiter Hamu sandoitchi o **hitotsu** to, chiizu sandoitchi o hitotsu to kōhii o **futatsu** desu ne.

Sarah Hai, sō desu.

(A little later)

Chris **Kono sandoitchi wa oishii** desu.

Sarah Kono kōhii **mo** oishii desu ne.

Part 2: In a Japanese restaurant

Waitress O-kimari desu ka.

Chris **Sushi teishoku** o kudasai.

Sarah **Soshite tempura teishoku o onegaishimasu.**

Waitress **O-nomimono wa?**

Chris **Bīru** o futatsu to **sake** o hitotsu kudasai.

Waitress **Kashikomarimashita.**

Waiter *Have you decided?*

Sarah *Yes. A ham sandwich and coffee, please.*

Chris *As for me, I'll have a cheese sandwich and coffee, please.*

Waiter *One ham sandwich, one cheese sandwich
and two coffees.*

Sarah *Yes, that's right.*

(A little later)

Chris *This sandwich is delicious.*

Sarah *This coffee also is delicious, isn't it?*

Waitress *Have you decided?*

Chris *Please may I have the sushi set meal?*

Sarah *And also the tempura set meal, please.*

Waitress *How about drinks?*

Chris *Two beers and a sake, please.*

Waitress *Certainly, Sir.*

Conversation 4: Shopping

Part 1: Buying a camera film

- Shopkeeper** Irasshaimase.
- Chris** Sumimasen. Kono **firumu** wa **ikura** desu ka.
- Shopkeeper** **Sore** wa go **hyaku en** desu.
- Chris** Fuji firumu **ga arimasu ka**.
- Shopkeeper** Hai, **kore** desu.
- Chris** Ikura desu ka.
- Shopkeeper** Kore wa yon hyaku en desu.
- Chris** **Jā**, Fuji firumu o mittsu kudasai.
- Shopkeeper** Kashikomarimashita.
Zembu de sen ni hyaku en desu.
- Chris** Dōzo.
- Shopkeeper** Arigatō gozaimasu.

Part 2: Buying Japanese souvenirs

- Shop assistant** Irasshaimase.
- Sarah** Sumimasen. Sono **ningyō** wa ikura desu ka.
- Shop assistant** Kore wa gosen-en desu.
- Sarah** **Sensu** ga arimasu ka.
- Shop assistant** Hai, arimasu. **Are** wa kyū hyaku en desu.
- Sarah** Jā, sono ningyō o hitotsu to **ano** sensu o mittsu kudasai. Soshite kono **chōchin** o futatsu kudasai.
- Shop assistant** Zembu de kyū sen-en desu.
- Sarah** Dōzo.
- Shop assistant** Arigatō gozaimashita. Mata okoshi kudasai.

Shopkeeper *Welcome, how may I help you?*
Chris *Excuse me, how much is this film?*
Shopkeeper *That one is 500 yen.*
Chris *Do you have any Fuji film?*
Shopkeeper *Yes, this one.*
Chris *How much is it?*
Shopkeeper *This one is 400 yen.*
Chris *Right, I'll have three Fuji films please.*
Shopkeeper *Certainly, Sir.
Altogether that's 1,200 yen.*
Chris *There you go.*
Shopkeeper *Thank you very much.*

Shop assistant *Welcome, may I help you?*
Sarah *Excuse me, how much is this doll?*
Shop assistant *This is 5,000 yen.*
Sarah *Do you have any fans?*
Shop assistant *Yes (we have). Those ones over there are 900 yen.*
Sarah *Right, I'll have one of that doll and three of those fans over there, please. Also I'll have two of these paper lanterns.*
Shop assistant *Altogether, that is 9,000 yen.*
Sarah *There you are.*
Shop assistant *Thank you very much. Please shop here again.*

Conversation 5: Buying food and drink to take home

Part 1: In the food hall

- Shop assistant** Irasshai, irasshaimase!
- Sarah** Sumimasen. **Ocha** ga arimasu ka.
- Shop assistant** Hai, **iroiro arimasu yo**.
- Sarah** Kore wa ikura desu ka.
- Shop assistant** Sore wa ni sen en desu.
- Sarah** **Chotto takai** desu ne.
- Shop assistant** Kore wa yon hyaku-en desu.
- Sarah** **Zuibun yasui** desu ne. **Misete kudasai**.
Jā, kore o mittsu kudasai.
- Shop assistant** Kashikomarimashita.
- Chris** Sumimasen. Kono **okashi** wa ikura desu ka.
- Shop assistant** Sore wa ichi **man**-en desu.
- Chris** **Aa!** Takai desu ne!

Part 2: Buying Japanese rice wine

- Stallholder** Irasshai, irasshai!
- Chris** Sumimasen. Kono osake wa ikura desu ka.
- Stallholder** Sore wa **tokkyūshu** desu. San man-en desu.
- Chris** San man-en desu ka. Takai desu ne.
- Stallholder** **Tokubetsuna** osake desu yo.
Kore wa **ikkyūshu** desu. Gosen-en desu.
- Chris** Sore wa zuibun yasui desu ne. Oishii desu ka.
- Stallholder** Oishii desu **yo**.
- Chris** Jā sore o hitotsu kudasai.
Nikyūshu ga arimasu ka.

