

Japanese Grammar

Second Edition

by

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Preface

This book is one of a new series of handy grammar reference guides designed for students, businesspeople, and others who want to improve their knowledge of Japanese grammar. It enables you to reflect on what you already know, to reinforce your skills, and to fill in the gaps.

Whether you are just beginning your study of Japanese or have some basic Japanese and want to refresh your memory, this book is for you. Previous knowledge has not been taken for granted; definitions and explanations are simple and concise, and examples use and reuse a core of basic vocabulary.

The book is divided into three sections: The Basics, Parts of Speech, and Special Topics.

- In the Basics section you will find a nontechnical and easy-to-follow discussion of Japanese sounds, spelling conventions, and word-order patterns.
- In the Parts of Speech section you will find the nouns, pronouns, particles, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs that make up the Japanese language.
- In the Special Topics section you will find numbers, expressions for telling time, useful words and phrases, borrowed words, synonyms, antonyms, and more.

New to this edition is a list called Japanese–English Vocabulary, where you will find all the Japanese words in the book along with their English meaning. Also new is the use of color to highlight important points of grammar or vocabulary; another feature is the use of tips to help the understanding of the Japanese language and culture.

We would like to thank the following people for their invaluable help with this project: Masako Nanto, School of Language Studies, Foreign Service Institute, Department of

State; Diane Roth, Editor, and Dimitry Popow, Languages Editor, Barron's Educational Series, Inc.

And many thanks to the teachers and students of Japanese who have shared with us their welcome, helpful, and supportive comments about the first edition of this book.

Nobuo Akiyama
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How To Use This Book

In the chapters that follow, a numerical decimal system has been used with the symbol § in front of it. This was done so that you may find quickly and easily the reference to a particular point in basic Japanese grammar when you use the index. For example, if you look up the entry “particles” in the index, you will find the reference given as §6. Sometimes additional § reference numbers are given when the entry you consulted is mentioned in other areas in the chapter §.

The Basics

§1.

Pronunciation Guide

§1.1 WHAT ARE VOWELS AND CONSONANTS?

There are two kinds of sounds in any language.

- *Vowels* are produced by air passing out through the mouth without being blocked. The letters that represent these sounds are **a, e, i, o, u**.
- *Consonants*, on the other hand, are produced by blockage (partial or complete) of the air. The remaining alphabet letters are used to represent consonant sounds: **b, c, d**, etc.

Japanese isn't difficult to pronounce if you follow a few simple guidelines. Take the time to read this section, and try out each sound presented.

§1.2 VOWELS

Tip

If you have studied Spanish, it may help you to know that Japanese vowels are more like those of Spanish than English.

The following vowels are short and pure, with *no glide*—that is, they are not diphthongs.

2 The Basics

JAPANESE VOWEL	ENGLISH EQUIVALENT	EXAMPLE
a	as in father	akai (<i>ah-kah-ee</i>) red
e	as in men	ebi (<i>eh-bee</i>) shrimp
i	as in see	imi (<i>ee-mee</i>) meaning
o	as in boat	otoko (<i>oh-toh-koh</i>) male
u	as in food	uma (<i>oo-mah</i>) horse

The following vowels are like the ones above, but lengthened.

JAPANESE VOWEL	ENGLISH EQUIVALENT	EXAMPLE
ā	as in father, but lengthened	batā (<i>bah-tāh</i>) butter
ei	as in men, but lengthened	eigo (<i>eh-goh</i>) English
ii	as in see, but lengthened	iiharu (<i>ee-hah-roo</i>) insist
ō	as in boat, but lengthened	ōsama (<i>oh-sah-mah</i>) king
ū	as in food, but lengthened	yūbin (<i>yōō-been</i>) mail

Macrons

A *macron*, or bar, above a vowel means it should be lengthened.

Example

butter / batā / bah-tāh

In the above word, the macron above the second vowel means you should hold the sound twice as long as you normally would.

And keep in mind these points:

- Long vowels are important. Pronouncing a long vowel incorrectly can result in a different word or even an unintelligible one.

For example, obasan (*oh-bah-sahn*) means **aunt**
 obāsan (*oh-bāh-sahn*) means **grandmother**
 ojisan (*oh-jee-sahn*) means **uncle**
 ojiisan (*oh-jēe-sahn*) means **grandfather**
 seki (*seh-kee*) means **seat**
 seiki (*seh-kee*) means **century**

(For more examples, see §19.)

- Sometimes the **i** and the **u** aren't pronounced. This usually occurs between voiceless consonants (**p, t, k, ch, f, h, s, sh**), or at the end of a word following a voiceless consonant.

Examples

sukiyaki (*skee-yah-kee*)

This word for a popular Japanese dish begins with **skee**, not **soo**. The **u** is not pronounced.

tabemashita (*tah-beh-mahsh-tah*) **I ate**

The **i** is not pronounced.

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§1.3 CONSONANTS

With a few exceptions, Japanese consonants are similar to those of English. Note those that are different:

f	The English f is pronounced with a passage of air between the upper teeth and the lower lip. To make the Japanese f , blow air lightly between your lips as if you were just beginning a whistle.
g	Always as in go , never as in age . You may also hear it pronounced as the ng sound in sing but not at the beginning of a word.
r	This is different from the English r . To make the Japanese r , lightly touch the tip of your tongue to the bony ridge behind the upper teeth, almost in the English d position. It's more like the Spanish r , but it's not trilled.
s	Always hissed, as in so , never voiced, as in his or or or pleasure .

And note the following points as well:

- If you have trouble making a consonant the Japanese way, your English pronunciation will still be intelligible.
- Some Japanese consonants are doubled. In English, this is just a feature of spelling and often doesn't affect pronunciation. In Japanese, the doubling is important and may change the meaning of a word.

Example

Kite kudasai (*kee-teh koo-dah-sah-ee*) means
"Please put it (clothing) on."

Kitte kudasai (*Keet-teh koo-dah-sah-ee*) means
“Please cut it.”

(For more examples, see §20.)

Tip

In a word with a doubled consonant, don't say the consonant twice—simply hold the sound longer.

§2.

The Japanese Writing System

§2.1 DIRECTION AND CHARACTERS

Traditionally, Japanese is written from top to bottom and from right to left. But it is also written horizontally and from left to right, as in English.

Japanese writing uses three kinds of characters:

kanji (<i>kahn-jee</i>)	漢字
hiragana (<i>hee-rah-gah-nah</i>)	ひらがな
katakana (<i>kah-tah-kah-nah</i>)	カタカナ

Hiragana and katakana are also called **kana** (*kah-nah*). All three are used together in Japanese writing.

§2.2 KANJI

Chinese and Japanese are completely different languages. But beginning in the fourth or fifth century, Japanese adopted written symbols and many vocabulary items from Chinese. In Japan, these symbols or Chinese characters are called **kanji**. They represent both meaning and sound, and often one kanji has more than one pronunciation (or reading, as it's commonly called) and meaning.

Japanese people learn about 2,000 kanji by the end of junior high school. Those are the basic characters used in newspapers, magazines, and school textbooks. Most Japanese know several thousand additional kanji as well.

Kanji range from simple, with one or two strokes, to complex, with many strokes needed to make one character. Some

look like pictures, or line drawings, of the words they represent.

Examples

mountain yama (*yah-mah*) 山

river kawa (*kah-wah*) 川

These two together form Yamakawa, 山川 a family name. Here are some more kanji:

Japan Nihon (*nee-hon*) 日本

person hito (*hee-toh*) 人
jin (*jeen*)

Japanese Nihonjin (*nee-hon-jeen*) 日本人

§2.3 HIRAGANA AND KATAKANA

Hiragana and **Katakana** symbols represent the sounds of syllables. Hiragana is used for native Japanese words and grammatical elements, and katakana is mainly for words of foreign origin. Each is a kind of alphabet, or syllabary, of 46 basic characters or sounds.

The following example will show you how the elements are used together.

Sumisu san, Nihon e yōkoso. / **Welcome to Japan, Mr. Smith.** スミスさん、日本へようこそ。

Smith	Mr.	Japan	to welcome
Sumisu	san	Nihon	e yōkoso
スミス	さん	日本	へ ようこそ
katakana	hiragana	kanji	hiragana

8 The Basics

The **hiragana** and **katakana** charts provided here will be useful if you continue your study of Japanese.

HIRAGANA				
あ a (ah)	い i (ee)	う u (oo)	え e (eh)	お o (oh)
か ka (kah)	き ki (kee)	く ku (koo)	け ke (keh)	こ ko (koh)
さ sa (sah)	し shi (shee)	す su (soo)	せ se (seh)	そ so (soh)
た ta (tah)	ち chi (chee)	つ tsu (tsoo)	て te (teh)	と to (toh)
な na (nah)	に ni (nee)	ぬ nu (noo)	ね ne (neh)	の no (noh)
は ha (hah)	ひ hi (hee)	ふ fu (foo)	へ he (heh)	ほ ho (hoh)
ま ma (mah)	み mi (mee)	む mu (moo)	め me (meh)	も mo (moh)
や ya (yah)		ゆ yu (yoo)		よ yo (yoh)
ら ra (rah)	り ri (ree)	る ru (roo)	れ re (reh)	ろ ro (roh)
わ wa (wah)				を o (oh)
ん n				
が ga (gah)	ぎ gi (gee)	ぐ gu (goo)	げ ge (geh)	ご go (goh)
ざ za (zah)	じ ji (jee)	ず zu (zoo)	ぜ ze (zeh)	ぞ zo (zoh)
だ da (dah)	ぢ ji (jee)	づ zu (zoo)	で de (deh)	ど do (doh)
ば ba (bah)	び bi (bee)	ぶ bu (boo)	べ be (beh)	ぼ bo (boh)
ぱ pa (pah)	ぴ pi (pee)	ぷ pu (poo)	ぺ pe (peh)	ぽ po (poh)
きゃ kya (kyah)		きゅ kyu (kyoo)		きょ kyo (kyoh)
しゃ sha (shah)		しゅ shu (shoo)		しょ sho (shoh)
ちゃ cha (chah)		ちゅ chu (choo)		ちょ cho (choh)
にゃ nya (nyah)		にゅ nyu (nyoo)		にょ nyo (nyoh)
ひゃ hya (hyah)		ひゅ hyu (hyoo)		ひょ hyo (hyoh)
みゃ mya (myah)		みゅ myu (myoo)		みょ myo (myoh)
りゃ rya (ryah)		りゅ ryu (ryoo)		りょ ryo (ryoh)
ぎゃ gya (gyah)		ぎゅ gyu (gyoo)		ぎょ gyo (gyoh)
じゃ ja (jah)		じゅ ju (joo)		じょ jo (joh)
びゃ bya (byah)		びゅ byu (byoo)		びょ byo (byoh)
ぴゃ pya (pyah)		ぴゅ pyu (pyoo)		ぴょ pyo (pyoh)

KATAKANA				
ア a (ah)	イ i (ee)	ウ u (oo)	エ e (eh)	オ o (oh)
カ ka (kah)	キ ki (kee)	ク ku (koo)	ケ ke (keh)	コ ko (koh)
サ sa (sah)	シ shi (shee)	ス su (soo)	セ se (seh)	ソ so (soh)
タ ta (tah)	チ chi (chee)	ツ tsu (tsoo)	テ te (teh)	ト to (toh)
ナ na (nah)	ニ ni (nee)	ヌ nu (noo)	ネ ne (neh)	ノ no (noh)
ハ ha (hah)	ヒ hi (hee)	フ fu (foo)	ヘ he (heh)	ホ ho (hoh)
マ ma (mah)	ミ mi (mee)	ム mu (moo)	メ me (meh)	モ mo (moh)
ヤ ya (yah)		ユ yu (yoo)		ヨ yo (yoh)
ラ ra (rah)	リ ri (ree)	ル ru (roo)	レ re (reh)	ロ ro (roh)
ワ wa (wah)			ヲ o (oh)	
ン n				
ガ ga (gah)	ギ gi (gee)	グ gu (goo)	ゲ ge (geh)	ゴ go (goh)
ザ za (zah)	ジ ji (jee)	ズ zu (zoo)	ゼ ze (zeh)	ゾ zo (zoh)
ダ da (dah)	ヂ ji (jee)	ヅ zu (zoo)	デ de (deh)	ド do (doh)
バ ba (bah)	ビ bi (bee)	ブ bu (boo)	ベ be (beh)	ボ bo (boh)
パ pa (pah)	ピ pi (pee)	プ pu (poo)	ペ pe (peh)	ポ po (poh)
ファ fa (fah)	フィ fi (fee)	フ fu (foo)	フェ fe (feh)	フォ fo (foh)
キャ kya (kyah)		キュ kyu (kyoo)		キョ kyo (kyoh)
シャ sha (shah)		シュ shu (shoo)		ショ sho (shoh)
チャ cha (chah)		チュ chu (choo)		チョ cho (choh)
ニャ nya (nyah)		ニュ nyu (nyoo)		ニョ nyo (nyoh)
ヒャ hya (hyah)		ヒュ hyu (hyoo)		ヒョ hyo (hyoh)
ミャ mya (myah)		ミュ myu (myoo)		ミョ myo (myoh)
リャ rya (ryah)		リュ ryu (ryoo)		リョ ryo (ryoh)
ギャ gya (gyah)		ギュ gyu (gyoo)		ギョ gyo (gyoh)
ジャ ja (jah)		ジュ ju (joo)		ジョ jo (joh)
ビャ bya (byah)		ビュ byu (byoo)		ビョ byo (byoh)
ピャ pya (pyah)		ピュ pyu (pyoo)		ピョ pyo (pyoh)

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§2.4 ROMAJI

The commonly used expression for the romanization of Japanese words is **romaji**. Although there are several systems of romaji, the most widely used, and the one used in this book, is a modified version of the Hepburn system.

§3.

Word Order

§3.1 WHAT IS A SENTENCE?

A *sentence* is an organized series of words which enables us to make a statement, ask a question, express a thought, offer an opinion, and so forth. In writing, an English sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a period, a question mark, or an exclamation mark. In writing (using romaji), a Japanese sentence starts with a capital letter, and ends with a period, not a question mark or an exclamation mark.

Examples

Yoko is Japanese. / Yōko san wa Nihonjin desu.
(statement)

Is Yoko Japanese? / Yōko san wa Nihonjin desu ka.
(question)

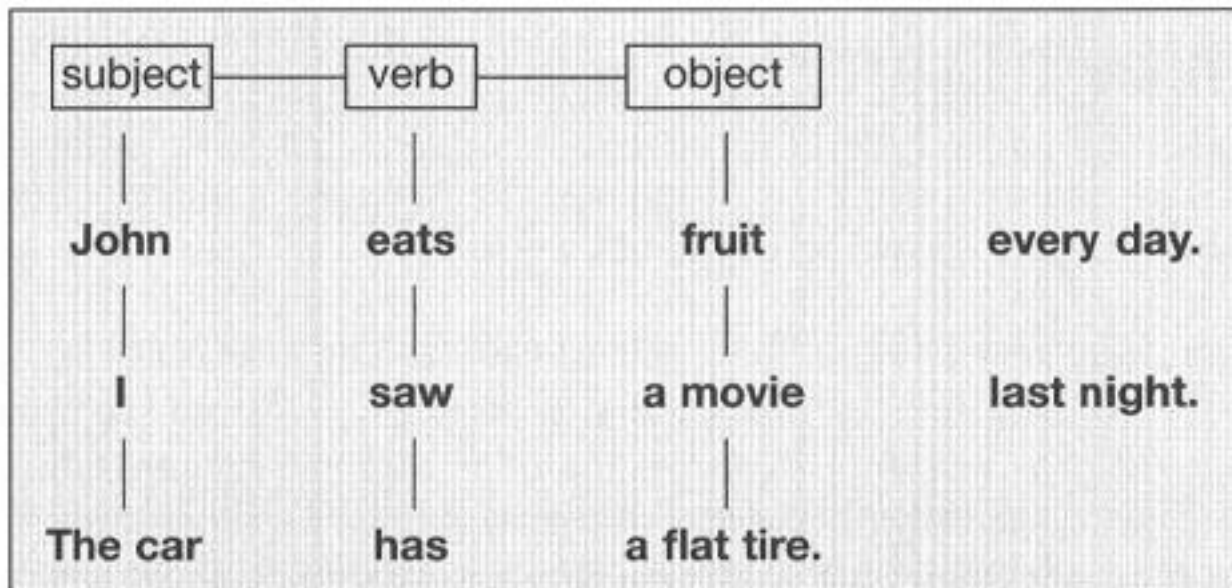
Yoko, be careful! / Yōko san ki o tsukete kudasai.
(exclamation)

§3.2 THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

English is a *Subject-Verb-Object* language. (So are French, German, Spanish, and Italian.) This means that in a typical sentence (a statement, not a question), the subject comes first, the verb next, and the object last. This kind of word order sequence for the sentence is sometimes referred to by the initials **SVO** (an SVO language).

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Examples

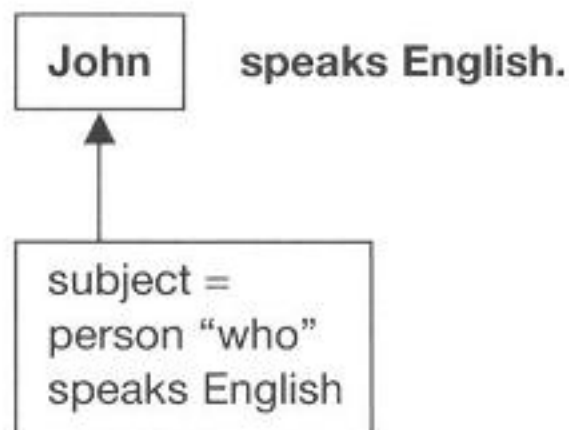


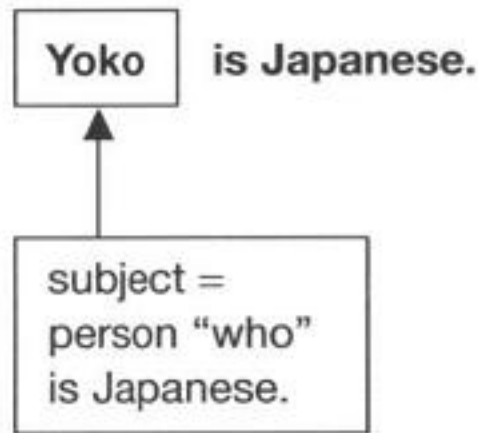
Understanding this principle of word order is important because, as we shall see in §3.3, the word order in Japanese is different.

English sentences have two basic parts, a *subject* and a *predicate*.

- The subject is “who” or “what” the sentence is about. A subject must contain a noun or pronoun. In a statement, the subject is usually the first element in the sentence.

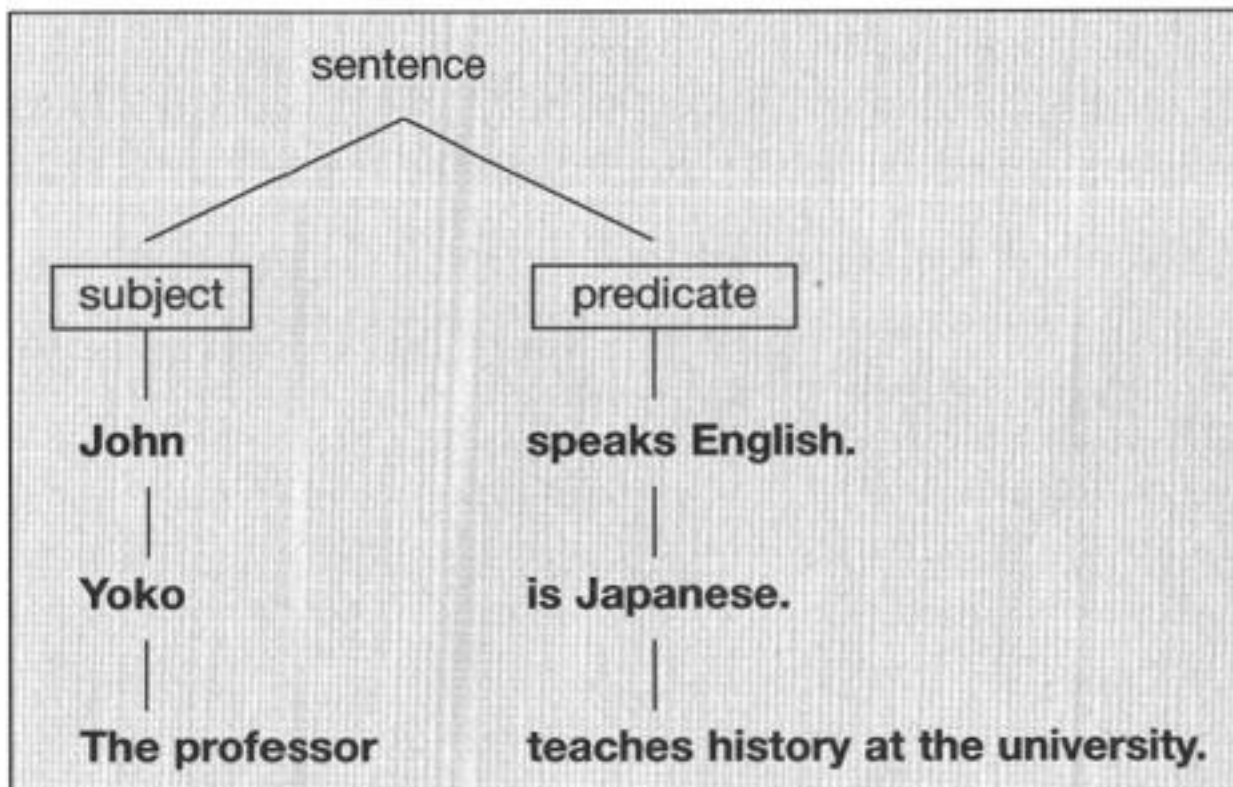
Examples





- The predicate is that part of the sentence that expresses what is said about the subject. It usually can be found directly after the subject, it must include a verb, and it includes everything remaining in the sentence that is not part of the subject.

Examples



§3.3 THE JAPANESE SENTENCE

§3.3-1 Subject-Object-Verb Sentences

Japanese is a *Subject-Object-Verb* language. (So are Korean, Mongolian, and Turkish.) Thus, in a typical sentence, the subject comes first, the object next, and the verb last. This kind of word order sequence for the sentence is sometimes referred to by the initials **SOV** (an SOV language).

Examples

subject	object	verb
Okāsan ga Mother	pan o bread	kaimashita. bought
Jon san ga John	sore o it	shimashita. did
Otōsan ga Father	eiga o movie	mimashita. saw

The significant difference from English here is that the verb must come at the *end* of the sentence.

- What about questions? The word order remains the same. But remember: Japanese does not use question marks. A sentence becomes a question by adding the particle *ka* at the end. You can think of *ka* as a question mark. (Particles, an important Part of Speech in Japanese, will be discussed in §6.)

Examples

Subject	Object	Verb	
Okāsan ga	pan o	kaimashita ka.	Did mother buy bread?
Jon san ga	sore o	shimashita ka.	Did John do it?
Otōsan ga	eiga o	mimashita ka.	Did father see a movie?

§3.3–2 Subject and Predicate

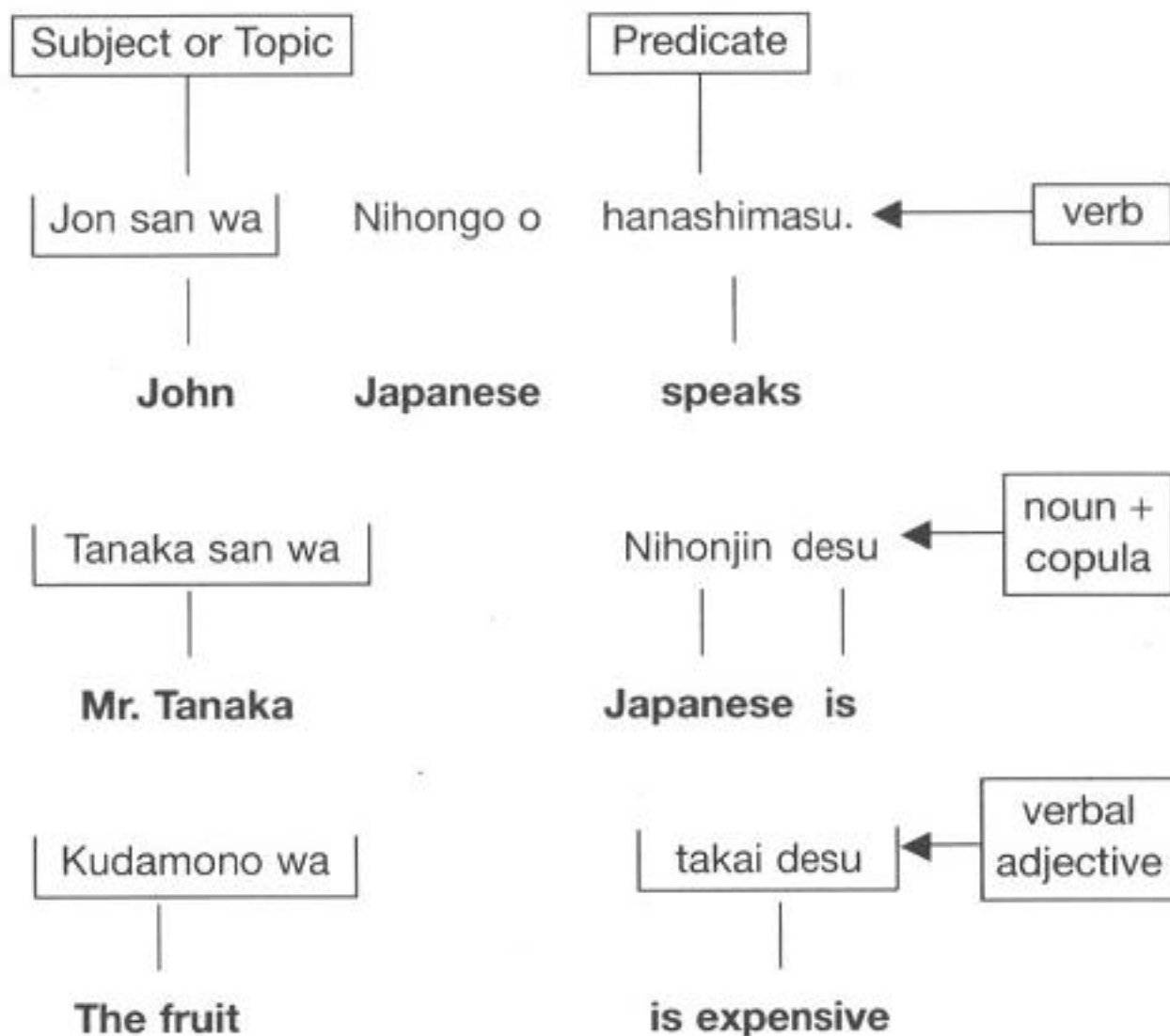
Tip

Japanese sentences *may* have a subject or a topic, but they *must* have a predicate. (The subject is followed by the particle *ga*, and the topic by the particle *wa*. See §6.)

- The *predicate* is the core of the Japanese sentence. It comes at the end, and it must be a verb or a verbal form. In Japanese, a verbal form may be a noun plus copula (like English **is** or **are**. See §7.6), or a verbal adjective.

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Examples



- In addition to the *subject* or topic, there may, of course, be other elements in the sentence—*object*, *indirect object*, *adverb*, and so forth. They come before the predicate, and are not considered part of it.
- Two principles hold true for word order in a Japanese sentence:
The predicate must come at the end of the sentence.
A particle must immediately follow the word or words it marks.
- Other than this, word order is not rigid. The subject or topic usually comes first, although an adverb of time may pre-

cede it or follow it. Expressions of time usually precede expressions of place. Most modifiers precede the words they modify.

Examples

Kare	wa	mainichi	uchi	de	shinbun
he	topic marker	every day	home	at	newspapers

o	takusan	yomimasu.
obj. marker	many	reads

Kono	kodomotachi	wa	Nihonjin	desu.
these	children	topic marker	Japanese	are

Shinbun	ga	tēburu	no	ue	ni	arimasu.
newspaper	subj. marker	table	's	top	on	(there) is

Kyō	Jon san	wa	Tōkyō kara	Kyōto ni	ikimasu.
Today	John	topic marker	from	to	will go

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Kanojo wa honya de hon o kaimashita.
| | | | | | |
she topic **bookstore** **at** **book** obj. **bought**
marker marker

- With a question, the word order is the same. As you now know, the particle *ka* at the end of the sentence makes a statement into a question.

Example

Kanojo wa honya de hon o kaimashita ka. / **Did she buy
a book at the
bookstore?**
| |
she topic
marker

- If a question uses a question word (*when*, *who*, *what*, etc.), it normally comes after the subject or topic, but this is not rigid.

Examples

Kanojo wa itsu honya de hon o kaimashita ka. / **When did she buy a
book at the bookstore?**
| | |
she topic **when**
marker

Kanojo wa naze honya de hon o kaimashita ka. / **Why did she buy a
book at the bookstore?**
| | |
she topic **why**
marker

Dare ga honya de hon o kaimashita ka. / **Who bought
a book
at the
bookstore?**
| |
who subj.
marker

20 The Basics

Tip

Although this sentence is grammatically correct, the Japanese prefer to omit the **you** which would be obvious from the context.

Example

Nani o kaimashita ka. / **What did (you) buy?**

Hon o kaimashita. / **(I) bought a book.**

In a sense, these shouldn't be called "incomplete sentences" because, to the Japanese, they are quite complete!

Parts of Speech

§4.

Nouns

§4.1 WHAT ARE NOUNS?

A *noun* is a word that names or refers to a person, a place, or a thing. A thing may be a quality or a concept.

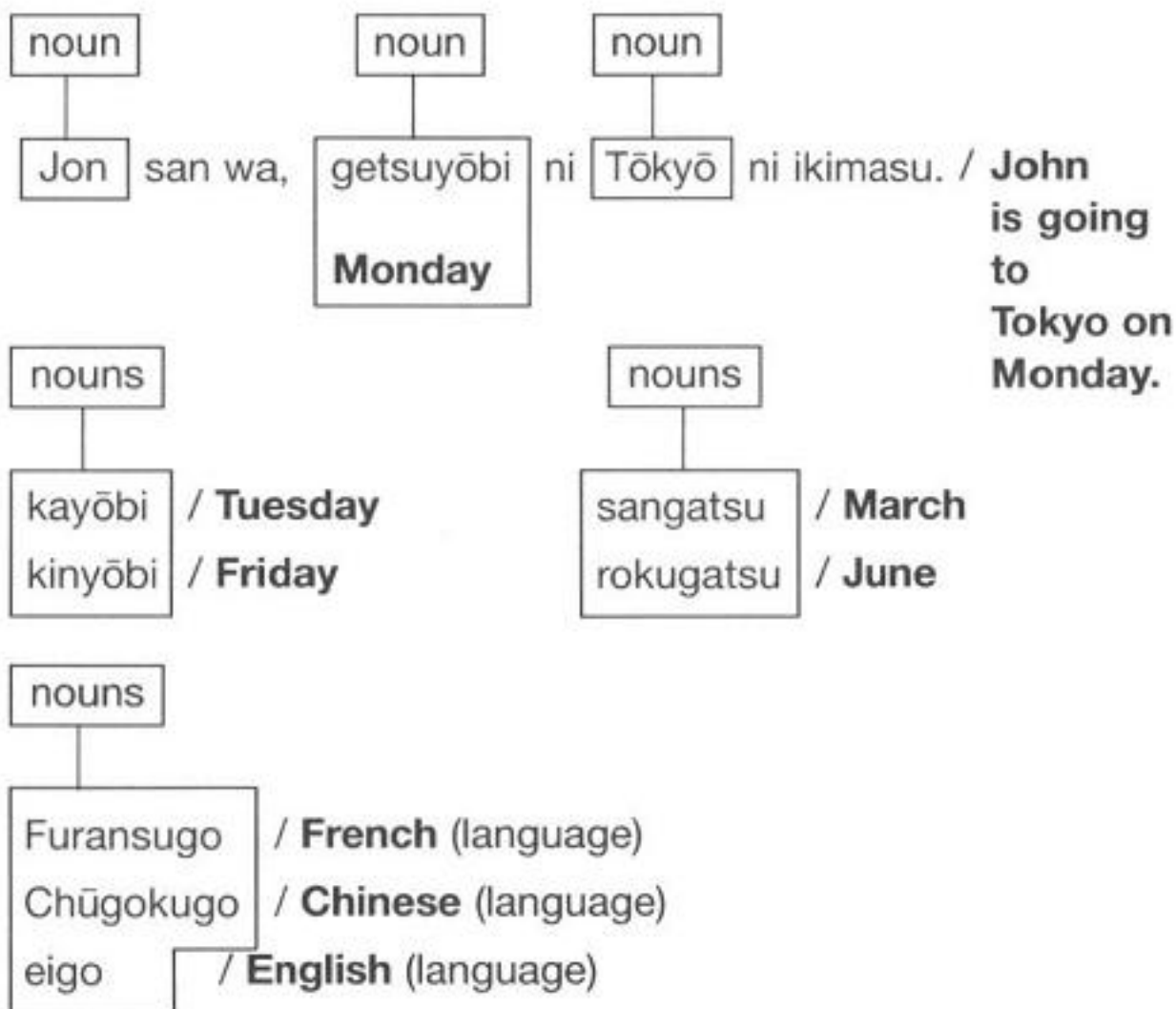
There are two main types of nouns:

- A *proper* noun names a particular person, place, or thing. In English, all proper nouns are capitalized. The Japanese concept of proper nouns is more limited. In romaji (see §2.4), names of persons or places, for example, are capitalized, but days of the week and months of the year are not. The words for other languages are capitalized, but not the word for English: *eigo*

Examples



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- A *common* noun does not name a particular person, place, or thing.

Examples

hon / **book** otokonoko / **boy** onnanoko / **girl**

§4.2 GENDER

Japanese nouns do not have *gender*. There are no special endings to show masculine, feminine, or neuter forms.

§4.3 ARTICLES

Japanese does not use *articles* before nouns. There are no words to correspond to English **a**, **an**, or **the**.

§4.4 NUMBER

Number means that a word can be *singular* (referring to one person, thing, etc.) or *plural* (referring to more than one). With most Japanese nouns, number is not an issue. *The same word is used for one or for more than one.*

Examples

hon / **book, books**

uchi / **house, houses**

shinbun / **newspaper,
newspapers**

ki / **tree, trees**

te / **hand, hands**

kuruma / **car, cars**

Hon o motte imasu. / **I have a book.**

Hon o motte imasu. / **I have some books.**

- For nouns referring to people, the plural suffix *-tachi* may be used, although it isn't required.

Examples

kodomo / **child, children**

kodomotachi / **children**

otokonoko / **boy, boys**

otokonokotachi / **boys**

onnanoko / **girl, girls**

onnanokotachi / **girls**

hahaoya / **mother, mothers**

hahaoyatachi / **mothers**

sensei / **teacher, teachers**

senseitachi / **teachers**

- When *-tachi* is used with someone's name, it usually refers to the person and his or her family or group.

Examples

Tanaka san tachi / **Mr. Tanaka and his family**

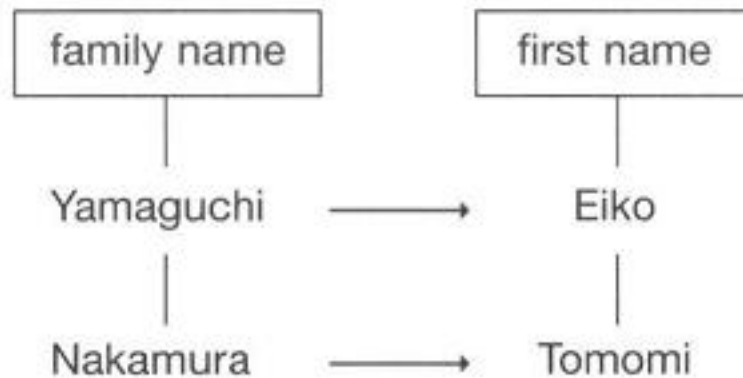
Tomoko san tachi / **Tomoko and her group**

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§4.5 NAMES

Japanese use *family names first*, and *first names last*.

Examples



When Japanese introduce themselves to each other, they say the family name first. However, they know that English speakers do it the opposite way.

Tip

Japanese prefer family names, not first names. Japanese adults rarely use first names. Even among friends, family names are the rule, first names the exception. Unless a Japanese specifically asks you to use his or her first name, you should use the family name.

With children, it's different. Japanese use young children's first names followed by the title *chan*, older children's first names followed by *san* (see §4.6).

§4.6 TITLES

The Japanese word that corresponds to English **Mr.**, **Mrs.**, **Miss**, and **Ms.** is *san*. The Japanese always use *san* (or other, more formal titles of respect) with proper names. Even among family members or close personal friends who use first names with each other, *san* follows the name.

Tip

Be sure to use *san* in direct address (when speaking directly to someone), and when referring to someone else. *Never* use *san* to refer to yourself.

Examples

Tanaka san, kōhī wa ikaga desu ka. / **Mr. Tanaka, would you like some coffee?**

Merī san wa, kyō gakkō ni imasu ka. / **Is Mary at school today?**

But note the following:

Watakushi wa, John Smith desu. / **I'm John Smith.**

§4.7 POLITENESS

The prefix *o-* before certain nouns expresses *politeness*. (This is also used with verbs and adjectives. See §7 and §8.)