- Shop assistant** *Welcome, welcome, how may I help you?*
- Sarah** *Excuse me, do you have any green tea?*
- Shop assistant** *Yes, we have all sorts.*
- Sarah** *How much is this one?*
- Shop assistant** *That one is 2,000 yen.*
- Sarah** *It's a bit expensive, isn't it?*
- Shop assistant** *This one is 400 yen.*
- Sarah** *That's a lot cheaper, isn't it? Please show it to me.
Right, I'll have three of these, please.*
- Shop assistant** *Certainly, Madam.*
- Chris** *Excuse me. These cakes, how much are they?*
- Shop assistant** *Those are 10,000 yen.*
- Chris** *Wow! They're expensive, aren't they!*
-
- Stallholder** *Welcome, welcome.*
- Chris** *Excuse me, how much is this sake?*
- Stallholder** *That one is special grade. It's 30,000 yen.*
- Chris** *30,000 yen? That's expensive, isn't it?*
- Stallholder** *It's special sake you know. This one is first grade.
It's 5,000 yen.*
- Chris** *That one is a lot cheaper, isn't it? Is it delicious?*
- Stallholder** *It's delicious, sure.*
- Chris** *Right, one of those, please.
Do you have any second grade?*

Stallholder Hai, iroiro arimasu yo. Kore wa oishii desu.
Sanzen-en desu.

Chris Jā, sore mo hitotsu kudasai.

Stallholder Kashikomarimashita.

Conversation 6: Asking for directions

Part 1: Where is Tokyo station?

Sarah Sumimasen.

Passer-by Hai?

Sarah Tokyo **eki** wa **doko** desu ka.

Passer-by Tokyo eki desu ka. **Massugu itte kudasai.**
Soshite **shingō** o **migi** ni **magatte kudasai.**

Sarah Shingō o migi desu ne.

Passer-by Sō desu. Tokyo eki wa **hidarigawa ni arimasu.**
Depāto no **mukaigawa** desu.

Sarah Hidarigawa desu ne. Arigatō gozaimasu.

Part 2: Where is the Meiji Shrine?

Sarah Are! Meiji Jingū wa doko desu ka.

Chris Sumimasen. Meiji Jingū wa doko desu ka.

Passer-by Meiji Jingū desu ka. **Ē to**, massugu itte,
ginkō o migi ni magatte kudasai.

Chris Ginkō o migi desu ne.

Passer-by Hai, sō desu. Sono ginkō wa **kōen** no **soba** desu.
Meiji Jingū wa kōen no **naka** ni arimasu.

Chris **Wakarimashita.** Arigatō gozaimasu.

Stallholder Yes, we have all sorts. This one is delicious.
It's 3,000 yen.

Chris Right, one of those as well, please.

Stallholder Certainly, Sir.

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Sarah Excuse me.

Passer-by Yes?

Sarah Where is Tokyo station?

Passer-by Tokyo station? Go straight ahead.
And then turn right at the traffic lights.

Sarah Turn right at the traffic lights, right?

Passer-by That's right. Tokyo station is located on the left-hand side.
It's opposite the department store.

Sarah The left-hand side? Thank you very much.

Sarah Hey! Where is the Meiji Shrine?

Chris Excuse me, where is the Meiji Shrine?

Passer-by The Meiji Shrine? Let's think, go straight ahead.
Then turn right at the bank.

Chris It's right at the bank, right?

Passer-by Yes, that's right. That bank is alongside the park.
The Meiji Shrine is located within the park.

Chris I've got it. Thank you very much.

Conversation 7: Sightseeing

Part 1: Visiting a famous shrine

- Miyuki** Chris-san, Sarah-san, konnichiwa.
Sarah Miyuki-san! Konnichiwa.
Miyuki **Ii otenki** desu ne.
Chris **Mainichi hare** desu ne.
Miyuki-san, kono **jinja** wa **yūmei** desu ka.
Miyuki **Totemo yūmei** desu. **Dō omoimasu ka.**
Chris **Subarashii to omoimasu.**
Sarah Watashi wa totemo **suki** desu.
Chris Kono kōen mo suki desu.
Miyuki Jā, jinja no naka o **mimashō**.

Part 2: Looking around Tokyo

- Chris** Kono **biru** wa takai desu ne.
Miyuki Kore wa **nihon de ichiban** takai desu yo.
Sarah Sō desu ka. **Sugoi** desu ne.
Miyuki Ano biru o **mite kudasai**. Dō omoimasu ka.
Chris **Omoshiroi** to omoimasu. Boku wa suki desu.
Sarah Watashi wa suki dewa arimasen. **Hen** da to omoimasu.

- Miyuki** *Chris, Sarah! Hello!*
- Sarah** *Miyuki! Hello!*
- Miyuki** *It's nice weather, isn't it?*
- Chris** *Every day is fine, isn't it?
Miyuki, is this shrine famous?*
- Miyuki** *It's very famous. What do you think?*
- Chris** *I think it is amazing.*
- Sarah** *I really like it.*
- Chris** *I also like this park.*
- Miyuki** *Right, let's look at the inside of the temple.*
-
- Chris** *This building is high, isn't it?*
- Miyuki** *This is Japan's highest, you know.*
- Sarah** *Really? It's incredible, isn't it?*
- Miyuki** *Please look at that building over there. What do you think?*
- Chris** *I think it is interesting. I like it.*
- Sarah** *I don't like it. I think it is weird.*

Conversation 8: Feeling ill

Part 1: Saying what's wrong

- Miyuki** Chris-san, **dō shita n desu ka.**
- Chris** Chotto ... **kibun ga warui desu.**
- Miyuki** **Kaze o hiita n desu ka.**
- Chris** **Atama ga itai desu. Onaka** mo itai desu.
- Miyuki** Sō desu ka. **Nodo** ga itai desu ka.
- Chris** Chotto itai desu ne. **Mimi** mo chotto itai desu.
- Miyuki** Jā, kaze desu ne. Kono **kusuri o nonde kudasai.**
- Sarah** Kaze dewa arimasen. **Futsuka yoi** desu yo!