Examples

namae, onamae / **name**

kane, okane / **money**

sake, osake / **rice wine**

furo, ofuro / **bath**

hashi, ohashi / **chopsticks**

tegami, otegami / **letter**

A variation of this form is *go-*, which is used with words of Chinese origin.

hon, gohon / **book**

kekkon, gokekkon / **marriage**

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Note the following about the prefixes *o-* and *go-*:

- Although both men and women may use the above forms, in some cases, these prefixes would be used only by women, as in the “o” forms in examples below.

Examples

niku, oniku / **meat**

yasai, oyasai / **vegetables**

- Some words are *always* used with the polite prefix. The *o-* and *go-* are now part of the words:

Examples

ocha / **Japanese tea**

gohan / **cooked rice, meal**

Tip

- These prefixes cannot be used with all nouns. It's best to use them only when you are certain they are correct, as with the examples above.

§4.8 COMPOUND NOUNS

When two nouns are used together to make a *compound* noun, they are usually joined by the particle *no*.

Examples

rekishi no kurasu / **history class**

eigo no sensei / **English teacher**

apāto no biru / **apartment building**

Some compound nouns may be formed *without* the *no*, however.

Examples

kōhī jawan / **coffee cup**

kankō basu / **tour bus**

bōeki gaisha / **trading company**

§4.9 NOUN SUFFIXES

- The suffix *-ya*, when added to a noun, means the place or shop where that thing is sold, or the person or shopkeeper who sells it.

Examples

niku / **meat** → nikuya / **butcher shop, butcher**

hon / **book** → honya / **bookstore, clerk, owner**

kamera / **camera** → kameraya / **camera shop, clerk, owner**

- When referring to the clerk or shopkeeper, the title *san* is used:

Examples

nikuya san / **butcher**

kameraya san / **camera shop clerk**

- The suffix *-ka*, when added to a noun, means a person with expertise or special knowledge on that subject.

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Examples

seiji / politics	→	seijika / politician
hyōron / commentary	→	hyōronka / critic, commentator
shōsetsu / novel	→	shōsetsuka / novelist
geijutsu / art	→	geijutsuka / artist

§5.

Pronouns

§5.1 WHAT ARE PRONOUNS?

A *pronoun* is a word that takes the place of a noun. Here are some common English pronouns: **I, you, he, she, it, we, they**. These are personal pronouns used as *subjects*. Other common English pronouns are **me, him, her, us, them**. These are personal pronouns used as *objects*. **You** and **it**, of course, may be subjects or objects. In addition to these, there are other kinds of pronouns, such as *possessive* (**mine, yours, his, etc.**), *demonstrative* (**this, that**), and *interrogative* (**who, where, what, etc.**)

Japanese pronoun usage is quite different from that of English, as you will see from the following discussion.

§5.2 PERSONAL PRONOUNS

Personal pronouns in Japanese refer to people, not things or ideas. Japanese has no equivalent to the English **it** in this category.

Tip

- When the meaning can be understood from the context, the Japanese prefer *not* to use personal pronouns. Use these with care, and be sure to read the information that follows.

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Singular	Plural
watakushi / I, me	watakushitachi / we, us
anata / you	anatatachi / you anatagata / you (polite)
kare / he, him	karera / they, them (all male or male and female)
kanojo / she, her	kanojotachi / they, them (female) kanojora / they, them (female)

Tip

Informal usage
watashi / **I, me**
atashi / **I, me** (female)

§5.2-1 Special Usage

anata / **you**

- Avoid using this whenever possible. When speaking to someone directly, try to use the person's name and *san* instead.

Example

Sumisu	san,	nani	o	kaimashita	ka.	/	Mr. Smith, what
							did you buy?
Smith	Mr.	what		did buy	?		
			obj. marker				

- When speaking to a teacher, a doctor, a dentist, or a member of the Diet (the Japanese legislature), use the word *sensei*, either alone, or after the person's last name. *Sensei*, which literally means "teacher," may also be used with others not listed above. A teacher can be one who has achieved success or earned respect in his or her field. You can use *sensei*, for example, to address an artist, writer, architect, musician, or other talented person.

Example

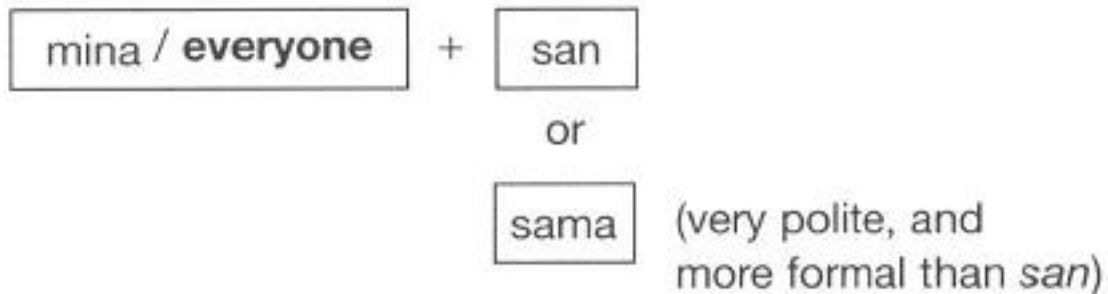
Sensei, ogenki desu ka. / **Sir (teacher), how have you been?**

If you are speaking to a group, you can use the following expressions for "you" (plural):

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Example

mina san / **everyone (you all)** mina sama / **everyone (you all)**



Examples

Mina san, ohayō gozaimasu. / **Good morning, everyone.**

Mina sama, sayōnara. / **Goodbye, everyone!**

kare / he kanojo / she

- Whenever possible, when referring to a third person, use the person's name.

Example

Sumisu san wa Nyūyōku kara kimashita ka. / **Is Mrs. Smith from New York?**

This is better than saying, "Is *she* from New York?" Of course, if it is clear who the subject is, it can be left out entirely.

- Several other terms can be used instead of the pronouns *kare*, *kanojo*, and their plural forms. The Japanese prefer these:

Singular	Plural
ano hito / that person	ano hitotachi / those persons
ano kata / that person (polite)	ano katagata / those persons (polite)

Examples

Kinō ano hito ni aimashita ka. / **Did you see him (that person) yesterday?**

|
that person

Ano katagata wa kinō irasshaimashita. / **They (those persons) were here yesterday.**

|
those persons

§5.2-2 Case

Case refers to the form of a pronoun which shows its relationship to other words in a sentence.

In English, the personal pronouns have three cases: the *nominative* (used for the subject of a sentence or clause), the *objective* (used for the object of a sentence, indirect object, or object of a preposition), and the *possessive* (showing ownership). English has a different set of personal pronouns for each of these cases.

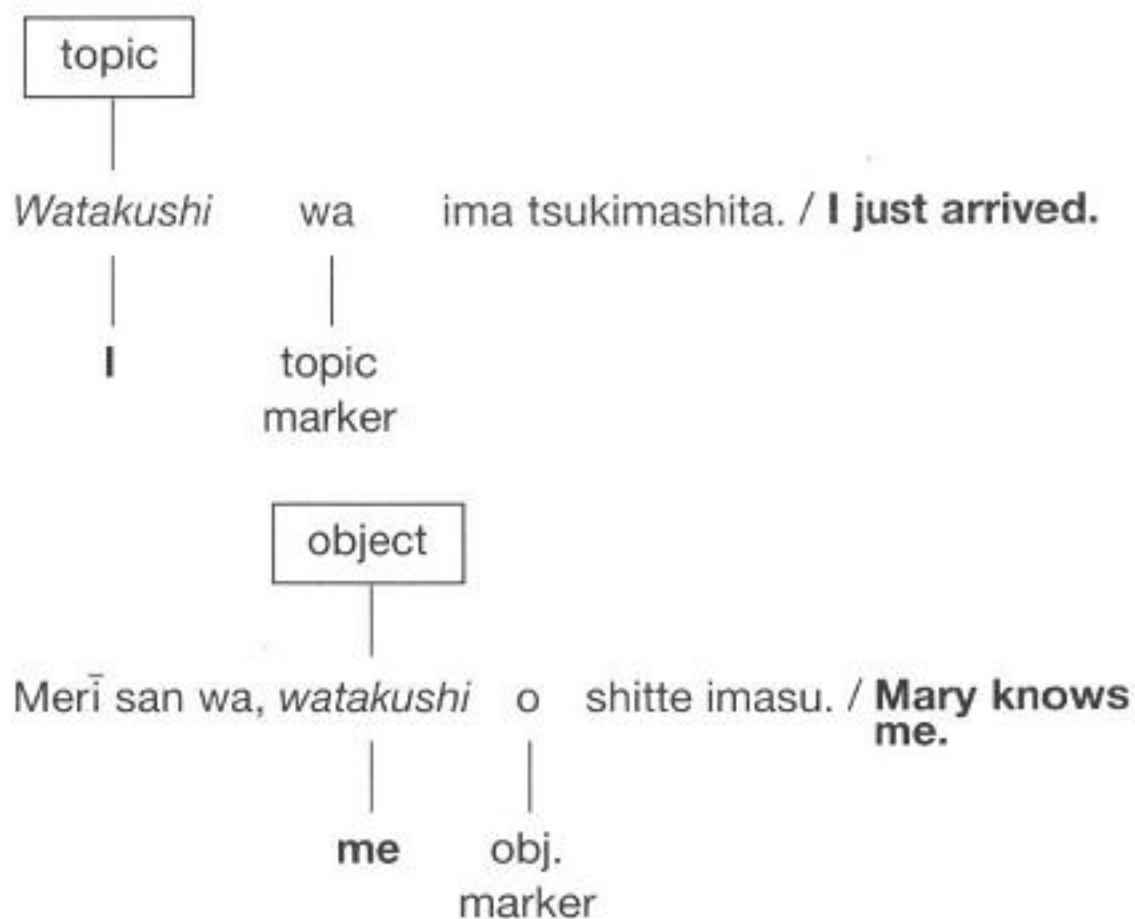
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Examples

- He* lives here. *He* = nominative case (subject of the sentence)
- I see *him*. *him* = objective case (object of the verb)
- His* car is here. *His* = possessive case (shows ownership)

In Japanese, the personal pronouns function with all three cases, but the words stay the same. The case is shown by a *particle*, or postposition, that comes after the pronoun. Note that in the following examples of how one pronoun, *watakushi*, is used for different grammatical functions, the topic marker *wa*, rather than the subject marker *ga*, is preferred. This will be discussed in more detail in the chapter on Particles (see §6).

Examples



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§5.4 INDEFINITE PRONOUNS

dareka / someone	daremo / no one
donataka / someone (polite)	donatamo / no one (polite)
doreka / something	doremo / nothing
dokoka / somewhere	dokomo / nowhere
nanika / something	nanimi / nothing
ikuraka / some, a little	ikuramo / not much
nandemo / anything	nannimo / nothing

- Note that the expressions listed on the right side of the preceding chart take *negative* verbs in order to have a negative meaning.

Examples

Dareka kimashita. / **Someone came.**

| |
someone came

Daremo kimasen deshita. / **No one came.**

| |
no one didn't come

§5.5 DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

The *demonstrative* words (some are pronouns and some are adjectives or adverbs) form a pattern of prefixes:

ko- / **here** (close to the speaker)
 so- / **there** (away from the speaker)
 a- / **over there** (some distance from the speaker)
 do- / **question**

The last one, *do-*, can be seen in §5.3 above.

Here are the rest:

	ko- / here	so- / there	a- / over there
	↓	↓	↓
Pronoun	kore / this	sore / that	are / that
Adjective	kono / this	sono / that	ano / that
Adjective	konna / this kind of	sonna / that kind of	anna / that kind of
Adverb	kō / in this manner	sō / in that manner	ā / in that manner
Adverb, Pronoun	koko / here	soko / there	asoko / over there
Adverb, Pronoun	kochira / here, this	sochira / there, that	achira / there, that
This form is politer usage than the one above.			

§5.6 RELATIVE PRONOUNS

The *relative* pronouns in English are **who**, **whom**, **whose**, **which**, **where**, and **that**. Because relative clauses in

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Japanese precede, rather than follow, the words they modify. Japanese does not have words that correspond to these pronouns.

Example

Kyō tsuita hito wa Yamada san desu. / **The man
who arrived
today is
Mr. Yamada.**

today arrived man topic marker is

Notice that the Japanese sentence has no word to correspond to the relative pronoun “who” in the English sentences.

This will be explained further in the section on Verbs (see §7).

§5.7 REFLEXIVE PRONOUNS

The *reflexive* pronouns in English are words such as **myself**, **yourself**, **himself**, **yourselves**, and so forth. Japanese has only one word to correspond to these pronouns. You might call it an all-purpose reflexive pronoun. Its meaning is both singular and plural, masculine and feminine. It can be used for humans and for warm-blooded animals. It cannot be used for fish, reptiles, insects, or inanimate objects.

jibun / **one's self**

This is commonly followed by particles such as *de* or *no* (see §6).

Examples

Jibun de ikimasu. / **I'm going myself.**

Jibun de shinasai. / **Do it yourself.**

Jibun no koto wa jibun de shinasai. / **Do your own work
by yourself.**

Merī san wa, jibun de benkyō shite imasu. / **Mary is
studying by
herself.**

§6.

Particles

§6.1 WHAT ARE PARTICLES?

A particle is a word that shows the relationship of a word, a phrase, or a clause to the rest of the sentence. Some particles show grammatical function—subject, object, indirect object. Some have meaning themselves, like English prepositions. But since they always *follow* the word or words they mark, they are *postpositions*.

The lists that follow include some of the more common particles, and some of their uses.

§6.2 PARTICLES USED WITH WORDS OR PHRASES

wa	de	made ni
ga	e	mo
o	hodo	shika
no	ka	to
ni	kara	ya
dake	made	yor

wa

topic marker

How do you decide if an expression is a topic, marked with *wa*, or a subject, marked with *ga*? Both look like the subject of an English sentence!

Think of the topic as a comment on something that has already been introduced into the conversation, or that is part of general or shared knowledge. As such, *wa* can mean

“Speaking of (the) . . .” or “As for (the).”

Examples

Kimura san wa, gakusei desu. / **Mr. Kimura is a student. (Speaking of Mr. Kimura, he’s a student.)**

| | |

topic **student** is

marker

Nihonjin wa, hashi o tsukaimasu. / **The Japanese use chopsticks. (As for the Japanese, they use chopsticks.)**

| | | |

topic **chopsticks** obj. use

marker marker

- Note that *wa* as a topic marker can also follow what in English may look like an object, a phrase, or a clause.

Examples

Asagohan wa hachiji ni tabemashita. / **I ate breakfast at 8 o’clock. (Speaking of breakfast, I ate at 8 o’clock.)**

| | | | |

breakfast topic **8** at ate

marker o’clock

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Hachiji ni wa asagohan o tabemashita.
| | | |
8 **at** topic object
o'clock marker marker

/ I ate breakfast at 8 o'clock. (Speaking of 8 o'clock, I ate breakfast then.)

Asagohan o tabeta no wa hachiji deshita. / **I ate breakfast at 8 o'clock. (The time I ate breakfast was 8 o'clock.)**
| | | |
ate | topic **was**
nominalizer marker

contrast

Wa can follow a noun to show contrast. The thing being contrasted may or may not be stated, but with this usage, the contrast is implied.

Examples

Sakana wa tabemasu ga, niku wa
| | | |
fish eat but meat
|
| **tabemasen.** / **I eat fish, but I don't eat meat.**
|
don't eat

Terebi wa mimasen. / **I don't watch television.**
 | |
Television **don't watch**

ga

subject marker

Ga marks what the Japanese call the grammatical *subject* of a sentence. Think of the subject in the following two ways:

- First, in neutral descriptions of observable actions or situations.

Examples

Tegami ga kimashita. / **The mail came.**
 | | |
mail subj. **came**
 marker

Ame ga hutte imasu. / **It's raining. (The rain is falling.)**
 | | |
rain subj. **is falling**
 marker

Note that in the negative counterparts of these sentences, *wa*, not *ga*, must be used.

Tegami wa kimasen deshita. / **The mail didn't come.**

- Second, for special emphasis, to distinguish a particular person or thing from all others.

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Examples

Watakushi ga shimashita. / **I did it. (I am the one who did it.)**

Tōkyō ga ōkii desu. / **Tokyo is big. (It is Tokyo that is big.)**

- When an interrogative pronoun is used as the subject of a sentence, *ga* must always be used too.

Example

Dare ga, kore o shimashita ka. / **Who did this?**
(Who is the one who did this?)

who subj. this obj. did ?
marker marker

object marker

O usually marks the object. But *ga* marks the object of certain non-action verbs and certain verbal adjectives and adjectival nouns (see §8).

Examples

Yōko san wa, eigo ga wakarimasu. / **Yoko understands English.**

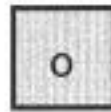
topic English obj. understands
marker marker

Nihongo ga dekimasu ka. / **Can you speak Japanese?**

obj. can do?
marker

Hon ga hoshii desu. / **I want a book.**
 | | |
book obj. **want**
 marker

Merī san wa, tenisu ga jōzu desu. / **Mary is good at tennis**
 | | | |
 topic obj. **good at** **is**
 marker marker



direct object marker

Examples

Senshū sono hon o yomimashita. / **I read that book last week.**
 | | | |
last week **that** **book** **read**

Jon san wa eiga o mimashita. / **John saw a movie.**
 | |
movie **saw**

through, along, in

The particle *o* is used with verbs such as **walk, run, drive, go through**, etc., when speaking of continuous motion and a finite place or distance.

Examples

Sūgaku no kurasu wa, muzukashii desu. / **The math class is difficult.**

math class difficult is

Amerika no tabemono wa, oishii desu. / **American food is delicious.**

American food delicious is

appositional

No links the noun or pronoun to the appositive that follows.

Examples

Nikuya no Doi san wa, okanemochi desu. / **The butcher, Mr. Doi, is rich.**

The butcher Mr. Doi rich is

Amerikajin no Jon san wa, Shikago kara kimashita. / **The American, John, is from Chicago.**

John, the American from came

- For the nominalization use of *no*, see §7.19 and §8.5.

ni

indirect object marker

Examples

Yamada san ni hanashimashita. / I talked to Ms. Yamada.

| |
to talked

Hon o watakushi ni kudasai. / Please give me the book. (Please give the book to me.)

| | | |
book me to please give

- Note that some Japanese verbs, such as **ask** and **meet**, take an indirect object, although their English counterparts do not.