Part 2: Going to the pharmacist

- Pharmacist** Irasshaimase.
- Sarah** Sumimasen. Atama ga itai desu.
Nodo mo chotto itai desu.
- Pharmacist** **Netsu ga arimasu** ka.
- Sarah** Hai, **sanjū hachi do** desu.
- Pharmacist** Kono kusuri wa ii desu yo.
Ichi-nichi san kai nonde kudasai.
- Sarah** San kai desu ne.
- Pharmacist** Hai. **Shokugo ni** nonde kudasai.
- Sarah** Wakarimashita. Dōmo arigatō.

Miyuki *Chris, what's the matter?*
Chris *I'm a bit ... I don't feel well.*
Miyuki *Have you got a cold?*
Chris *I've got a headache. And a stomach ache.*
Miyuki *Really? Is your throat sore?*
Chris *It is a bit sore, yes. My ears hurt too.*
Miyuki *Right, it's a cold isn't it? Please take this medicine.*
Sarah *It's not a cold. It's a hangover!*

Pharmacist *Welcome, how may I help you?*
Sarah *Excuse me, I have a headache.
My throat is a little sore too.*
Pharmacist *Do you have a fever?*
Sarah *Yes, it's 38 degrees.*
Pharmacist *This medicine is good.
Please take it three times per day.*
Sarah *Three times, right?*
Pharmacist *Yes. Please take it after meals.*
Sarah *Understood. Thank you.*

Conversation 9: On the move

Part 1: Taking the bullet train

Chris Kyōto-yuki no **kippu** o **nimai** kudasai.

Ticket officer **Katamichi** desu ka. **Ōfuku** desu ka.

Chris Ōfuku desu.

Ticket officer Zembu de sanman nisen en desu.

Chris Dōzo. **Tsugi no densha wa nanji desu ka.**

Ticket officer **Jū-ji han** desu. **Yonban-sen** desu.

Chris Dōmo arigatō.

Part 2: Finding the right platform

Sarah Sumimasen, **koko** wa yonban-sen desu ka.

Passer-by **lie**, koko wa goban-sen desu.
Yonban-sen wa **asoko** desu.

Sarah Dōmo arigatō.

Chris Tsugi no densha wa jū-ji han desu ne.
Ima nan ji desu ka.

Sarah **Ima** jū-ji jūgo fun desu.

Chris Jā, kōhii o **kaimashō**.

Chris *Two tickets for Kyoto, please.*
Ticket officer *Is that one way or return?*
Chris *It's return.*
Ticket officer *Altogether it's 32,000 yen.*
Chris *There you go. What time is the next train?*
Ticket officer *Half past 10. Platform 4.*
Chris *Thank you.*

Sarah *Excuse me, is this platform 4?*
Passer-by *No, this is platform 5.
Platform 4 is over there.*
Sarah *Thank you.*
Chris *The next train is half past 10, isn't it?
What time is it now?*
Sarah *Now it is quarter past 10.*
Chris *Right, let's buy a coffee.*

Conversation 10: Visiting

Part 1: Welcome to my home

- Sarah and Chris** Gomen kudasai!
- Mrs Ueno** Ā, Chris-san, Sarah-san!
Yoku irasshaimashita.
- Chris and Sarah** Konnichiwa.
- Mrs Ueno** Dōzo, **o-hairi kudasai!**
- Sarah** Shitsurei shimasu.
- Mrs Ueno** **Kochira e dōzo ... O-kake kudasai.**
- Chris** Shitsurei shimasu.
- ***
- Mrs Ueno** Kyōto wa dō omoimasu ka.
- Sarah** Totemo **kirei** da to omoimasu.
- Chris** **O-tera** mo jinja mo subarashii
desu ne.
- Mrs Ueno** **Doko ni ikimashita ka.**
- Sarah** **Kinkakuji, Ginkakuji, Ryōanji . . .**
sō desu ne.
Subete ikimashita!
- Chris** **Ashita Nijōjō** ni ikimasu.
- Mrs Ueno** Sō desu ka. Nijōjō wa totemo yūmei desu yo.

Part 2: Having something to eat

- Mr Ueno** Ā, Sarah-san! Yoku irasshaimashita!
Go-shujin desu ka.
- Chris** Hajimemashite, Chris Adams desu.
Dōzo yoroshiku.
- Mr Ueno** Ueno Tadashi desu. Dōzo yoroshiku.
Dōzo, dōzo, o-kake kudasai.
- Mrs Ueno** Jā, tabemashō!

- Sarah and Chris** *May we come in?*
- Mrs Ueno** *Aah, Chris, Sarah!
Welcome to my home!*
- Chris and Sarah** *Hello.*
- Mrs Ueno** *Do come in!*
- Sarah** *Sorry for disturbing you.*
- Mrs Ueno** *Come this way ... Please sit down.*
- Chris** *Sorry for disturbing you.*
- ***
- Mrs Ueno** *What do you think of Kyoto?*
- Sarah** *I think it is very beautiful.*
- Chris** *Both the temples and the shrines are amazing,
aren't they?*
- Mrs Ueno** *Where did you go?*
- Sarah** *The Golden Temple, the Silver Temple,
the Ryōanji Temple and rock garden ... indeed.
We went everywhere.*
- Chris** *Tomorrow we are going to Nijō castle.*
- Mrs Ueno** *Really? Nijō castle is very famous, you know.*
-
- Mr Ueno** *Aah, Sarah! Welcome to my home.
Is this your husband?*
- Chris** *How do you do? I am Chris Adams.
Pleased to meet you.*
- Mr Ueno** *I am Ueno Tadashi. Pleased to meet you.
Go on, go on, sit down, please.*
- Mrs Ueno** *Right, let's eat!*

Chris, Sarah, Mr Ueno **Itadakimasu!**

Chris Mmm, totemo oishii desu.

Sarah Kore wa sushi desu ne.
Watashi wa daisuki desu.