Examples

Watakushi wa, Tanaka san ni kikimashita. / I asked Mr. Tanaka.

| |
to asked

Tomodachi ni aimashita. / I met my friend.

| | |
friend to met

location

With stative (non-action) verbs meaning **there is/are**, *imasu* for people, *arimasu* for things, *ni* means **in, at, or on**, and so forth.

Examples

Merī san wa, Kyōto ni imasu. / **Mary is in Kyoto.**

Ginza wa Tōkyō ni arimasu. / **Ginza is in Tokyo.**

Haha wa depāto ni imasu. / **My mother is at the department store.**

| |
 my department
 mother store

For location, the equivalents of English expressions **near, under, inside, on top of**, etc. are useful. Note how they are formed in Japanese. First look at the following words:

ue / top	shita / bottom
mae / front	ushiro / back
naka / inside	soto / outside
chikaku / nearby	tonari / next to

These words are nouns in Japanese. To form a locational phrase, the particle *no* links another noun to one of these, and then the particle *ni* follows.

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tēburu no ue ni / **on top of the table**

| | | |
table 's top on

Hon wa, tēburu no ue ni arimasu. / **The book is on top of the table.**

uchi no naka ni / **inside the house**

| | | |
house 's inside in

Jon san wa, uchi no naka ni imasu. / **John is inside the house.**

eki no chikaku ni / **near the station**

| | | |
station 's nearby at

Yūbinkyoku wa, eki no chikaku ni arimasu. / **The post office is near the station.**

direction

With verbs of motion, *ni* means **to** or **toward**.

Examples

Nakamura san wa, mainichi Tōkyō
|
every day

ni ikimasu. / **Mrs. Nakamura goes to Tokyo every day.**

| |
to goes

Ano hito wa, Amerika ni kaerimashita. / **He returned to America.**

He to returned

specific time

With expressions of specific time, *ni* means **at** (clock time), **in** (month, year), or **on** (day).

Examples

ichiji ni / **at one o'clock**
 gogo jūichiji ni / **at 11 P.M.**

Ano hitotachi wa, shichiji han ni tsukimashita. / **They arrived at 7:30.**

They 7:30 at arrived

rokugatsu ni / **in June**
 kugatsu ni / **in September**
 senkyūhyakukyūjū nen ni / **in (the year) 1990**

Ano hito wa, shigatsu ni umaremashita. / **He was born in April.**

April in was born

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Watakushi wa, 1991 nen ni Nihon ni
| | | |
year in Japan to

ikimashita. / **I went to Japan in 1991.**

|
went

getsuyōbi ni / **on Monday**
kinyōbi ni / **on Friday**

Getsuyōbi ni shigoto o hajimemasu. / **I begin work on Monday.**
| | | |
Monday on work begin

Kayōbi ni sore o shimashō. / **Let's do it on Tuesday.**
| | | |
Tuesday on it let's do

notion of per

Ni, is used with expressions such as **per hour, per day, per person**, etc.

Examples

ichijikan ni san doru / **three dollars per hour**
| | | |
hour per three dollars

Isshūkan ni yonjūhachi jikan hatarakimasu. / I work 48
 | | | | |
 week per 48 hours work
 hours a
 week.

Sandoitchi o hitori ni futatsu tsukurimasu.
 | | | | |
 Sandwiches person per two will make

/ I'll make two sandwiches per person.

For some other uses of *ni*, see §7.12 and §7.13.

dake

limitation

Dake translates English words such as **only**, **all**, **just**, **no more than**, **as many as**, and **as much as**.

Examples

Sore dake desu ka. / Is that all?

| | | |
 that all is ?

Terebi wa, nyūsu bangumi dake mimasu. / On
 | | | |
 news program only watch
 television
 I watch
 only the
 news.

totalizing

This use of *de* connotes a **unit**, a **certain number or amount**, or **together**.

Examples

futari de / **(by) two people**

Futari de shimasu. / **Two of us (together) will do it.**

|
will do

Nihon ni futari de ikimasu. / **Two of us will go to Japan.**
 | | | |
Japan to two people will go

Zenbu de sen en desu. / **All together it's 1,000 yen.**
 | | | |
all together 1,000 yen is

time limit

The meaning of *de* here is **within** or **in** for a given length of time.

Examples

Nishūkan de dekimasu. / **I can do it within two weeks.**
 | | |
two weeks within can do

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Ichijikan de ikemasu. / **You can go in one hour.**

 | | |
one hour in can go

scope

Here *de* means **among, of, within**, etc., referring to extent or range.

Examples

Kudamono de, nani ga ichiban **suki desu** ka.
 | | | | | |
fruit of which most like ?

/ **Which of the fruit do you like the most?**

Amerika de, doko ni **ikitai desu** ka. / **Where in America do you want to go?**
 | | | | |
within where want to go ? go?

material

Here *de* means **of** or **from** in **made of** or **made from** expressions.

Examples

Kono tēburu wa, ki de **dekite imasu.** / **This table is made of wood.**
 | | | |
table wood of is made

Kore wa, gin de tsukurimashita. / **I made it of silver.**

| | |
 silver of made

e

direction

Like *ni*, *e* is used with verbs of motion to indicate **to** or **toward**.

Example

Karifornia e ikimasu ka. / **Are you going to California?**

|
 are going

hodo

extent or degree

Hodo means **as much as**, or **as . . . as**, and it is often used in negative constructions, although the meaning is positive.

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Examples

Watakushi wa, anata hodo

|
I

|
you

|
as much as

isogashiku arimasen. / I'm not as busy as you are.

|
not busy

Kore hodo oishii mono wa arimasen. / **There's nothing as delicious as this.**

|
this

|
delicious thing

|
nothing as delicious as this.

Ashi ga itaku naru hodo arukimashita. / **I walked so much that my feet hurt.**

|
feet

|
began hurting

|
to the extent that

|
walked

|
I walked so much that my feet hurt.

about, approximately

With things that can be counted, *hodo* means **about** or **approximately**.

Examples

Sen en hodo desu. / **It's about 1,000 yen.**

|
1,000

|
yen

|
about

|
is

Isshūkan hodo de dekimasu. / **It can be done in about a week.**

| | | |

a week about in can be done

ka

enumerative

The meaning of *ka* here is **or**, that is, listing parallel things and then choosing.

Examples

Banana ka ringo o kaimashō. / **Let's buy bananas or apples.**

| | |

or apples let's buy

Kōhī ka, kōcha ka, kokoa wa

| | | | |

coffee or tea or cocoa

ikaga desu ka. / **Would you like coffee, tea, or cocoa?**

| |

how about ?

- Note that *ka*, like many particles, has several meanings. In the example above, it is also used as the question marker at the end of the sentence.

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kara

place of departure, origin

The meaning of *kara* here is **from**.

Examples

Kono kisha wa, Kyōto kara kimashita. / **This train came from Kyoto.**

 | | | |

this train from came

Watakushi wa, Nihon kara kimashita. / **I am from Japan.**

 | |

I from

starting time

The meaning of *kara* here would be expressed by **at** in English, but in Japanese, the meaning is **from a certain time and continuing on**. In other words, it is the beginning of a period of time. It differs from the use of the particle *ni*, which means **at a precise time**. (**Meet me at one o'clock.**)

Examples

Gēmu wa, ichiji kara hajimarimasu. / **The game begins at one o'clock.**

 | | | |

game one o'clock from begins

Getsuyōbi kara isogashiku narimasu. / **Starting Monday, I'll be busy.**

| | | |
Monday **from** **busy** **become**

source

Kara also means **from** in the sense of **origin**.

Examples

Tanaka san kara kikimashita. / **I heard it from Mrs. Tanaka.**

| |
from **heard**

Kono hon wa, toshokan kara karimashita. / **I borrowed this book from the library.**

| | | | |
this book **library** **from** **borrowed** **library.**

made

target time or place

Made means **until, as far as**. It is often combined with *kara* in a sentence.

Example

Yūgata made benkyō shimashita. / **I studied until evening.**

| | |
evening **until** **studied**

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Tsugi no kado made arukimashō. / **Let's walk as far as the next corner.**

| | | |

next corner as far as let's walk

Gakkō wa, kuji kara sanji made
| | | |

school 9 o'clock from 3 o'clock until

desu. / **School is from 9 until 3 o'clock.**

|

is

made ni

time limit

Unlike the time limit usage of the particle *de* (**within**), *made ni* means **by** (the time given), or **not later than**.

Examples

Goji made ni dekimasu ka. / **Can you do it by 5 o'clock?**

| | |

5 o'clock by can do

Kayōbi made ni hitsuyō desu. / **I need it by Tuesday.**

| | |

Tuesday by need

mo

including, excluding

Mo means **also** or **too**. Depending on which word it follows in a sentence, *mo* can replace *wa*, *ga*, or *o*. When used with a negative verb, the meaning is **(not) either**, or **neither . . . nor**.

Examples

Watakushi mo ikitai desu. / I want to go too.
 | | |
 I too want to go

Gohan mo suki desu. / I also like rice.
 | | |
 rice also like

Yōko san wa, niku mo sakana mo
 | | | |
 meat neither fish nor
 tabemasen. / Yoko eats neither meat nor fish.
 |
 doesn't eat

emphasis

This meaning of *mo* is **even** in the sense of emphasis.

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Examples

Ano Amerikajin wa, sashimi mo

| |
raw fish even

tabemasu. / **That American even eats raw fish.**

|
eats

Ichi doru mo arimasen. / **I don't even have one dollar.**

| | | |
one dollar even there isn't

shika

limitation

Shika means **only, just**. Although the meaning is affirmative, it takes the negative form of the verb.

Examples

Eigo shika shirimasen. / **I only know English.**

| | |
English only don't know

Shinbun shika yomimasen. / **I only read newspapers.**

| | |
newspapers only don't read

to

complete listing

To means **and** when stating all possible items in a list. The implication is **and nothing more**.

Examples

Jon san to Merī san ga kimashita. / **John and Mary came.**

Enpitsu	to,	nōto	to,	jōgi o
pencils	and	notebook	and	ruler

kaimashita. / **I bought pencils, a notebook, and a ruler.**

|
bought

involvement

Here, *to* means **together with**.

Examples

Satō san	to	honya	e	ikimashita.	/	I went to the bookstore with Mr. Sato.
with	bookstore	to	went			

Examples

Jon san ya Meri san ga kimashita. / **John and Mary came.**

Enpitsu ya, nōto ya, jōgi o

| | | | |
pencil and notebook and ruler

kaimashita. / **I bought a pencil, a notebook, and a ruler.**

|
bought

yor

comparison

Used when comparing things, *yor* means **than**. Think of it as the **than** in expressions such as **bigger than, smaller than, better than, worse than, rather than**, etc. It is often used in combination with *hō*(contrast) (see §8).

Examples

Kore yori sore o kudasai. / **Please give me that rather than this.**

| | | |
this rather than that please give

Pan yori gohan no hō ga

| | |
bread more than rice

suki desu. / **I like rice more than bread.**

|
like

Byōki desu ga, shigoto ni ikimasu. / **I'm sick, but I'm going to work.**

| | | | | |

sick am but work to go

- *Ga* is often used at the end of a clause with the final clause implied but unsaid. This has a softening effect on the exchange, with both speakers understanding the meaning of what has been left unspoken.

Examples

Ikitakatta desu ga ... / **I wanted to go but ... (I couldn't).**

| |

wanted to go but

neutral connector

Here, *ga* means **and**.

Examples

Hawai ni ikimashita ga, subarashikatta desu. / **I went to Hawaii, and it was wonderful.**

| | |

went and was wonderful

Sono hon o yomimashita ga, omoshirokatta desu.

| | |

read and was interesting

/ I read that book, and it was interesting.

kara

reason

Here, *kara* means **because** or **since**.

Examples

Isogashii kara ikemasen. / **Because I'm busy, I can't go.**

| | |
busy because can't go

Ame da kara uchi ni imasu. / **Since it's raining, I'll stay home.**

| | | | | |
rain is since home at stay

sequential action

The meaning of *kara* here is **after**, **since**, **ever since**.

Examples

Tabete kara shigoto o shimasu. / **After eating, I'll do some work.**

| | | |
eating after work will do

Kekkonshite kara shiawase desu. / **Ever since he got married, he has been happy.**

| | | |
getting married since happy is

keredo

neutral connector

Keredo means **and**.

Examples

Depāto ni itta keredo, konde imashita.
 | | | | | |
 department to went and crowded was
 store

/ I went to the department store, and it was crowded.

Takushī ni notta keredo, takakatta desu. / I took a taxi,
 | | | | |
 taxi on got and was expensive
 and it was expensive.

contrary reasoning

Here, *keredo* means **but, although, however**.

Examples

Yonda keredo, wakarimasen deshita. / I read it, but I
 | | |
 read but didn't understand
 didn't understand it.

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Eiga wa omoshirokatta keredo,
| | |
movie was interesting although
|
nete shimaimashita. / **Although the movie was**
interesting, I fell asleep.
|
fell asleep

nagara

simultaneous action

Nagara means **while** or **as**.

Examples

Aruki nagara, hanashimashita. / **While walking, we**
| | | **talked.**
walking while talked

Gohan o tabe nagara, terebi o mimasu. / **As I'm eating,**
| | | **I watch**
eating as TV watch television.

node

cause and effect

Node means **since** or **because** when followed by an "effect" clause.

Examples

Kumotte iru node, umi ni ikimasen. / **Since it's cloudy, I'm not going to the beach.**

cloudy is since beach to not going

Hashitta node, tsukaremashita. / **Because I ran, I got tired.**

ran because got tired

noni

contrast

Noni means **in spite of** or **although**, with strong contrast between the two clauses implied.

Examples

Tabetakunai noni, tabemashita. / **Although I didn't want to eat it, I ate it.**

didn't want to eat although ate

Takai noni, kaimashita. / **Although it was expensive, I bought it.**

expensive although bought

to

condition

When discussing under what condition, or under which circumstance, *to* means **if** or **when**.

Examples

Kangaeru to wakarimasu. / **If you think, you'll understand it.**
 think if will understand

Kuji ni iku to, Sano san ni aemasu. / **If you go there at 9, you can see Mr. Sano.**
 9 at go if can see

Tōkyō ni tsuku to, ame ga futte imashita. / **When I arrived in Tokyo, it was raining.**
 arrived when rain falling was

§6.4 PARTICLES USED WITH SENTENCES

The following particles are used at the end of sentences.

ka	yo
ne	wa

ka

question marker

Ka is like the English question mark at the end of a sentence. In Japanese, however, the word order of a statement does not change when a question is formed.

Examples

Horiguchi san wa, kirei desu. / **Mrs. Horiguchi is beautiful.**

beautiful	is

Horiguchi san wa, kirei desu ka. / **Is Mrs. Horiguchi beautiful?**

is	?

Imōto san wa, sensei desu ka. / **Is your sister a teacher?**

sister	teacher	is	?

Doko de [ban gohan] o [tabetai desu] ka. / **Where do you want to eat dinner?**

where	dinner	want to eat	?

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Itsu eigo o benkyō shimashita ka. / **When did you study English?**
| | | |
when English studied ?

ne

confirmation

Ne is similar to the English tag questions **don't you think so**, or **isn't it?** It calls for the listener to agree with or confirm what the speaker has said.

Examples

Atsui desu ne. / **It's hot, isn't it?**
| |
is hot isn't it

Omoshiroi eiga deshita ne. / **It was an interesting movie, wasn't it?**
| | | |
interesting movie was wasn't it

yo

emphatic

One usage of *yo* is similar to the English exclamation point. In that sense, it conveys emotion or strong feeling. It can also be an expression of emphasis, such as **I'm certain** (of what has

just been said). Because men and women use *yo* differently, and because it can be assertive, beginners should use it with care.

Examples

Benkyō shinasai yo. / **Study!**
 |
study

Fujisan wa, kirei desu yo. / **Mt. Fuji is beautiful!**
 | | | |
Mt. Fuji beautiful is !

wa

female sentence ending

Used only by women, *wa* doesn't translate easily. It can have both an emphatic function and a softening effect.

Examples

Totemo atsui wa. / **It's very hot.**
 | |
very is hot

Watakushi ga suru wa. / **I'll do it.**
 |
will do

§7.

Verbs

§7.1 WHAT ARE VERBS?

Verbs are words that describe an action, a process, or a state of being.

Verbs have different forms which enable you to express time, intention, feelings, politeness, etc. Japanese verbs express these things too, but in different ways from those of English and other Indo-European languages. As you have seen in §3, for example, the main verb of a Japanese sentence must be at the end. In this section, you will see other differences, as well as some similarities.

§7.2 AGREEMENT

In English a verb must agree with its subject in person and number. In the present tense, for example, a subject in the first person takes a different verb form from a subject in the third person. And a plural subject in the third person takes a different verb form from a singular subject.

Examples

Person	Singular	Plural
First Person	I go	we go
Second Person	you go	you go
Third Person	he/she/it goes	they go

- In Japanese, agreement is not an issue. Verbs do not have different forms to indicate person, number, or gender. The *same* verb form is used no matter what the subject. This is true for all tenses.

Examples

Person	Singular	Plural
First Person	ikimasu / I go	ikimasu / we go
Second Person	ikimasu / you go	ikimasu / you go
Third Person	ikimasu / he/she/ it goes	ikimasu / they go

Tip

This principle is easy to understand if you remember the following: If the meaning is clear from the context in a Japanese sentence, a pronoun is not necessary. Therefore, *ikimasu* is both a verb and a sentence.

- In English, except for the imperative, or command form, a sentence consisting of a verb alone is not possible.

§7.3 VERB CONJUGATIONS

Japanese verbs can be classified into two major groups, or conjugations. The only exceptions are two irregular verbs: *suru*, **to do**, and *kuru*, **to come**.

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These groupings are a basic key to the Japanese verb system. They enable you to change the verb forms for different tenses and moods.

In a dictionary, an English verb is listed in its infinitive, or **to** form: **(to) go**, **(to) see**, etc. A Japanese verb, on the other hand, is listed in what is called its “dictionary form.” The dictionary form is the basis for categorizing a verb into one of the two major conjugations.

The two groups differ in how they form their stems and their infinitives. The stem is the most important inflectional base, which may change, or to which different suffixes, or endings, are added, to show tense, mood, and politeness level. The infinitive is the second most important inflectional base.

§7.3–1 The Consonant Conjugation

In this group, the verb stems end in a consonant. Therefore, they may be called **c-stem** verbs, as we shall do here. Because the stems are formed by dropping the final **u**, this is also referred to as the **u-dropping conjugation**, and the verbs may be called **u-dropping verbs**.

How can you tell a Consonant Conjugation verb?

- If the dictionary form ends in anything but *-eru* or *-iru*, it belongs in this group.

How do you form the stem?

- To form the stem of the verb, drop the final *-u*.

Examples

DICTIONARY FORM	STEM	ENGLISH
isogu	isog-	to hurry
kaku	kak-	to write
nuru	nur-	to paint
tobu	tob-	to fly
shinu	shin-	to die
yomu	yom-	to read

- For a few verbs, certain sound changes are necessary:
 If a verb ends in *-su*, the stem ends in *sh* before a suffix beginning with *i*, or *s* before other suffixes.
 If a verb ends in *-tsu*, the stem ends in *ch* before a suffix beginning with *i*, or *t* before other suffixes. For example:

DICTIONARY FORM	STEM	ENGLISH
dasu	das- dash-	to take out
kasu	kas- kash-	to lend
matsu	mat- mach-	to wait
tatsu	tat- tach-	to stand

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If a verb ends in *-au*, *-iu*, or *-ou*, it is still considered a c-stem verb, and it belongs in this group, even though a vowel remains after the *u* is dropped. The reason is that a missing “*w*” is considered the final consonant of the stem. That *w*, although not used in the affirmative forms, is needed for some of the negative forms. For example:

DICTIONARY FORM	STEM	ENGLISH
shimau	shima(w)-	to put away
kau	ka(w)-	to buy
iu	i(w)-	to say
omou	omo(w)-	to think

- Some verbs that end in *-eru* and *-iru* belong to the c-stem verb group. Here are a few examples:

DICTIONARY FORM	STEM	ENGLISH
hairu	hair-	to enter
kaeru	kaer-	to return
shiru	shir-	to know
kiru	kir-	to cut
iru	ir-	to need

Note that *kiru*, **to cut**, is a c-stem verb. When pronounced, the first syllable is stressed. The verb *kiru*, **to wear**, is a v-stem verb (see §7.3–2). When pronounced, the second syllable is stressed.

§7.3–2 The Vowel Conjugation

In this group, the verb stems end in a vowel. Therefore, they may be called **v-stem** verbs, as we shall do here. Because the stems are formed by dropping the final **ru**, this is also referred to as the **ru-dropping conjugation**, and the verbs may be called **ru-dropping verbs**.

How can you tell a Vowel Conjugation verb?

- Most verbs with dictionary forms which end in *-eru* and *-iru* belong in this group. (For some exceptions, see §7.3–1.)

How do you form the stem?

- To form the stem of the verb, drop the final *-ru*.

Examples

DICTIONARY FORM	STEM	ENGLISH
ageru	age-	to give, to raise
dekiru	deki-	to be able
hajimeru	hajime-	to begin
iru	i-	to be
kangaeru	kangae-	to think
miru	mi-	to see
neru	ne-	to sleep
taberu	tabe-	to eat
kiru	ki-	to wear

§7.4 THE INFINITIVE

The infinitive is also an important base for constructing other verb forms. To form the infinitive, do the following:

- for c-stem verbs, add *-i* to the stem. For example:

DICTIONARY FORM	STEM	INFINITIVE
isogu	isog-	isogi-
kaku	kak-	kaki-
nuru	nur-	nuri-
tobu	tob-	tobi-
shinu	shin-	shini-
yomu	yom-	yomi-

- for v-stem verbs, add *nothing* to the stem. (In this conjugation, the stem and the infinitive are the same.) For example:

DICTIONARY FORM	STEM	INFINITIVE
ageru	age-	age-
dekiru	deki-	deki-
hajimeru	hajime-	hajime-
iru	i-	i-
kangaeru	kangae-	kangae-
miru	mi-	mi-

- For the irregular verbs, the forms are as follows:

DICTIONARY FORM	INFINITIVE
kuru	ki-
suru	shi-

§7.5 PLAIN AND POLITE FORMS

The Japanese use different sets, or levels, of verb forms, depending on the politeness requirements of the situation, and the relationship among the speakers. For non-Japanese, using the different politeness levels correctly takes a great deal of experience with the Japanese language and culture.

The two most common levels are called *plain* and *polite*. The plain verb forms are used with immediate family members and close friends and associates. The polite forms have a wider range, and are more appropriate for general use, especially for students of Japanese.

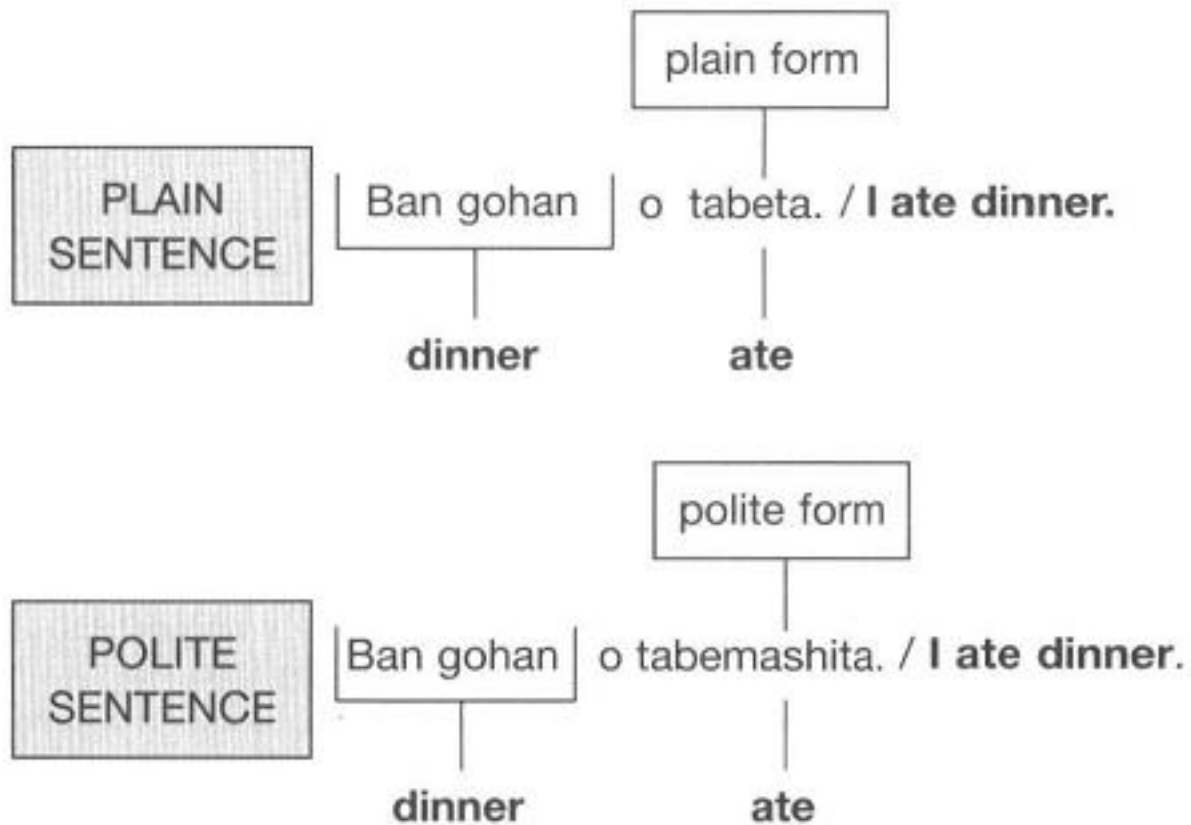
The examples below show two ways of saying the same thing, one plain style, and one polite style. Note the different verb forms.

Plain	Present Past	da / dictionary form datta / -ta, -da
Polite	Present Past	desu / -masu deshita / -mashita

- Both plain and polite forms are introduced with new verbs throughout this chapter.

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Examples

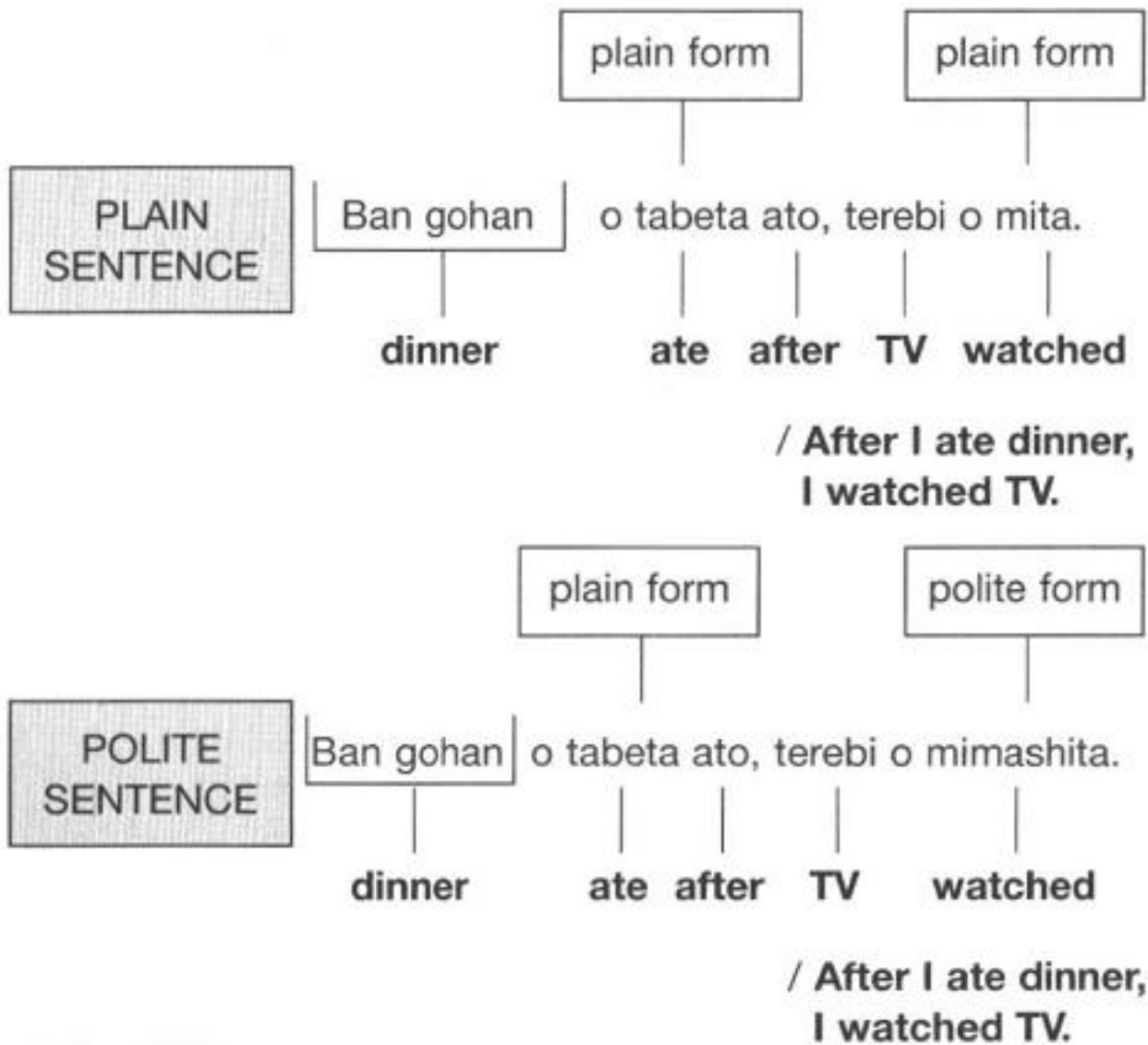


Tip

Although readers of this book should use the polite level, both forms must be learned. This is because the plain form can function other than as the main verb. When the main verb of the sentence, the one at the end, is in the polite form, other verbs earlier in the same sentence usually take the plain form.

The following examples show two sentences that say the same thing, one plain style, the other polite. Note that both sentences use a plain verb form, *tabeta*, for **ate**. And keep in mind that the verb at the end determines the politeness level for the entire sentence.

Examples



In the sections on verbs that follow, both the plain and polite forms will be given. Although there are other, more formal verb forms, these two levels should be appropriate for the reader's needs.

§7.6 THE "TO BE" VERBS

English has one verb to express the meaning **to be**, although that verb takes several forms (**am, is, are, was, were**, etc.). Japanese has three different words, each expressing a particular aspect of the meaning of **to be**: *desu*, *arimasu*, and *imasu*.

desu

Often called the copula, *desu* is used when you want to indicate such things as condition, quality, number, characteristics, or identity. You can understand it more easily if you think of *desu* as meaning not only **is**, but also **equals**, especially with two nouns or noun phrases. If you can substitute **equals** for **is** in an English sentence such as **This equals/is a book** or **Mrs. Smith equals/is my best friend**, *desu* is the word you want.

Although the polite forms *desu* (present) and *deshita* (past) are the ones you will use most often, you should know the following forms as well.

<i>desu</i> / is, equals		Affirmative	Negative
Present	Plain Polite	da desu	dewa nai dewa arimasen
Past	Plain Polite	datta deshita	dewa nakatta dewa arimasen deshita
Probable	Plain Polite	darō deshō	dewa nai darō dewa nai deshō

- For informal or familiar usage, *ja* can replace *dewa*

Examples

Kore wa, hon desu. / **This is a book.**

this	book	is

Tanaka san wa, sensei desu. / **Mr. Tanaka is a teacher.**

teacher

Otenki ga, ii desu. / **The weather is good.**

weather good

Otenki ga, warui deshō. / **The weather will probably be bad.**

bad will probably be

Ano hito wa, kinō byōki deshita. / **He was sick yesterday.**

he yesterday sick was

arimasu

Arimasu means **is** or **exists** for the location of inanimate things. It also expresses the idea of English **to have**. If you think of the meaning as **(something) exists/is located (somewhere)**, *arimasu* is the word you want. Because *arimasu* is a stative (non-action) verb, the particle *ni* is used with expressions of location.

Example

Hon wa, tēburu no ue ni arimasu. / **The book is on the table.**

table 's top on

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In the **to have** meaning of *arimasu*, the thing possessed is the subject of the sentence, and takes the particle *ga*.

Examples

Okane ga arimasu ka. / **Do you have any money?**
(As for you, does money exist?)

| |
money **is**

Hai, arimasu. / **Yes, I do. (Yes, it exists.)**

|
yes

Here are the other forms of *arimasu*:

<i>arimasu</i> / is, exists		Affirmative	Negative
Present	Plain Polite	aru arimasu	nai arimasen
Past	Plain Polite	atta arimashita	nakatta arimasen deshita
Probable	Plain Polite	aru darō aru deshō	nai darō nai deshō

Examples

Fujisan wa, Nihon ni arimasu. / **Mt. Fuji is in Japan.**

| |
in **is**

Ginza ni, sūpā ga arimasu ka. / **Is there a supermarket
in Ginza?**

supermarket

Eki wa, doko ni arimasu ka. / **Where is the station?**

station where

Jisho ga arimasu ka. / **Do you have a dictionary?**

dictionary

Iie, arimasen. / **No, I don't (have a dictionary).**

Koko ni kōen ga arimashita. / **There was a park here.**

here park was

imasu

Imasu is also a stative (non-action) verb used to express **is** or **exists** for location. But *imasu* is used for living things—people, animals, insects (*not* plants). The particle *ni* is used with *imasu* when the location is specified.

Imasu is also used as an auxiliary verb to form the progressive tenses, where it functions just like the English **is**: **He is going, I was going**, etc. Because this meaning of *imasu* is discussed in §7.7-4 and §7.7-5, the examples below will deal with only the locational meaning. First, here are the other forms of *imasu*:

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<i>imasu / is, exists</i>		Affirmative	Negative
Present	Plain Polite	iru imasu	inai imasen
Past	Plain Polite	ita imashita	inakatta imasen deshita
Probable	Plain Polite	iru darō iru deshō	inai darō inai deshō

Examples

Tanaka san wa imasu ka. / **Is Mr. Tanaka here?**

Hai, imasu. / **Yes, he is.**

Kinō Tōkyō ni imashita ka. / **Were you in Tokyo yesterday?**

| |
 yesterday were

Neko wa doko ni imasu ka. / **Where is the cat?**

| |
 cat where

Merī san wa, raigetsu Nihon ni

|
 next month

iru deshō. / **Mary will probably be in Japan next month.**

|
 will probably
 be

§7.7 THE INDICATIVE MOOD

The indicative mood allows you to express ordinary, objective statements, questions, etc. Tense refers to the time of the action or state expressed by the verb.

Tip

Sometimes Japanese is described as having just two tenses: the past and the non-past. At first, this sounds strange; on second thought, it can be a useful concept. What does it mean? It means that *Japanese does not have a separate future tense*. The past is the past, the non-past is everything else—that is, present and future. Here we will use more conventional terms (present and past), however.

Keep in mind as you look at the different tenses and moods that Japanese verbs do not change their form for gender and number.

§7.7–1 Present Tense

The present tense meanings in Japanese are similar to those of English: incomplete or habitual actions or states. The present tense is used for future time as well; Japanese has no separate future tense.

The plain form of the present tense is the same as the dictionary form, the one from which the stem is derived. The dictionary form was discussed in §7.3, Verb Conjugations.

plain form, c-stem verbs (see §7.3–1)

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iku / **I go, you go, he/she/it goes, we go, they go,
I will go, you will go, he/she/it will go, we will go,
they will go**

yomu / **I read, you read, he/she/it reads, we read, they
read,
I will read, you will read, he/she/it will read, we
will read, they will read**

plain form, v-stem verbs (see §7.3–1)

miru / **I see, you see, he/she/it sees, we see, they see,
I will see, you will see, he/she/it will see, we will
see, they will see**

taberu / **I eat, you eat, he/she/it eats, we eat, they eat,
I will eat, you will eat, he/she/it will eat, we will
eat, they will eat**

- To form the negative of the plain form, do the following:

c-stem verbs: add *-anai* to the stem.

iku / ikanai

go / don't go

yomu / yomanai

read / don't read

- Note that for c-stem verbs ending in *-au*, *-iu*, or *-ou*, you must add a *w* to the stem before adding *-anai* (see §7.3–1).

shimau / shimawanai

put away / don't put away

kau / kawanai

buy / don't buy

iu / iwanai

say / don't say

omou / omowanai

think / don't think

v-stem verbs: add *-nai* to the stem

hajimeru / hajimenai	begin / don't begin
kangaeru / kangaenai	think / don't think
taberu / tabenai	eat / don't eat
ageru / agenai	give / don't give
miru / minai	see / don't see

Tip

The polite present is sometimes referred to as the *masu* form. It can be constructed in two different ways.