Mrs Ueno Arigatō gozaimasu.
O-kawari wa?

Sarah **Mō kekkō desu. Gochisōsama deshita.**

Chris and Mr Ueno Gochisōsama.

Mrs Ueno Jā, ocha o nomimashō!

Chris, Sarah, Mr Ueno *Bon appetit!*
Chris *Mmm, it is very delicious.*
Sarah *This is sushi, isn't it?*
I love it.
Mrs Ueno *Thank you very much.*
Would you like some more?
Sarah *I'm full, thank you. That was a feast!*
Chris and Mr Ueno *Thanks for the meal.*
Mrs Ueno *Right, let's have some green tea.*

Cultural information

Bowing

Bowing is an integral part of Japanese etiquette and social life. People bow when they meet each other; school children bow at the beginning and end of lessons; news readers bow at the beginning of the programme, roadwork signs show workmen bowing in apology; you even see people bowing on the phone! It is an important way of showing respect for other people and you soon feel at home with it. Simply keep your arms by your side, bow from the waist, don't make the bow either too shallow or too deep and take your lead from the other person.

Mobile phones

The mobile-phone industry has boomed in Japan with over 75 per cent of the population owning one and the numbers growing all the time. Japanese technology has led the way with innovations such as sending e-mail and photos via your mobile and it is only a matter of time before Japanese mobile phones will be able to control all the electronic gadgets in the home, even while you are out. Young Japanese people even have a nickname – *oya yubi zoku* – which means 'the finger thumb tribe' because their fingers are so busy texting at top speed!

Japanese food

There is an enormous range of Japanese food with huge regional variety but here are short descriptions of five classic dishes:

- *Sushi* is often mistakenly translated as 'raw fish', the word actually means 'vinegared rice'. Sushi rice is made by seasoning rice with rice vinegar, sugar and salt. Sushi chefs take up to 10 years to become fully qualified and many have their own secret method for preparing sushi rice which they guard carefully. There are different types of sushi, the classic one being *nigirizushi*. These are ovals of sushi rice with toppings such as raw fish, seafood and omelette-style egg usually with a dab of *wasabi* (hot green mustard) in between.
- *Sashimi* is raw, very fresh, sliced fish of many varieties. The skill is in the cutting of the fish and, as with all Japanese dishes, the

presentation. The joy of eating raw fish is in the texture – it almost melts in the mouth like smoked salmon and does not have the slimy texture or strong smell that many Westerners associate with raw fish.

- *Tempura* is seafood, fish and vegetables deep fried in a very light and crisp batter and dipped into a fish stock-based sauce called *tentsuyu*.
- *Yakitori* means ‘grilled bird’ and traditionally was pieces of chicken dipped in sauce and grilled on bamboo skewers. Nowadays you also get vegetables, pork and beef cooked yakitori-style.
- *Miso shiru* is bean-paste soup and is one of the basic components of a traditional Japanese meal along with rice (*gohan*) and pickles (*tsukemono*). If you order *teishoku* (set meal) in a restaurant these three dishes will accompany your main dish.

Tokyo

Tokyo is a busy and crowded capital city of 11.4 million people and it would certainly be true to say that the city never sleeps! There are many, many shopping areas, arcades and department stores both above and below ground. Must-see areas for shopping include: *Ginza* where you may decide to window shop only when you see the prices; *Shinjuku* which has a massive underground shopping centre; *Harajuku* and *Shibuya*, which have many trendy boutiques and where you can see young Japanese people parading in head-turning fashions; and *Akihabara* where there are hundreds of discount electrical stores selling all the latest gadgets and gizmos.

Shopping in Japan

There is a saying in Japanese: *Okyakusama wa kamisama desu* which means ‘the customer is god’. The level of service in Japanese shops, and in particular in department stores, is very high and Japanese people expect this. Shop assistants use very polite Japanese grammar and phrases and in department stores they wear very smart uniforms and bow as customers enter the shop, lift or escalator. Even in small shops, shopkeepers are very deferential towards their customers. At markets and festival stalls, on the other hand, there is often a more bustling and informal atmosphere with stallholders calling out their wares and greeting potential customers with *irasshai* – a more informal version of *irasshaimase*.

Geography

Japan consists of about 3,600 islands, which spread in a long arc of 3,200 km (the distance from London to Moscow). In area, it is the size of California and 1½ times the size of Britain. Most of the population of 127 million people live on the four main islands, which are (North to South): Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu. Seventy-five per cent of Japan is mountainous and so most of the population live in the flatter coastal areas where population density is very high (one of the highest in the world behind Bangladesh and South Korea). Japan is susceptible to land subsidence, earthquakes, volcanoes and tidal waves. On average there are three quakes or tremors per day somewhere in Japan but many are too mild to feel. Japan's highest mountain is Mount Fuji at 3,776 m – this is also a dormant volcano.

Religion in Japan

Modern-day Japan has no state religion but its two main religions are Shinto and Buddhism. Shinto worship is native to Japan and can be traced back to ancient history and mythology. It has no written doctrine and is associated with ancestor and nature worship. The belief is that *kami* (gods) are everywhere and can be called on to protect and help humans. Shinto worship is carried out at *jinja* (shrines). Buddhism, which began in India was introduced to Japan via China and Korea in the 6th century AD. Worship takes place in temples. Nowadays these two religions are well integrated and people use both for different purposes. Shinto shrines are used for celebrations and thanksgiving (weddings, births, rice planting) and Buddhist temples are used for solemn events such as funerals. Temples and shrines often occupy the same grounds.

Written Japanese

There are three types of writing or scripts in Japanese (four if you include *rōmaji* – Japanese written using a, b, c ...). These three scripts are *hiragana*, *katakana* and *kanji*, and each has a specific use.

Kanji, meaning 'Chinese character', was developed in China in the 14th century BC and introduced to Japan from the 4th century AD where it was adapted to fit the Japanese language. *Kanji* are not separate letters but are ideographs, which convey a specific

meaning, word or idea. The simplest *kanji* developed from pictures drawn by the Chinese of the world around them such as trees, mountains, the moon and the sun. Although there are as many as 50,000 *kanji*, in modern-day Japan there is an approved list of 1,945 for everyday use and these are the ones taught in school.

Hiragana and *katakana* are both phonetic scripts. This means that each symbol represents a sound or phoneme (rather than a letter). There are 46 basic sounds and the *hiragana* and *katakana* scripts are two ways of writing these sounds. We also have two ways of writing the alphabet – capitals and lower case – but the two Japanese scripts are used for different purposes:

Hiragana is used to write the grammatical parts of words and sentences and for words which don't have a *kanji*. *Katakana* is used for writing non-Japanese words that have been introduced into the language. You have learnt some of these: *kōhii*, *kamera*.

Travelling by train

Japan has a highly efficient railway system run by a number of private companies, the largest one being JR (Japan Railways). A huge 30 per cent of passenger travel is by train because travel by road is relatively slow and distances between cities are long. The *shinkansen* or bullet train was once the fastest train in the world with a top speed of 275 km/hour (165 mph) and the journey from Tokyo to Osaka (515 km) takes just 2½ hours. The future for rail travel in Japan looks exciting too with the development of the linear motor train or *maglev* (magnetically levitated train). In recent tests it reached a speed of 552 km/hour (331 mph), the fastest ever speed for a manned train. This would reduce the travel time from Tokyo to Osaka to just one hour!

Home-visiting etiquette

When you visit a Japanese home you should always take off your shoes in the hallway and put on the slippers provided. The same rule applies in Japanese-style hotels and many restaurants too. If you go into a *tatami*-mat room (*tatami* is made from rice straw) you should take off your slippers too. If you go to the toilet there is usually a pair of toilet slippers to put on (but don't forget to take them off again when you come out!).

When you first sit down, it is polite to sit in the formal *seiza* (kneeling) position. Formal greetings and bows are normally done from this position and your host will invite you to relax after a short time. When 'relaxing', men usually sit cross-legged and women with their legs folded to one side. If you need to stretch your legs out try not to point your feet towards anyone as this is considered to be very bad manners. Also don't blow your nose in front of people because this is considered to be very rude – try and turn away or move to the corner of the room and do it discreetly!

If you are staying the night and are invited to take a bath, you should always wash outside of the bath (a shower or bowl with sponge and soap will be provided) and use the bath for soaking in. The water needs to remain relatively clean because it will be used by other members of the family (so don't pull the plug out!). Baths are short and deep so you sit rather than lie out in them. You might find that the water is much hotter than you are used to but it is great for having a good soak in.

Listening skills: Survival phrases

29

Please say it again.

Mō ichido itte kudasai.

Please say it more slowly.

Motto yukkuri itte kudasai.

Please say it again, slowly.

Mō ichido yukkuri itte kudasai.

What does xxx mean?

xxx wa dō iu imi desu ka.

Can you say it in simpler
Japanese?

*Motto kantanna nihongo de itte
kudasai.*

Please could you draw/write it?

Kaite kudasai.

I'm sorry, I don't understand.

Sumimasen, wakarimasen.

Japanese–English glossary

aa <i>oh, hey, wow!</i>	ē to <i>erm, let's think</i>
ano <i>that over there</i>	e yōkoso <i>welcome to</i>
are <i>that one over there</i>	eki <i>station</i>
are! <i>what! wow!</i>	en <i>yen, Japanese currency</i>
arigatō gozaimashita <i>thank you</i> <i>very much</i>	firumu <i>camera film</i>
arigatō gozaimasu <i>thank you</i>	futatsu <i>two items</i>
ashita <i>tomorrow</i>	futsuka yoi <i>hangover</i>
asoko <i>over there</i>	
atama <i>head</i>	
	ga arimasu ka <i>do you have any?</i>
ban, bangō <i>number</i>	Ginkakuji <i>The Silver Temple</i>
biru <i>building</i>	go <i>five</i>
bīru <i>beer</i>	ginkō <i>bank</i>
boku / watashi <i>I</i>	gochisōsama deshita <i>said after</i> <i>eating, means 'that was a feast'</i>
	gomen kudasai <i>may I/we come</i> <i>in?, excuse me</i>
chiizu <i>cheese</i>	go-shujin <i>your husband</i>
chōchin <i>paper lantern</i>	
chotto <i>a bit</i>	
	hachi <i>eight</i>
daisuki desu <i>I like it very much</i>	hai <i>yes</i>
densha <i>train</i>	hai, sō desu <i>yes, that's right</i>
denwa <i>phone</i>	hajimemashite <i>how do you do?</i>
depāto <i>department store</i>	hamu <i>ham</i>
desu <i>am, is, are</i>	han <i>half past</i>
desu ka <i>is it?, are you?</i>	hare <i>sunny, fine weather</i>
dewa arimasen <i>is not</i>	hen <i>strange, weird</i>
dō omoimasu ka <i>what do you</i> <i>think?</i>	hidarigawa <i>left-hand side</i>
dō shita n desu ka <i>what's the</i> <i>matter?</i>	hitotsu <i>one item</i>
doko <i>where</i>	hyaku <i>100</i>
doko ni ikimashita ka <i>where did</i> <i>you go?</i>	ichi <i>one</i>
dōzo <i>there you are, go ahead,</i> <i>after you</i>	ichi-nichi <i>each day, per day</i>
dōzo yoroshiku <i>pleased to meet you</i>	ie <i>no</i>
	ii o-tenki <i>nice weather</i>
	ikimasu, ikimashita <i>go, went</i>
	ikkyūshu <i>first grade of sake</i>