Either:

Add *-masu* to the infinitive. (See §7.4.)

c-stem verbs	isogi + masu kaki + masu nuri + masu tobi + masu shini + masu yomi + masu	isogimasu / hurry kakimasu / write nurimasu / paint tobimasu / fly shinimasu / die yomimasu / read
v-stem verbs	age + masu hajime + masu kangae + masu mi + masu ki + masu ori + masu	agemasu / give hajimemasu / begin kangaemasu / think about mimasu / see kimasu / wear orimasu / get off

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Or:

For c-stem verbs, add *-imasu* to the stem.

isogu isog + imasu

kaku kak + imasu

nuru nur + imasu

isogimasu / **hurry**

kakimasu / **write**

nurimasu / **paint**

For v-stem verbs, add *-masu* to the stem.

hajimeru hajime + masu

kangaeru kangaе + masu

miru mi + masu

hajimemasu / **begin**

kangaemasu / **think about**

mimasu / **see**

- To form the polite negative, do the following:

For all verbs, simply change the ending from *masu* to *masen*.

ikimasu / ikimasen

wakarimasu / wakarimasen

kakimasu / kakimasen

mimasu / mimasen

oshiemasu / oshiemasen

go / don't go

understand /

don't understand

write / don't write

see / don't see

teach / don't teach

Here are a few verbs in their present tense conjugations:

Verb		Affirmative	Negative
taberu / eat			
Present	Plain	taberu	tabenai
	Polite	tabemasu	tabemasen
nomu / drink			
Present	Plain	nomu	nomanai
	Polite	nomimasu	nomimasen
suru / do			
Present	Plain	suru	shinai
	Polite	shimasu	shimasen

And some present tense sentences:

Examples

Watakushi wa, kōhī o nomimasen. / **I don't drink coffee.**

|
|
coffee **don't drink**

Tanaka san wa, sushi o mainichi tabemasu. / **Mr. Tanaka eats sushi every day.**

|
|
every day **eat**

Ano hitotachi wa, terebi o mimasen. / **They don't watch television.**

|
|
|
they **television** **don't watch**

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Nihongo ga wakarimasu ka. / **Do you understand Japanese?**

|
understand

Kyōto ni ashita ikimasu. / **I'll go to Kyoto tomorrow.**

| |
tomorrow will go

§7.7-2 Past Tense

Like English, the past tense is used for actions completed in the past (**I ate, I studied**, etc.). It is also used to express the equivalent of the English present perfect (**I have walked, I have eaten**, etc.).

Forming the plain past tense is easy for v-stem verbs, more complex for c-stem verbs.

For plain form, v-stem verbs: add *-ta* to the stem.

taberu / tabeta
oshieru / oshieta
miru / mita
ageru / ageta

eat / ate
teach / taught
see / saw
give / gave

For plain form, c-stem verbs: do the following:

- Look at the *final* syllable in the plain present form (dictionary form) of the verb. Find the syllable in column A below. Change it to the syllable in column B.

A

B

change this → to this		
omou	u → tta	omotta / thought
motsu	tsu → tta	motta / held
nuru	ru → tta	nutta / painted
nomu	mu → nda	nonda / drank
shinu	nu → nda	shinda / died
tobu	bu → nda	tonda / flew
kiku	ku → ita	kiita / asked
oyogu	gu → ida	oyoida / swam
hanasu	su → shita	hanashita / talked

- To form the negative of the plain past tense, do the following:

c-stem verbs: add *-anakatta* to the stem

iku	itta / ikanakatta	went / didn't go
yomu	yonda / yomanakatta	read / didn't read
kau(w)	katta / kawanakatta	bought / didn't buy
isogu	isoida / isoganakatta	hurried / didn't hurry

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v-stem verbs: add *-nakatta* to the stem.

hajimeru	hajimeta / hajimenakatta	began / didn't begin
taberu	tabeta / tabenakatta	ate / didn't eat
ageru	ageta / agenakatta	gave / didn't give
miru	mita / minakatta	saw / didn't see

For the polite past tense, change the present tense ending from *masu* to *mashita*.

ikimasu / ikimashita	go / went
mimasu / mimashita	see / saw
kaimasu / kaimashita	buy / bought
wakarimasu / wakarimashita	understand / understood
tabemasu / tabemashita	eat / ate
shimasu / shimashita	do / did
kimasu / kimashita	come / came

- For the negative of the polite past, add the word *deshita* to the polite present negative.

tabemasen / tabemasen deshita	don't eat / didn't eat
ikimasen / ikimasen deshita	don't go / didn't go
hashirimasen / hashirimasen deshita	don't run / didn't run
kaimasen / kaimasen deshita	don't buy / didn't buy

Here are a few verbs in their past tense conjugations:

Verb	Affirmative	Negative
kiru / to put on (clothes) Past Plain Polite	kita kimashita	kinakatta kimasen deshita
yomu / to read Past Plain Polite	yonda yomimashita	yomanakatta yomimasen deshita
suru / to do Past Plain Polite	shita shimashita	shinakatta shimasen deshita

And some past tense sentences:

Examples

Itsu kimashita ka. / **When did you come?**

| |
when came

Kinō shimasen deshita. / **I didn't do it yesterday.**

| |
yesterday didn't do

Owarimashita. / **It's finished.**

|
finished

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Doko de kaimashita ka. / **Where did you buy it?**

bought

Naze ikimassen deshita ka. / **Why didn't you go?**

why

didn't go

§7.7-3 The Gerund

Often referred to as the “-te form,” the gerund is a useful form of the Japanese verb. Alone, it does not have tense or mood. But it combines with other verb forms to create tenses and moods, such as the continuous tenses and the imperative mood, for example. It has other uses as well.

Tip

One caution: The term “gerund” may be misleading. In English, a gerund is the **-ing** form of a verb when functioning as a noun (**I like swimming, Reading is my favorite hobby**, etc. For this use, see §7.19). The Japanese gerund is a verb form, *not* a noun. Indeed, in the progressive tenses, it functions much like the English **-ing** form.

Gerunds are regular in form and easy to construct.

Start with the plain past tense (see §7.7-2), and change the final *-a* to *-e*.

Present	Past	Gerund
aruku / walk	aruita	aruite
kiku / ask, listen	kiita	kiite
taberu / eat	tabeta	tabete
hanasu / speak	hanashita	hanashite
yomu / read	yonda	yonde

Note that for the copula, *desu*, the plain past tense is *datta* and the gerund is *de*.

One important use of the gerund is when listing actions in a neutral sequence (with no strong contrast or emphasis) within a sentence. All but the last verb are gerunds.

Example

Sūpā ni itte, niku o katte, uchi ni

| | |
went meat bought

kaerimashita. / **I went to the supermarket, bought
some meat, and returned home.**

|
returned

§7.7-4 Present Progressive

Japanese uses the present progressive for action in progress or continuous action, state of being, and also to express the meaning of the English present perfect.

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Unlike English, it cannot be used to express future meaning (**Tomorrow he's going to New York**, or **I'm getting my degree next year**, etc.).

To form the present progressive, start with the gerund, and add the appropriate form of the verb *iru*. The plain form is used in informal conversation, of course. The polite form, appropriate for general use, is given here. Note that *iru* when used alone as a verb can only refer to living things. With the gerund, it is used for inanimate things as well.

Affirmative	Negative
aruite imasu / walking	aruite imasen / not walking
kiite imasu / listening	kiite imasen / not listening
tabete imasu / eating	tabete imasen / not eating
hanashite imasu / speaking	hanashite imasen / not speaking
yonde imasu / reading	yonde imasen / not reading
nonde imasu / drinking	nonde imasen / not drinking
motte imasu / holding	motte imasen / not holding
oyoide imasu / swimming	oyoide imasen / not swimming

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Mise ga shimatte imasu. / **The store is closed.**
(Someone closed it, and it's still closed.)
|
store **is closed**

Ano hito wa futotte imasu. / **He is fat.** (He got fat, and he's still fat.)
|
he **is fat**

Haha wa Tōkyō ni itte imasu. / **Mother is in Tokyo.**
(She went to Tokyo, and she's still there.)
|
mother **is**

Tsukarete imasu. / **I'm tired.** (I got tired, and I'm still tired.)
|
tired

The present progressive can express the English present perfect tense—an action that began in the past and continues through the present. In the following sentences, notice how the time element, **for five years**, results in a present perfect meaning. Without it, the meaning is simply continuous action.

Examples

Kyōto ni gonen kan sunde imasu. / **I have been living in Kyoto for five years.**
| |
five years **for** **am living**

Kyōto ni sunde imasu. / **I'm living in Kyoto.**

§7.7-5 Past Progressive

The past progressive is used for past continuous action or state of being.

The form is easy: start with the gerund, and change *imasu* to the past form: *imashita*. The negative is the gerund plus the negative past of *imashita*, which is *imasen deshita*.

Affirmative	Negative
aruite imashita / was walking	aruite imasen deshita / wasn't walking
kiite imashita / was listening	kiite imasen deshita / wasn't listening
tabete imashita / was eating	tabete imasen deshita / wasn't eating
hanashite imashita / was speaking /	hanashite imasen deshita / wasn't speaking
yonde imashita / was reading	yonde imasen deshita / wasn't reading
nonde imashita / was drinking	nonde imasen deshita / wasn't drinking
motte imashita / was holding	motte imasen deshita / wasn't holding
oyoide imashita / was swimming	oyoide imasen deshita / wasn't swimming

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Here are some examples of past continuous action.

Examples

Haha wa, ban gohan o tsukutte imashita. / **Mother was preparing dinner.**
|
was making

Chichi wa, hataraiten deshita. / **Father wasn't working.**
|
father **wasn't working**

Kyonen Nihongo o benkyō shite imashita. / **Last year I was studying Japanese.**
|
last year **was studying**

Neko ga, isu no ue de nete imashita. / **The cat was sleeping on the chair.**
| | |
cat **chair's** **top** **was sleeping**

The following examples show past states of being.

Examples

Denki ga tsuite imashita. / **The light was on.**
|
light **was on**

Doa ga aite imashita. / **The door was open.**
|
door **was open**

Ano hito wa yasete imashita. / **She was thin.**
 |
was thin

Tsukarete imasen deshita. / **I wasn't tired.**
 |
tired

§7.8 THE PRESUMPTIVE MOOD

Sometimes called the “probable” mood, this has no exact equivalent in English, although it is important in Japanese. It enables speakers to use a verb form that can express *probability, belief, or intention* without being too direct. This mood has two sets of forms, one indicating probability, the second indicating intention.

darō, deshō form

This form expresses the speaker's belief that something will probably happen. It is easily constructed by adding *darō* or *deshō* (plain and polite, respectively) to the plain, or dictionary form, of the verb. This works for the negative of the plain form as well, and also for the past forms.

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Present	
Plain	Polite
kuru darō	kuru deshō / will probably come
iku darō	iku deshō / will probably go
taberu darō	taberu deshō / will probably eat
Negative	
konai darō	konai deshō / will probably not come
ikanai darō	ikanai deshō / will probably not go
tabenai darō	tabenai deshō / will probably not eat
Past	
kita darō	kita deshō / probably came
itta darō	itta deshō / probably went
tabeta darō	tabeta deshō / probably ate
Negative	
konakatta darō	konakatta deshō / probably didn't come
ikanakatta darō	ikanakatta deshō / probably didn't go
tabanakatta darō	tabanakatta deshō / probably didn't eat

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-ō, -yō / -*mashō* forms

These differ somewhat in the plain and polite forms.

First consider the plain form, -ō, -yō. As a final verb at the end of a sentence, it expresses the speaker's intention. Considered abrupt, it is used mostly by men. It can also mean "Let's (do something)," but for this, the -*mashō* form is preferred. As a medial verb (not at the end of the sentence), it expresses intention or probability. The forms are made as follows:

- For c-stem verbs, start with the plain, or dictionary form, and change the final -*u* to -ō.

Present	Presumptive
nuru / paint	nurō / will probably paint, will/let's paint
kiku / ask	kikō / will probably ask, will/let's ask

- For v-stem verbs, start with the stem, and add -yō.

Present	Stem	Presumptive
taberu / eat	tabe-	tabeyō / will probably eat, will/let's eat
miru / see	mi-	miyō / will probably see, will/let's see

- The irregular verb forms are as follows:

suru / do	shiyō / will probably do, will/let's do
kuru / come	koyō / will probably come, will/let's come

- The negative forms, infrequently used, are not needed here.
- Note how the *ō* and *yō* forms are used in medial and final position, and the differences in meaning.

Examples

Konban hayaku neyō
 | | |
tonight **early** **probably go to sleep**
 to omoimasu. / **I think I'll probably go to sleep**
 | | **early tonight.**
that **think**

Watakushi ga ikō. / **I will go.**

|
will go

Tabeyō. / **Let's eat.**

Now look at the polite form, *-mashō*. This can express several things: the speaker's intention to do something, a polite description of the probability of someone else's doing something, or, most common, the idea of "Let's" or "Shall we?"

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To construct this form, add *-mashō* to the infinitive of the verb.

Plain	Infinitive	<i>-mashō</i> Form
yomu / read	yomi-	yomimashō / let's read
miru / see	mi-	mimashō / let's see
taberu / eat	tabe-	tabemashō / let's eat
iku / go	iki-	ikimashō / let's go

Here are some examples of some common uses of this form:

Examples

Ginza ni ikimashō. / **Let's go to Ginza.**

let's go

Ban gohan o tabemashō ka. / **Shall we eat dinner?**

dinner shall we eat

Uchi ni kaerimashō. / **Let's return home.**

home let's return

Watakushi ga shimashō. / **I'll do it.**

will do

Jon san ga kimashō. / **John will probably come.**

will probably come

- Note that the last sentence above would mean the same thing using the *deshō* form. For example:

Jon san ga kuru deshō. / **John will probably come.**

will probably come.

§7.9 THE IMPERATIVE MOOD

The true imperative or command form in Japanese is too abrupt for most usage. However, you should recognize it.

The imperative is formed by adding *-e* to the stem of *c*-stem verbs, and *-ro* to the stem of *v*-stem verbs. To form the negative imperatives, add *-na* to the plain present form of the verb.

Plain	Imperative	Imperative (Negative)
iku / go	ike / go!	ikuna / don't go!
kiku / listen	kike / listen!	kikuna / don't listen!
taberu / eat	tabero / eat!	taberuna / don't eat!
miru / look	miro / look!	miruna / don't look!

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A somewhat less harsh form is made by adding *-nasai* to the infinitive form of the verb. This is not used with negative forms.

iku / go	ikinasai / go
taberu / eat	tabenasai / eat

Examples

Yukkuri hanashinasai. / **Speak slowly.**

 | |
slowly **speak**

Koko ni kinasai. / **Come here.**

 | |
here **come**

The form of the imperative commonly used for polite requests or commands is the gerund, or *-te* form, with the word *kudasai*.

kuru / come	Kite kudasai. / Please come.
taberu / eat	Tabete kudasai. / Please eat.
suwaru / sit down	Suwatte kudasai. / Please sit down.
kiku / listen	Kiite kudasai. / Please listen.
hanasu / speak	Hanashite kudasai. / Please speak.

Examples

Ryokō ni tsuite hanashite kudasai. / **Please tell me about your trip.**
 | | |
trip about please tell

Tegami o dashite kudasai. / **Please mail the letter.**
 | |
letter please mail

Takushī o yonde kudasai. / **Please call a taxi.**
 | |
taxi please call

For the negative of this structure, add *-de kudasai* to the negative of the plain present form.

Ikanaide kudasai. / **Please don't go.**
 Shinpai shinaide kudasai. / **Please don't worry.**

Kudasai can also be used when requesting an object. In this usage another verb form is not needed.

Examples

Hon o kudasai. / **Please give me a book.**
 | |
book please give

Kōhī o kudasai. / **Please give me some coffee.**
 | |
coffee please give

§7.10 THE CONDITIONAL MOOD

In Japanese, there are several ways of conveying the conditional, or “if” meaning. Although they can, in many cases, be used interchangeably, there are slight differences in meaning.

-eba form

This is sometimes called the “provisional” form, because it means “if” in the sense of “provided something happens (now or in the future).” In the negative form, it can mean “unless.”

For the *-eba* form, drop the final *-u* of the dictionary form of the verb and add *-eba*. For the negative, drop the final *-i* of the plain negative form and add *-kereba*.

Plain	Conditional
kuru / come	kureba / if, provided I (you, etc.) come konakereba / if I don't come, unless I come
miru / see	mireba / if, provided I see minakereba / if I don't see, unless I see
yomu / read	yomeba / if, provided I read yomanakereba / if I don't read, unless I read
taberu / eat	tabereba / if, provided I eat tabenakereba / if I don't eat, unless I eat

Examples

Isshōkenmei | benkyō sureba, | Nihongo o
 | | |
hard | **if study** | **Japanese**
 oboemasu. / **If you study hard, you'll learn**
 | **Japanese.**
 |
will learn

Ano hito | ni aereba | shiawase desu. / **If I meet him, I'll**
 | | | **be happy.**
 | | |
him | **if meet** | **will be happy**

Yasumanakereba | byōki ni narimasu. / **Unless you**
 | | | **rest you'll**
 | | | **be sick.**
 | | |
unless rest | **sick** | **become**

With verbal adjectives (*-i* adjectives), drop the *-i* and add *kereba*. For the negative, use the adverbial form (*yasuku*) [see §8.2–3] and add *nakereba*. For example:

Adjective	Conditional
yasui / cheap	yasukereba / if it's cheap, if it were cheap yasukunakereba / if it's not cheap, unless it's cheap

Examples

Honya ni | ittara, | shimatte imashita. / **When I went to the bookstore, it was closed.**
 bookstore when went was closed

Benkyō shitara, | wakatta deshō. / **If I had studied, I would have understood.**
 if had studied understood

Kōhī o nondara, | neraremasen. / **When I drink coffee, I can't sleep.**
 coffee when drink can't sleep

Notice the use of *-tara* forms with *-i* and *-na* adjectives and with nouns.

Examples

Takakattara | kaimasen. / **If it's expensive, I won't buy it.**
 if it is expensive won't buy

Soko ga | shizuka dattara | ikimasu. / **If it were quiet there, I would go.**
 there if it were quiet would go

Ii hon | dattara, | kaimasu. / **If it were a good book, I would buy it.**
 good if it were would buy

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Other useful conditional forms are *nara* and *to*.

nara

with verbs	Present: iku nara / if I (you, etc.) go Past: itta nara / if I had gone
with verbal adjectives	Present: ōkii nara / if it is / were big Past: ōkikatta nara / if it had been big
with adjectival nouns	Present: kirei nara / if it is / were pretty Past: kirei datta nara / if it had been pretty
with nouns	gakusei nara / if I am / were a student

Similar to the *-tara* forms in meaning, *nara* can be used for **if** and **after**. In some uses, it has a strong contrary-to-fact element, like the subjunctive mood of English.

Examples

Watakushi ga kanemochi nara yotto o

| | |
rich person if sailboat

kaimasu.

/ **If I were rich, I would buy a sailboat.**

|
would buy

Isogu nara, chikatetsu de ikinasai. / **If you're in a hurry,**

| | | |
hurry if subway take

take a subway.

to

To is used with the present forms of verbs and verbal adjectives, adjectival nouns, and with nouns. In many cases, the meaning is the same as that of the *-tara* or *-eba* forms.