ikura desu ka <i>how much is it?</i>	konbanwa <i>good evening</i>
ima <i>now, at the moment</i>	konnichiwa <i>hello, good afternoon</i>
irasshaimase <i>welcome,</i> <i>can I help you?</i>	kono <i>this</i>
iroiro arimasu yo <i>we have all</i> <i>sorts</i>	kore <i>this one</i>
itadakimasu <i>said before eating,</i> <i>like bon appetit</i>	kudasai <i>please, please may I</i> <i>have?</i>
itai desu <i>it hurts, aches, is sore</i>	kusuri o nonde kudasai <i>please</i> <i>take the medicine</i>
itsutsu <i>five</i>	kusuriya <i>pharmacist</i>
itte kudasai <i>please say it,</i> <i>please go</i>	kyū <i>nine</i>
jā <i>right, in that case</i>	magatte kudasai <i>please turn</i>
jinja <i>Shintō shrine</i>	mainichi <i>everyday</i>
jū <i>ten</i>	man <i>10,000</i>
jū go fun <i>quarter past</i>	massugu <i>straight ahead</i>
jū go fun mae <i>quarter to</i>	mata okoshi kudasai <i>please shop</i> <i>here again</i>
jū ji han <i>half past ten</i>	migi <i>right</i>
ka <i>spoken question mark</i>	mimashō <i>let's look at</i>
kaimashō <i>let's buy</i>	mimasu <i>to look</i>
kaimasu <i>to buy</i>	mimi <i>ears</i>
kamera <i>camera</i>	misete kudasai <i>please show me</i>
kashikomarimashita <i>certainly, sir</i> <i>/ madam</i>	mite kudasai <i>please look at</i>
katamichi <i>one way</i>	mittsu <i>three items</i>
kaze o hiita n desu ka <i>have you</i> <i>caught a cold?</i>	mo <i>also, as well</i>
keitai denwa <i>mobile phone</i>	mō ichido <i>once more</i>
kibun ga warui desu <i>I don't feel</i> <i>well</i>	mō kekkō desu <i>I'm full, thank</i> <i>you</i>
Kinkakuji <i>The Golden Temple</i>	moshi moshi <i>hello</i> <i>(on the phone)</i>
kippu <i>ticket</i>	mukaigawa <i>opposite, across</i> <i>from</i>
kirei <i>beautiful</i>	muttsu <i>six</i>
kochira e dōzo <i>this way, please</i>	naka <i>within, in</i>
kōen <i>park</i>	nan <i>what</i>
kōhii <i>coffee</i>	nana <i>seven</i>
koko <i>here, this place</i>	nanatsu <i>seven</i>
kokonotsu <i>nine</i>	nanji desu ka <i>what time is it?</i>
	ne <i>isn't it?</i>

netsu ga arimasu <i>have a fever</i>	ni sandoitchi <i>sandwich</i>
two; to	sanjūhachi do <i>38 degrees</i>
ni arimasu <i>is located</i>	sen <i>thousand</i>
nihon <i>Japan</i>	sensu <i>fan</i>
nihon de ichiban <i>number one in</i>	shingō <i>traffic lights</i>
<i>Japan, Japan's most</i>	Shinkansen <i>bullet train</i>
Nijōjō <i>Nijō castle</i>	shite kudasai <i>please make,</i>
nikyūshu <i>second grade of sake</i>	<i>please do</i>
nimai <i>two items</i>	shitsurei shimasu <i>sorry for</i>
ningyō <i>Japanese doll</i>	<i>disturbing you</i>
nodo <i>throat</i>	shokugo ni <i>after meals</i>
nomimasu <i>to drink</i>	soba <i>alongside</i>
	sono <i>that</i>
o kudasai <i>may I have?</i>	sore <i>that one</i>
ocha <i>green tea</i>	soshite <i>and also</i>
ōfuku <i>return</i>	subarashii to omoimasu <i>I think</i>
o-hairi kudasai <i>please come in</i>	<i>that it is amazing</i>
o-hashī <i>chopsticks</i>	subete <i>everything, everywhere</i>
ohayō gozaimasu <i>good morning</i>	sugoi <i>incredible</i>
oishii <i>delicious</i>	suki <i>I like</i>
o-kake kudasai <i>please sit down</i>	sumimasen <i>excuse me, sorry,</i>
okashi <i>sweets and cakes</i>	<i>thank you for your trouble</i>
o-kawari wa? <i>another helping?</i>	
<i>some more?</i>	tabemasu <i>to eat</i>
o-kimari desu ka <i>have you</i>	takai <i>expensive</i>
<i>decided?</i>	teishoku <i>set meal</i>
omoshiroi <i>interesting</i>	tempura <i>fish and vegetables in</i>
onaka <i>stomach</i>	<i>batter</i>
onegaishimasu <i>please</i>	to <i>and</i>
o-nomimono wa? <i>what about</i>	tō <i>ten</i>
<i>drinks?</i>	tokkyūshu <i>special grade of sake</i>
o-tera <i>temples</i>	tokubetsuna <i>special</i>
	totemo <i>very</i>
roku <i>six</i>	tsugi no <i>the next</i>
rusu <i>not at home</i>	
Ryōanji <i>The Ryōanji Temple and</i>	wa <i>as for</i>
<i>rock garden</i>	wakarimashita <i>I've understood,</i>
	<i>I've got it</i>
san <i>Mr, Mrs or Miss; three</i>	wakarimasu <i>to understand</i>
san kai <i>three times</i>	