Examples

Sake o nomu	to,	nemuku	narimasu.	Whenever I drink sake, I become sleepy.
drink	whenever	sleepy	become	

Tenki ga ii	to,	kōen ni ikimasu.	When/if the weather is good, I go/will go to the park.
weather good	when/if	park go	

§7.11 THE POTENTIAL MOOD

To express the idea of capability or possibility (**can** or **be able to** in English), add *-eru* (plain) or *-emasu* (polite) to the stem of c-stem verbs, and *-rareru* (plain) or *-raremasu* (polite) to the stem of v-stem verbs. The negatives are formed regularly: Add *-enai* / *-emasen* to the stem of c-stem verbs, and *-rarenai* / *-raremasen* to the stem of v-stem verbs.

Examples

Merī san wa,	Nihongo ga hanasemasu.	Mary can speak Japanese.
Japanese	can speak	

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Nanji ni aemasu ka. / **What time can I see you?**

| |
what time can see

Kyō ikenai nara, ashita ikemasu ka. / **If you
can't go
today, can
you go
tomorrow?**

| | | | | |
today can't go if tomorrow can go ?

Another way to express the potential is as follows:

- Place the appropriate form of the verb *dekiru* / **can do** after a noun (plus the particle *ga*).

Examples

Nihongo ga dekimasu. / **I can speak Japanese.**

| |
Japanese can do

Tenisu ga dekimasu. / **I can play tennis.**

| |
tennis can do

Ryōri ga dekimasen. / **I can't cook.**

| |
cooking can't do

A verb form can be used with this structure as well, but it must first be nominalized, or made into a noun form. To nominalize a verb, do the following:

- Add the word *koto* to the plain, or dictionary form, of the verb. Then it can be used with *ga* and *dekiru* / *dekimasu*.

Examples

Nihongo o yomu koto ga dekimasu. / **I can read Japanese.**

| | |

Japanese read can do

Merī san wa, oyogu koto ga dekimasen. / **Mary can't swim.**

| |

swim can't do

Kinō, Tanaka san ni au koto ga dekimashita.

| | |

yesterday see could do

/ **Yesterday, I could see Ms. Tanaka.**

§7.12 THE PASSIVE VOICE

Japanese has two ways of using the passive. The first is with transitive verbs, as in English. In such sentences, the “doer” may or may not be expressed. (**My wallet was stolen, or My wallet was stolen by a pickpocket.**)

- To form the passive, add *-areru*, *-aremasu* to the stems of c-stem verbs, and *-rareru*, *-raremasu* to the stems of v-stem verbs. For the negative, add *-arenai*, *-aremasen* to the stems of c-stem verbs, and *-rarenai*, *-raremasen* to the stems of v-stem verbs.

- Note that the use of this type of passive is more limited in Japanese than in English. While passive forms are grammatically possible for many verbs, the resulting sentences may be awkward.

The second way of using the passive in Japanese, for which English has no corresponding use, may be called the “adversity” passive. You can think of it as the “too bad” or “regrettably” passive. This means that something happened to someone and it had an adverse effect on that person. The verb may be transitive or intransitive. Because this is quite unlike English, read the following sentences carefully, especially the translations.

- Note the use of *ni* in the passive sentences below.

Examples

Active

Merī san no okāsan ga shinimashita. / **Mary's mother died.**

| | | |

Mary 's mother died

Passive

Merī san wa okāsan ni shinaremashita. / **Mary's mother died (on her). (Lit: Mary was died by her mother.)**

| | | |

Mary mother by was died

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Active

Ame ga furimashita. / **It rained. (The rain fell.)**

| |
rain **fell**

Passive

Tanaka san wa ame ni furaremashta. / **Mr. Tanaka
was caught in
the rain. (Lit:
Mr. Tanaka was
fallen by rain.)**

| | |
rain by **was fallen**

§7.13 THE CAUSATIVE

The causative forms in Japanese express the idea of making or causing someone to do something: **I made my brother clean his room.** It also can mean **let** or **allow**: **Please let me go.**

- To form the causative, add *-aseru*, *-asemasu* to the stem of c-stem verbs (*-asenai*, *-asemasen* for the negative), and add *-saseru*, *-sasemasu* to the stem of v-stem verbs (*-sasenai*, *-sasemasen* for the negative).

yomu / **read**, yomaseru, yomasemasu / **make (someone)
read
let (someone)
read**

taberu / **eat**, tabesaseru, tabesasemasu / **make
(someone) eat
let (someone)
eat**

Examples

Merī san o mise ni ikasemashita. / **I made Mary go to the store.**

store to made go

Okāsan wa, kodomo o nekasemashita. / **The mother made the child go to bed.**

mother child made sleep

Watakushi ni harawasete kudasai. / **Please let me pay.**

let pay please

Otōto ni benkyō sasemashita. / **I made my younger brother study.**

younger brother made study

§7.14 THE CAUSATIVE PASSIVE

The causative passive form expresses the idea that the subject of the sentence is made to do something in the sense of being forced.

- To form the causative passive, add *-aserareru*, *-aseraremasu* to the stem of c-stem verbs (*-aserarenai*, *-aseraremasen* for the negative), and add *-saserareru*, *-saseraremasu* to the stem of v-stem verbs (*-saserarenai*, *-saseraremasen* for the negative).

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iku / go	ikaserareru, ikaseraremasu / be made to go
taberu / eat	tabesaserareru, tabesaseraremasu / be made to eat

Examples

Kyōkasho o kawaseraremashita. / **I was made to buy a textbook.**
| | |
textbook **was made to buy**

Kodomo wa, miruku o nomaseraremashita. / **The child was made to drink (his) milk.**
| | | | |
child **milk** **was made to drink**

Jon san wa, asa gohan o tsukuraseraremashita.
| | | | |
breakfast **was forced to make**
/ **John was forced to make breakfast.**

§7.15 THE GIVING AND RECEIVING VERBS

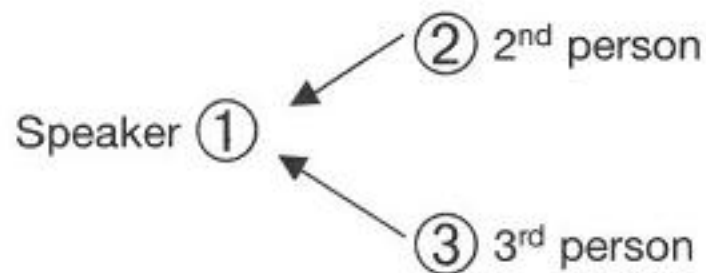
Japanese has several verbs for conveying the meaning of *giving* and *receiving*. Choosing which one to use involves the relative status of the giver and receiver. It also involves the direction of the action, in the sense of giving *to* and receiving *from*.

- The following verbs are used to describe someone's giving something to you, the speaker, or to someone in your in-group, as in the diagram below the box.

To say **to give kindly (to me or my in-group: family, friends, etc.)**, use:

kureru

kudasaru (use for referring to superiors)



Examples

Haha ga watakushi ni kuremashita. / **My mother gave it to me.**

| | | |
my mother me to gave

Kore wa tomodachi ga kureta hon desu. / **This is the book my friend gave me.**

| | | | |
this friend gave book is me.

Sensei ga jisho o kudasaimashita. / **The teacher gave me a dictionary.**

| | |
teacher dictionary gave

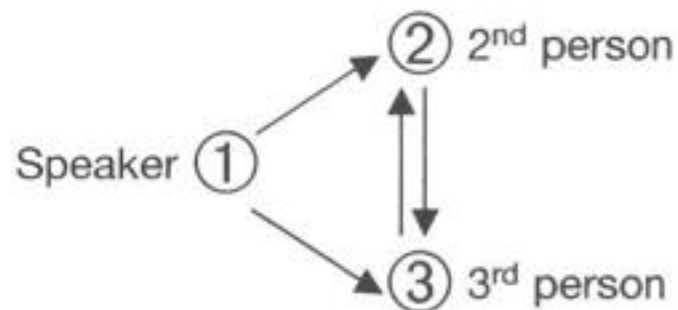
132 Parts of Speech

- The following verbs are used for **I give, he gives**, etc., as in the diagram below the box.

To say **give**, use:

ageru

sashiageru (use for speaking to or referring to superiors)



Examples

Chichi ni ocha o agemashita. / **I gave my father some tea.**

father tea gave

Merī san wa, Jon san ni chizu o agemashita. / **Mary gave John a map.**

map gave

Tanaka san wa, shachō ni hana o sashiagemashita.

company flowers gave
president

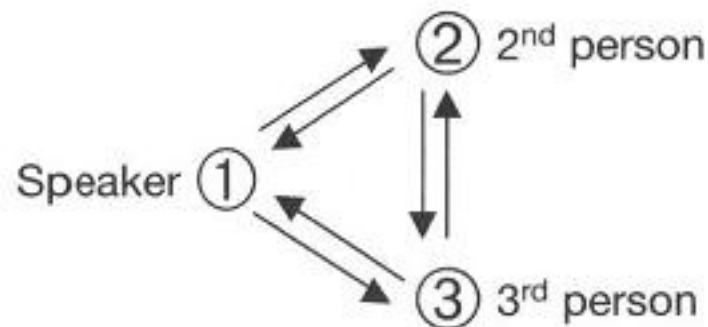
/ **Mrs. Tanaka gave flowers to the company president.**

- The following verbs are used for **receive**, as in the diagram below the box.

To say **receive**, use:

morau

itadaku (use for speaking to or referring to superiors)



Examples

Jon san wa, tomodachi ni rekōdo o moraimashita.

friend from record received

/ **John received a record from his friend.**

Chichi wa, kaisha kara bōnasu o moraimashita.

father company from bonus received

/ **Father received a bonus from the company.**

Sensei kara tegami o itadakimashita. / **I got a letter**

teacher from letter got **from the teacher.**

kau / buy katte ageru, katte sashiageru

Examples

Tanaka san ga, Jon san ni sore o

it

katte agemashita. / **Mr. Tanaka bought it for John.**

bought

Suzuki san wa, shachō ni nekutai o

company necktie
president

katte sashiagemashita. / **Mr. Suzuki bought the company president a tie.**

bought

iku / go itte morau, itte itadaku

Examples

Ane ni kaimono ni itte moraimashita. / **I had my elder sister go shopping for me.**

elder shopping had go

sister

Honda san ni yūbinkyoku e itte itadakimashita.

post office had go

/ I had Mr. Honda go to the post office for me.

§7.16 THE HONORIFIC AND HUMBLE FORMS

Using the correct language to reflect relationships is important to the Japanese. This means expressing the appropriate degree of respect or deference to the listener, and the appropriate degree of humility about oneself or one's family. The speaker's attitude toward the listener or the person being spoken about is the key. Honorific language elevates someone else; humble language lowers oneself.

Tip

Using the honorific and humble verb forms confidently takes a good deal of experience with Japanese culture, but the forms themselves are not difficult to learn.

The honorifics of verbs take several forms.

- One honorific form is the passive form itself (see §7.12).

Plain Form	Passive and Honorific Form
aruku / walk	arukareru
kaeru / change	kaerareru
suru / do	sareru
kuru / come	korareru

Kasa o | okashi itashimashō ka. | / **Shall I lend you an umbrella?**

umbrella shall lend

- Some verbs have special honorific and humble forms. Following are a few commonly used examples.

Verb	Honorific	Humble
iku / go	irassharu	mairu
kuru / come	irassharu	mairu
iru / be	irassharu	oru
suru / do	nasaru	itasu
iu / say	ossharu	mōsu
taberu / eat	meshiagaru	itadaku
miru / see	goran ni naru	haiken suru

§7.17 CLAUSES

Dependent Clauses

Unlike English, independent clauses in Japanese cannot be strung together in one sentence and joined by a conjunction like “and.” In Japanese, the main or independent clause comes at the *end* of the sentence, and other clauses are *dependent*. Following are some basic ways in which dependent clauses are linked to the main, or independent clause.

...-te/de

- The *-te* or gerund form of the verb can be used to indicate sequential, parallel, or causal relationships of dependent clauses. Verbal adjectives (the *-kute* form) and adjectival nouns (with the *de* form of the copula) can also be used this way (See §8), as can nouns (with the *de* form of the copula). Look at the examples.

Sequential:

As the name implies, this form is used for actions that occur in a time sequence: **first, then, then, etc.**

Example

Ginza e itte kaimono o shite, uchi e kaerimashita.

went	shopping	did	home	returned

/ I went to Ginza, did some shopping, and returned home.

Parallel:

The action or meaning here is parallel, or can take place at the same time.

Examples

Yamada san wa Ginza e itte, watakushi wa Shinjuku e

went

ikimashita. / **Mrs. Yamada went to Ginza, and I went to Shinjuku.**

went

Kono heya wa, hirokute akarukute rippa desu.

this room is spacious is bright gorgeous is

/ **This room is spacious and bright and gorgeous.**

Causal:

The dependent clause shows the cause, the main clause shows the effect. The cause-effect relationship need not be a strong one, however, for the *-te* form to be used.

Examples

Sensō ga owatte **ureshii desu.** / **I'm glad because the war is over.**

war is over am glad

Yamada san wa, byōki de **kimasen.** / **Ms. Yamada isn't coming because she's sick.**

sick is isn't coming

... -shi ... -shi

- This form is used for **and in addition, and what's more.**

Examples

Kono shūmatsu wa iroiro shimashita. / **I did various things this weekend.**

| | | |
this weekend various things did

Kaimono o shita shi, kuruma o aratta shi, Nihongo mo
 | | | | | |
shopping did and car washed and

┌──────────┐
 | benkyō shimashita. |
 └──────────┘
 |
studied

/ **I went shopping, washed my car, and studied Japanese.**

Kono shūmatsu wa, totemo taihen deshita. / **This weekend was awful (very bad).**

| | | | | |
this weekend very bad was

Kuruma o ┌──────────┐ shi, saifu o nakushita shi,
 | | | | | |
car was stolen and wallet lost and
what's more

inu ni ┌──────────┐
 | | | | |
dog by was bitten

/ **My car was stolen, I lost my wallet, and what's more, I was bitten by a dog.**

Relative Clauses

Japanese does not have relative pronouns like the English **who, that, which**, for use in relative clauses such as **The man who arrived is my friend**. Instead, the relative clause, ending with the plain form of the verb, comes *before* the word it modifies.

Examples

Watakushi ^{ga/}no itsumo iku restoran wa, Ginza

| | | |
I always go restaurant

ni arimasu. / **The restaurant that I always go to is
in Ginza.**

| |
in is

Kondo no ryokō de itta tokoro wa, Amerika to

| | | |
**this trip went places
time**

Kanada deshita. / **The places that I went to on this
trip were America and Canada.**

| |
Canada were

§7.18 COMMON EXPRESSIONS WITH VERBS AND ADJECTIVES

The following forms are useful, some with verbs, some with both verbs and adjectives. If you use the *-de*, *demo*, or *dewa* forms, they can be used with nouns or adjectival nouns as well.

-temo ii desu / **It's okay if . . .**
You may . . .

Examples

Takakutemo ii desu. / **It's okay (even) if it's expensive.**
 | |
if expensive **is okay**

Tabetemo ii desu. / **You may eat.**
 | |
if eat **is okay**

-nakutemo ii desu / **It's okay even if it's not . . .**
You don't have to . . .

Examples

Yasukunakutemo ii desu. / **It's okay even if it's not cheap.**
 | |
even if not cheap **is okay**

Tabenakutemo ii desu. / **You don't have to eat.**
 | |
if don't eat **is okay**

-tewa ikemasen / must not

Examples

Purezento wa okane **dewa ikemasen.** / **The gift must not (shouldn't) be money.**
| | |
gift **money** **must not be**

Tabetewa ikemasen. / **You must not eat.**
|
must not eat

-nakutewa ikemasen, -nakereba narimasen / must

Examples

Tabenakutewa ikemasen. / **You must eat.**
|
must eat

Tabenakereba narimasen. / **You must eat.**
|
must eat

hō ga ii desu / **It's better (that) . . .**

Examples

Motto benkyō shita hō ga ii desu. / **You had better study harder.**
 | | |
more **study** **had better**

Yasui hō ga ii desu. / **The cheap one is better.**
 | |
cheap **is better**

kamo shiremasen / **might, probably**

Examples

Ashita iku kamo shiremasen. / **I might go tomorrow.**
 | | |
tomorrow **go** **might**

Mō tabeta kamo shiremasen. / **He might have eaten already.**
 | | |
already **ate** **might**

hoshii desu / **want, need**

Examples

Okane ga hoshii desu. / **I need money.**
 | |
money **need**

Kōhī ga | hoshikatta desu. | / I wanted coffee.
 coffee | wanted

-tai desu / want

Examples

Sushi ga | tabetai desu. | / I want to eat sushi.
 want to eat

Sakana wa | tabetaku arimasen. | / I don't want to eat fish.
 fish | don't want to eat

§7.19 NOMINALIZATION

Verbs or clauses can be nominalized, or made into nouns, by using *no* or *koto* immediately after. Note that *koto* is more formal and can be used in the predicate; *no* is less formal and cannot be used in the predicate (see §3.3–2).