yasui *cheap*
yattsu *eight*
yo *you know, for sure*
yoku irasshaimashita *welcome to
my home*
yon *four*
yonban-sen *platform 4*
yottsū *four*
yukata *cotton dressing gown*
yuki *destined for*
yūmei *famous*

zembu de *altogether*
zuibun *a lot, very much*

English–Japanese glossary

<i>ache</i> : it ~s itai desu	kudasai
<i>across from</i> mukaigawa	<i>come in</i> : please ~ o-hairi kudasai
<i>after you</i> dōzo	
<i>afternoon</i> : good ~ konnichiwa	<i>day</i> : each / per ~ ichi-nichi
<i>alongside</i> soba	<i>decided</i> : have you ~? o-kimari
<i>also</i> ; and ~ mo; soshite	desu ka
<i>altogether</i> zembu de	<i>degrees</i> : 38 ~ sanjūhachi do
<i>am</i> desu	<i>delicious</i> oishii
<i>amazing</i> : I think that it is ~	<i>department store</i> depāto
subarashii to omoimasu	<i>destined for</i> yuki
<i>and</i> to	<i>do</i> : please ~ shite kudasai
<i>another</i> : ~ helping? o-kawari	<i>doll</i> : Japanese ~ ningyō
wa?	<i>dress</i> ing gown, cotton yukata
<i>are</i> ; ~ you? desu; desu ka	<i>drink</i> , to nomimasu
<i>as for</i> wa	<i>drinks</i> : what about ~? o-
	nomimono wa?
<i>bank</i> ginkō	
<i>beautiful</i> kirei	<i>ears</i> mimi
<i>beer</i> bīru	<i>eat</i> , to tabemasu
<i>bit</i> : a ~ chotto	<i>eight</i> hachi; yattsu
<i>bon appetit</i> itadakimasu	<i>evening</i> : good ~ konbanwa
<i>building</i> biru	<i>everyday</i> mainichi
<i>bullet train</i> Shinkansen	<i>everything</i> subete
<i>buy</i> , to; let's ~ kaimasu;	<i>everywhere</i> subete
kaimashō	<i>excuse me</i> gomen kudasai;
	sumimasen
<i>cakes</i> okashi	<i>expensive</i> takai
<i>camera</i> ; ~ film kamera; firumu	
<i>certainly</i> , sir / madam	<i>famous</i> yūmei
kashikomarimashita	<i>fan</i> sensu
<i>cheap</i> yasui	<i>feast</i> : that was a ~ gochisōsama
<i>cheese</i> chiizu	deshita
<i>chopsticks</i> o-hashī	<i>feel</i> : I don't ~ well kibun ga warui
<i>coffee</i> kōhī	desu
<i>cold</i> : have you caught a cold?	<i>fever</i> : have a ~ netsu ga arimasu
kaze o hiita n desu ka	<i>fine weather</i> hare
<i>come</i> : may I/we ~ in? gomen	<i>five</i> go; itsutsu

<i>four</i> yon; yottsu	<i>located: is</i> ~ ni arimasu
<i>full: I'm ~ thank you</i> mō kekkō desu	<i>look at: let's ~; please ~</i>
<i>go; please ~; ~ ahead</i> ikimasu;	mimashō; mite kudasai
itte kudasai; dōzo	<i>look, to</i> mimasu
<i>golden: The ~ Temple</i>	<i>lot: a ~</i> zuibun
Kinkakuji	
<i>half past</i> han	<i>make: please ~</i> shite kudasai
<i>ham</i> hamu	<i>meal: set ~</i> teishoku
<i>hangover</i> futsuka yoi	<i>meals: after ~</i> shokugo ni
<i>have: do you ~ any?; may I ~?</i>	<i>medicine: please take the ~</i>
ga arimasu ka; o kudasai	kusuri o nonde kudasai
<i>head</i> atama	<i>Miss (said after name)</i> san
<i>hello; hello (on the phone)</i>	<i>mobile phone</i> keitai denwa
konnichiwa; moshi moshi	<i>moment: at the ~</i> ima
<i>help: welcome, can I ~ you?</i>	<i>more: some ~?</i> o-kawari wa?
irasshaimase	<i>morning: good ~</i> ohayō
<i>here</i> koko	gozaimasu
<i>hey</i> aa	<i>Mr (said after name)</i> san
<i>home: not at ~</i> rusu	<i>Mrs (said after name)</i> san
<i>how do you do?</i> hajimemashite	<i>much: how ~ is it?; very ~</i>
<i>hundred</i> hyaku	ikura desu ka; zuibun
<i>hurt: it ~s</i> itai desu	
<i>husband: your ~</i> go-shujin	<i>next: the ~</i> tsugi no
	<i>Nijō castle</i> Nijōjō
<i>I</i> boku / watashi	<i>nine</i> kyū; kokonotsu
<i>in</i> naka	<i>now</i> ima
<i>incredible</i> sugoi	<i>number</i> ban, bangō
<i>interesting</i> omoshiroi	
<i>is; ~ it?; ~ not; ~n't it?</i> desu;	<i>oh</i> aa
desu ka; dewa arimasen; ne	<i>once more</i> mō ichido
<i>Japan; number one in ~ / Japan's</i>	<i>one</i> ichi; hitotsu
<i>most</i> nihon; nihon de ichiban	<i>one way</i> katamichi
	<i>opposite</i> mukaigawa
<i>know: you ~</i> yo	<i>over there</i> asoko
	<i>paper lantern</i> chōchin
<i>left-hand side</i> hidarigawa	<i>park</i> kōen
<i>like: I ~ ; I ~ it very much</i> suki;	<i>pharmacist</i> kusuriya
daisuki desu	<i>phone</i> denwa
	<i>place: this ~</i> koko

platform 4 yonban-sen please
 onegaishimasu
 pleased to meet you dōzo
 yoroshiku

quarter past jū go fun
 quarter to jū go fun mae
 question mark (spoken) ka

return ōfuku
 right migi

sake: first grade; second grade;
 special grade ikkyūshu;
 nikyūshu; tokkyūshu

sandwich sandoitchi
 say: please ~ it itte kudasai
 seven nana; nanatsu

Shintō shrine jinja
 shop: please ~ here again mata
 okoshi kudasai

show: please ~ me misete
 kudasai

silver: The ~ Temple Ginkakuji
 sit down: please ~ o-kake
 kudasai

six roku; muttsu
 sore: it is ~ itai desu
 sorry; ~ for disturbing you
 sumimasen; shitsurei shimasu

sort: we have all ~s iroiro
 arimasu yo
 special tokubetsu(na)

station eki
 stomach onaka
 straight ahead massugu
 strange hen

sunny hare
 sure: for ~ yo
 sweets okashi

tea: green ~ ocha

temples o-tera

ten jū; tō

thank you; ~ for your trouble; ~
 very much arigatō gozaimasu;
 sumimasen; arigatō
 gozaimashita

that; ~ one; ~ one over there; ~
 over there sono; sore; are; ano;

there you are dōzo

think: let's ~ ē to

this; ~ one kono; kore

thousand; ten ~ sen; man

three; ~ items; ~ times san;

mittsu; san kai

throat nodo

ticket kippu

time: what ~ is it? nanji desu ka

to ni

tomorrow ashita

traffic lights shingō

train densha

turn: please ~ magatte kudasai

two; ~ items ni; futatsu / nimai

understand, to wakarimasu

understood: I've ~ wakarimashita

very totemo

way: this ~ please kochira e dōzo

weather: nice ~ ii o-tenki

weird hen

welcome; ~ to; ~ to my home

irasshaimase; e yōkoso; yoku

irasshaimashita

well: as ~ mo

went ikimashita

what; ~ do you think?; ~!; ~'s the

matter? nan; dō omoimasu ka;

are!; dō shita n desu ka
where; ~ *did you go?* doko; doko
ni ikimashita ka
within naka
wow! are! aa!

yen (Japanese currency) en
yes; ~ *that's right* hai; hai, sō
desu

Numbers

1	ichi	15	jū-go
2	ni	16	jū-roku
3	san	17	jū-nana
4	yon/shi	18	jū-hachi
5	go	19	jū-kyō
6	roku	20	ni-jū
7	nana/shichi	30	san-jū
8	hachi	40	yon-jū
9	kyū	50	go-jū
10	jū	60	roku-jū
11	jū-ichi	70	nana-jū
12	jū-ni	80	hachi-jū
13	jū-san	90	kyū-jū
14	jū-yon	100	hyaku

Counting in 1,000s and 10,000s

1,000	sen	8,000	hassen
2,000	nisen	9,000	kyūsen
3,000	sanzen	10,000	ichiman
4,000	yonsen	20,000	niman
5,000	gosen	30,000	sanman
6,000	rokusen	40,000	yonman
7,000	nanasen	50,000	goman

General counters

<i>one item</i>	hitotsu
<i>two</i>	utatsu
<i>three</i>	mittsu
<i>four</i>	yottsu
<i>five</i>	itsutsu
<i>six</i>	muttsu
<i>seven</i>	nanatsu
<i>eight</i>	yattsu
<i>nine</i>	kokonotsu
<i>ten</i>	tō

Counting system for flat items

<i>one item</i>	ichi-mai
<i>two</i>	ni-mai
<i>three</i>	san-mai
<i>four</i>	yon-mai
<i>five</i>	go-mai
<i>six</i>	roku-mai

Time

<i>1 o'clock</i>	ichi-ji
<i>2 o'clock</i>	ni-ji
<i>3 o'clock</i>	san-ji
<i>4 o'clock</i>	yo-ji
<i>5 o'clock</i>	go-ji
<i>6 o'clock</i>	roku-ji
<i>7 o'clock</i>	shichi-ji
<i>8 o'clock</i>	hachi-ji
<i>9 o'clock</i>	ku-ji
<i>10 o'clock</i>	jū-ji
<i>11 o'clock</i>	jūichi-ji
<i>12 o'clock</i>	jū-niji
<i>1.30</i>	ichi-ji han
<i>1.15</i>	ichi-ji jūgo fun
<i>1.45</i>	ichi-ji jūgo fun mae

Verb table 1: Polite commands

Magatte kudasai.	<i>Please turn.</i>
Mite kudasai.	<i>Please look at.</i>
Nonde kudasai.	<i>Please take, this also means please drink.</i>

Eki o mite kudasai.	<i>Please look at the station.</i>
Kamera o mite kudasai.	<i>Please look at the camera.</i>
Jinja o mite kudasai.	<i>Please look at the shrine.</i>
Bīru o nonde kudasai.	<i>Please drink the beer.</i>
Sake o nonde kudasai.	<i>Please drink the sake.</i>

Verb table 2: Present/future, past and 'let's'

wakarimasu	<i>understand</i>	wakarimashita	<i>understood</i>
mimasu	<i>look at, see</i>	mimashita	<i>saw, looked at</i>
kaimasu	<i>buy</i>	kaimashita	<i>bought</i>
nomimasu	<i>drink</i>	nomimashita	<i>drank</i>
tabemasu	<i>eat</i>	tabemashita	<i>ate</i>
ikimasu	<i>go</i>	ikimashita	<i>went</i>

wakarimashō	<i>let's understand</i>
mimashō	<i>let's look at</i>
kaimashō	<i>let's buy</i>
nomimashō	<i>let's drink</i>
tabemashō	<i>let's eat</i>
ikimashō	<i>let's go</i>

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