Examples

Watakushi wa | taberu no | ga daisuki desu. / I like eating very much.
 eating

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Ryokō suru no wa tanoshii desu. / **I enjoy traveling.**

traveling

Anata ga itta koto wa tadashii desu. / **What you said was right.**

What you said was right

Miru koto wa shinjiru koto desu. / **Seeing is believing.**

Seeing believing

Suru yori iu no wa kantan desu. / **It's easier said than done.**

Saying than doing

Yamada san wa oshieru no o yamemashita. / **Mr. Yamada quit teaching.**

teaching quit

§7.20 VERB CHARTS

In the following charts you will find conjugated forms of a sample of Japanese verbs.

hanasu / **to speak**

Stem: hanas-

Transitive

		Affirmative	Negative
Present:	Plain	hanasu	hanasanai
	Polite	hanashimasu	hanashimasen
Past:	Plain	hanashita	hanasanakatta
	Polite	hanashimashita	hanashimasen deshita
Gerund (-te form):		hanashite	hanasanaide hanasanakute
Presumptive:	Plain	hanasu darō	hanasanai darō
	Polite	hanasu deshō	hanasanai deshō
Imperative:	Plain	hanasō	hanasumai
	Polite	hanashimashō	
Imperative:	Plain	hanase	hanasuna
	Polite	hanashite kudasai	hanasanaide kudasai
Conditional:		hanaseba	hanasanakereba
		hanashitara	hanasanakattara

Plain Affirmative

Potential:	hanaseru	Honorific:	ohanashi ni naru
Passive:	hanasareru		ohanashi nasaru
Causative:	hanasaseru	Humble:	ohanashi suru ohanashi itasu
Causative Passive:	hanasaserareru		

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iku / to go

Stem: ik-		Intransitive	
Present:	Plain	Affirmative iku	Negative ikanai
	Polite	ikimasu	ikimasen
Past:	Plain	itta	ikanakatta
	Polite	ikimashita	ikimasen deshita
Gerund (-te form):		itte	ikanaide ikanakute
Presumptive:	Plain	iku darō	ikanai darō
	Polite	iku deshō	ikanai deshō
	Plain	ikō	ikumai
	Polite	ikimashō	
Imperative:	Plain	ike	ikuna
	Polite	itte kudasai	ikanaide kudasai
Conditional:		ikeba	ikanakereba
		ittara	ikanakattara

Plain Affirmative

Potential:	ikeru	Honorific:	irassharu
Passive:	ikareru		
Causative:	ikaseru	Humble:	mairu
Causative Passive:	ikaserareru		

kaeru / to return

Stem: kaer-		Intransitive	
Present:	Plain	Affirmative kaeru	Negative kaeranai
	Polite	kaerimasu	kaerimasen
Past:	Plain	kaetta	kaeranakatta
	Polite	kaerimashita	kaerimasen deshita
Gerund (-te form):		kaette	kaeranaide kaeranakute
Presumptive:	Plain	kaeru darō	kaeranai darō
	Polite	kaeru deshō	kaeranai deshō
	Plain	kaerō	kaerumai
	Polite	kaerimashō	
Imperative:	Plain	kaere	kaeruna
	Polite	kaette kudasai	kaeranaide kudasai
Conditional:		kaereba	kaeranakereba
		kaettara	kaeranakattara

Plain Affirmative

Potential:	kaereru	Honorific:	okaeri ni naru
Passive:	kaerareru		okaeri nasaru
Causative:	kaeraseru	Humble:	_____
Causative Passive:	kaeraserareru		

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kau / to buy

Stem: ka-		Transitive	
Present:	Plain	Affirmative kau	Negative kawanai
	Polite	kaimasu	kaimasen
Past:	Plain	katta	kawanakatta
	Polite	kaimashita	kaimasen deshita
Gerund (-te form):		katte	kawanaide kawanakute
Presumptive:	Plain	kau darō	kawanai darō
	Polite	kau deshō	kawanai deshō
	Plain	kaō	kaumai
	Polite	kaimashō	
Imperative:	Plain	kae	kauna
	Polite	katte kudasai	kawanaide kudasai
Conditional:		kaeba	kawanakereba
		kattara	kawanakattara

Plain Affirmative

Potential:	kaeru	Honorific:	okai ni naru
Passive:	kawareru		okai nasaru
Causative:	kawaseru	Humble:	okai suru
Causative Passive:	kawaserareru		okai itasu

kiku / to listen, to ask, to hear

Stem: kik-		Transitive	
		Affirmative	Negative
Present:	Plain	kiku	kikanai
	Polite	kikimasu	kikimasen
Past:	Plain	kiita	kikanakatta
	Polite	kikimashita	kikimasen deshita
Gerund (-te form):		kiite	kikanaide kikanakute
Presumptive:	Plain	kiku darō	kikanai darō
	Polite	kiku deshō	kikanai deshō
Imperative:	Plain	kike	kikuna
	Polite	kiite kudasai	kikanaide kudasai
Conditional:		kikeba kiitara	kikanakereba kikanakattara

Plain Affirmative

Potential:	kikeru	Honorific:	okiki ni naru
Passive:	kikareru		okiki nasaru
Causative:	kikaseru	Humble:	ukagau (to ask)
Causative Passive:	kikaserareru		okiki suru (to ask)

156 Parts of Speech

kuru / to come

Stem: ku-		Intransitive	
		Affirmative	Negative
Present:	Plain	kuru	konai
	Polite	kimasu	kimasen
Past:	Plain	kita	konakatta
	Polite	kimashita	kimasen deshita
Gerund (-te form):		kite	konaide konakute
Presumptive:	Plain	kuru darō	konai darō
	Polite	kuru deshō	konai deshō
	Plain	koyō	kurumai
	Polite	kimashō	
Imperative:	Plain	koi	kuruna
	Polite	kite kudasai	konaide kudasai
Conditional:		kureba	konakereba
		kitara	konakattara

Plain Affirmative

Potential:	korareru	Honorific:	irassharu
Passive:	korareru		oide ni naru
Causative:	kosaseru	Humble:	mairu
Causative Passive:	kosaserareru		

miru / to look at, to see

Stem: mi-		Transitive	
Present:	Plain	Affirmative miru	Negative minai
	Polite	mimasu	mimasen
Past:	Plain	mita	minakatta
	Polite	mimashita	mimasen deshita
Gerund (-te form):		mite	minaide minakute
Presumptive:	Plain	miru darō	minai darō
	Polite	miru deshō	minai deshō
Imperative:	Plain	miyō	mimai
	Polite	mimashō	
Imperative:	Plain	miro	miruna
	Polite	mite kudasai	minaide kudasai
Conditional:		mireba	minakereba
		mitara	minakattara

Plain Affirmative

Potential:	mirareru	Honorific:	goran ni naru
Passive:	mirareru		goran nasaru
Causative:	misaseru	Humble:	haiken suru
Causative Passive:	misaserareru		haiken itasu

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nomu / to drink

Stem: nom-		Transitive	
Present:	Plain	Affirmative nomu	Negative nomanai
	Polite	nomimasu	nomimasen
Past:	Plain	nonda	nomanakatta
	Polite	nomimashita	nomimasen deshita
Gerund (-te form):		nonde	nomanaide nomanakute
Presumptive:	Plain	nomu darō	nomanai darō
	Polite	nomu deshō	nomanai deshō
	Plain	nomō	nomumai
	Polite	nomimashō	
Imperative:	Plain	nome	nomuna
	Polite	nonde kudasai	nomanaide kudasai
Conditional:		nomeba nondara	nomanakereba nomanakattara

Plain Affirmative

Potential:	nomeru	Honorific:	onomi ni naru
Passive:	nomareru		onomi nasaru
Causative:	nomaseru	Humble:	itadaku
Causative Passive:	nomaserareru		

suru / to do, to make

Stem: su-		Transitive	
Present:	Plain	Affirmative suru	Negative shinai
	Polite	shimasu	shimasen
Past:	Plain	shita	shinakatta
	Polite	shimashita	shimasen deshita
Gerund (-te form):		shite	shinaide shinakute
Presumptive:	Plain	suru darō	shinai darō
	Polite	suru deshō	shinai deshō
	Plain	shiyō	surumai
	Polite	shimashō	
Imperative:	Plain	shiro	suruna
	Polite	shite kudasai	shinaide kudasai
Conditional:		sureba	shinakereba
		shitara	shinakattara

Plain Affirmative

Potential:	dekiru	Honorific:	nasaru
Passive:	sareru		
Causative:	saseru	Humble:	itasu
Causative Passive:	saserareru		

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taberu / to eat

Stem: tabe-		Transitive	
Present:	Plain	Affirmative taberu	Negative tabenai
	Polite	tabemasu	tabemasen
Past:	Plain	tabeta	tabenakatta
	Polite	tabemashita	tabemasen deshita
Gerund (-te form):		tabete	tabenaide tabenakute
Presumptive:	Plain	taberu darō	tabenai darō
	Polite	taberu deshō	tabenai deshō
	Plain	tabeyō	tabemai
	Polite	tabemashō	
Imperative:	Plain	tabero	taberuna
	Polite	tabete kudasai	tabenaide kudasai
Conditional:		tabereba	tabenakereba
		tabetara	tabenakattara

Plain Affirmative

Potential:	taberareru	Honorific:	meshiagaru
Passive:	taberareru		otabe ni naru
Causative:	tabesaseru		otabe nasaru
Causative Passive:	tabesaserareru	Humble:	itadaku

wakaru / to understand

Stem: wakar-		Intransitive	
Present:	Plain	Affirmative wakaru	Negative wakaranai
	Polite	wakarimasu	wakarimasen
Past:	Plain	wakatta	wakaranakatta
	Polite	wakarimashita	wakarimasen deshita
Gerund (-te form):		wakatte	wakaranaide wakaranakute
Presumptive:	Plain	wakaru darō	wakaranai darō
	Polite	wakaru deshō	wakaranai deshō
Imperative:	Plain	wakarō	wakarumai
	Polite	wakarimashō	
Conditional:	Plain	wakareba	wakaranakereba
	Polite	wakattara	wakaranakattara

Plain Affirmative

Potential:	_____	Honorific:	owakari ni naru
Passive:	_____		owakari nasaru
Causative:	wakaraseru	Humble:	_____
Causative Passive:	wakaraserareru		

§8.

Adjectives

§8.1 WHAT ARE ADJECTIVES?

English speakers define *adjectives* as “words which modify or describe nouns.”

The Japanese adjective, however, does not fit neatly into the definition of the English adjective. Therefore, speakers of English must be prepared for new ways of looking at adjectives, which in Japanese are quite unlike their English counterparts.

What are the major differences? To put it simply, Japanese adjectives fall into two groups: one group has verb-like characteristics, and the other group has noun-like characteristics. Both groups may function like English adjectives, that is, to modify nouns that follow. With this concept in mind, Japanese adjectives can be understood easily.

One group may be called *verbal adjectives*, the other *adjectival nouns*. We shall look at each group separately. First, the verbal adjectives.

§8.2 VERBAL ADJECTIVES

Adjectives in this group, in their dictionary form, end only in *-ai*, *-ii*, *-oi*, or *-ui*. Thus, they are often referred to as *-i* adjectives.

Here are some common *-i* adjectives.

<i>-i</i> Adjectives	
chiisai / small	takai / expensive
yasui / inexpensive, cheap	ōkii / big
oishii / delicious	ii / good, nice
yasashii / easy	warui / bad
atarashii / new	muzukashii / difficult
omoshiroi / interesting	amai / sweet
suzushii / cool	wakai / young
hayai / fast, early	itai / painful
kuroi / black	shiroi / white

§8.2–1 Noun Modifiers

The *-i* adjective in the forms listed above can modify a noun that follows, just as an English adjective does:

Examples

chiisai kuruma / **small car**

kuroi kutsu / **black shoes**

omoshiroi hon / **interesting book**

ii hito / **good person**

Atarashii kuruma o kaimasu. / **I will buy a new car.**

new	car	will buy

Oishii kudamono o tabemashita. / **We ate some delicious fruit.**

fruit

§8.2–2 Verbal Forms

The forms given in §8.2 are the dictionary form of the verbal adjectives. As verbal forms, they have the characteristics of verbs, as you will see below.

They have stems.

To form the stem, drop the final *-i*. This is the form used to make all the other forms of the adjective.

-i Adjective	Stem
akai / red	aka-
omoshiroi / interesting	omoshiro-
nagai / long	naga-
yasui / cheap	yasu-

As is, they form the predicate.

Tip

Since the dictionary form is the plain present form of the verb, you can think of the verbal adjective as already containing in itself the grammatical form of the copula, or **is**. And, since a Japanese sentence requires a predicate but not a subject if the context is clear, each verbal adjective can constitute a sentence. There can, of course, be other elements in the sentence.

Note that these are plain forms.

Examples

Suzushii. / **It's cool.**

Muzukashii. / **It's difficult.**

Atama ga itai. / **My head hurts.**

Kono hon wa, omoshiroi. / **This book is interesting.**

They conjugate, or change form, for different tenses and moods.

- To form the plain past tense, add *-katta* to the stem.

Plain	
Present	Past
suzushii / is cool	suzushikatta / was cool
oishii / is delicious	oishikatta / was delicious
chiisai / is small	chiisakatta / was small
wakai / is young	wakakatta / was young
osoi / is slow	osokatta / was slow

- To form the negative of the plain present and past, add *-ku* to the stem. Then, as with regular plain past verbs, add the appropriate form of *nai*

Plain Negative	
Present	Past
suzushiku nai / isn't cool	suzushikunakatta / wasn't cool
chiisaku nai / isn't small	chiisakunakatta / wasn't small

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- For the polite forms, add *desu* to the plain form for the present and the past.

Polite	
Present	Past
suzushii desu / is cool	suzushikatta desu / was cool
chiisai desu / is small	chiisakatta desu / was small

- To form the polite negative, use the *-ku* form, and add *arimasen* to the present, and *arimasen deshita* to the past.

Polite Negative	
Present	Past
suzushiku arimasen / isn't cool	suzushiku arimasen deshita / wasn't cool
chiisaku arimasen / isn't small	chiisaku arimasen deshita / wasn't small

- A variation of the polite negative forms may be formed by adding *desu* to the plain negative forms:

suzushiiku nai desu / isn't cool	suzushikunakatta desu / wasn't cool
chiisaku nai desu / isn't small	chiisakunakatta desu / wasn't small

- To form the gerund, add *-kute* to the stem.

Example

Kono hon wa omoshirokute tanoshii desu. / **This book is interesting and enjoyable.**

- For other verb moods, the verbal adjective forms can be expanded as follows:

Presumptive: atsui deshō / **will probably be hot**

Conditional: atsukereba / **if it were hot**

atsukunakereba / **if it were not hot**

atsukutemo / **even if it's hot**

and so forth (see §7).

The following examples illustrate some uses of the verbal adjective forms presented in this section.

Examples

Kono kutsu wa, [chiisai desu.] / **These shoes are small.**

|
shoes **are small**

Ano hon wa, [yasukatta desu.] / **That book was cheap.**

|
was cheap

Hiru gohan wa, [oishikatta desu.] / **Lunch was delicious.**

|
lunch **was delicious**

Shiken wa [yasashikatta desu.] / **The exam was easy.**

|
exam **was easy**

Kono kuruma wa, [atarashiku nai desu.] / **This car isn't new.**

|
car **isn't new**

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Sono eiga wa, omoshiroku arimasen deshita. / **That movie wasn't interesting.**

movie wasn't interesting

Heya wa, suzushikunakatta desu. / **The room wasn't cool.**

room wasn't cool

§8.2-3 Adverbial Forms

To form adverbs from the *-i* adjectives, just add *-ku* to the stem. Or, to put it another way, change the final *-i* to *-ku*.

Adjective	Adverb
omoshiroi / interesting	omoshiroku / interesting
hayai / quick	hayaku / quick, quickly
warui / bad	waruku / bad, badly
ii / good	yoku* / well
takai / expensive	takaku / expensive
kuroi / black	kuroku / black

*This is an irregular form.

Note how the adverbs are used in sentences. Look at the kinds of verbs typically used with adverbs, especially *naru*, **become**.

Examples

Shōsetsu ga, omoshiroku narimashita. / **The novel became interesting.**
 or
I have become interested in novels.

| | |
 novel interesting became

Hayaku ikinasai. / **Go quickly.**

| |
 quickly go

Hayaku arukimashita. / **I walked quickly.**

Tenki ga waruku narimashita. / **The weather became bad.**

| | |
 weather bad became

Tarō san wa, yoku benkyō shimashita. / **Taro studied well.**

| |
 well studied

Yachin ga takaku narimashita. / **The rent became expensive.**

| | |
 rent expensive became

Doa o kuroku nurimashita. / **I painted the door black.**

| | |
 door black painted

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Ano hito wa, eigo ga yoku wakarimasu. / **He understands English well.**

English well understands

Yoku nemashita. / **I slept well.**

well slept

§8.3 ADJECTIVAL NOUNS

Words in this group have noun-like characteristics and can convey adjectival meanings. When they modify nouns, they are followed by the suffix *-na*. Thus, they are often referred to as *-na* adjectives.

Here are some common *-na* adjectives.

<i>-na</i> Adjectives	
shizuka / quiet	kirei / pretty
genki / well, healthy	benri / convenient
shinsetsu / kind	yūmei / famous
jōzu / good at	heta / not good at
dame / no good	suki / like
fuben / inconvenient	iroiro / various
shōjiki / honest	teinei / polite

Tip

You may notice that these words, as translated, do not fit neatly into the English notion of adjectives. The following sections should help clarify their usage.

§8.3–1 Noun Modifiers

With the addition of *-na*, the words in the preceding chart can modify a noun that follows, just as an English adjective does. Notice that for some of the words, the English translation is adjusted slightly to fit this context.

Examples

shizukana heya / **quiet room**

kireina hana / **pretty flowers**

genkina hito / **healthy person**

benrina dōgu / **convenient tool**

shinsetsuna sensei / **kind teacher**

yūmeina joyū / **famous actress**

jōzuna kashu / **talented singer**

hetana untenshu / **bad driver**

damena hito / **no good person, bad person**

sukina tabemono / **favorite food**

fubenna jikan / **inconvenient time**

iroirona kuni / **various countries**

shōjikina seijika / **honest politician**

teineina aisatsu / **polite greetings**

Tip

This noun modifier construction is similar in form to that of the noun + *no* + noun pattern used to make compound nouns (see §4.8): *eigo no sensei* / **English teacher**, etc. With the adjectival nouns, of course, *-na* is used instead of *no*. Otherwise, the pattern is the same. This is one of the noun-like characteristics of the adjectival nouns.

Now look at some examples of this usage in sentences.

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Examples

Shizukana heya ga hoshii desu. / **I want a quiet room.**

quiet room want

Sushi wa, watakushi no sukina tabemono desu. / **Sushi is my favorite food.**

favorite food

Sore wa fubenna jikan desu. / **That's an inconvenient time.**

inconvenient time

Iroirona kuni ni ikimashita. / **I have visited various countries.**

various countries visited

§8.3–2 Predicate Forms

The adjectival nouns form a predicate as nouns do, by adding the appropriate form of the copula, *desu* / **is, equals** (see §7.6).

Here are the basic forms of *desu*:

<i>desu</i> / is, equals		Affirmative	Negative
Present	Plain Polite	da desu	dewa nai dewa arimasen
Past	Plain Polite	datta deshita	dewa nakatta dewa arimasen deshita
Presumptive (Probable)	Plain Polite	darō deshō	dewa nai darō dewa nai deshō

The following examples illustrate how the adjectival nouns plus a form of *desu* constitute the predicate.

Examples

Kono heya wa, shizuka desu. / **This room is quiet.**

| |
 room quiet

Kōen wa, kirei | dewa arimasen deshita. | / **The park
wasn't pretty.**

| | |
 park pretty wasn't

Chichi wa, genki desu. / **My father is healthy.**

| |
 father healthy

Ano hito wa, supōtsu ga | heta desu. | / **She isn't good
at sports.**

| |
 sports isn't good at

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Examples

Shikago to Tōkyō to, dochira ga suki

or or which

desu ka. / **Which do you like better, Chicago or Tokyo?**

Tōkyō no hō ga suki desu. / **I like Tokyo better.**

's side like is

Jon san to Tomu san to, dare no hō ga wakai

or or whose side younger

desu ka. / **Who is younger, John or Tom?**

is

Jon san no hō ga, wakai desu. / **John is younger.**

's side young is

Notice the particle and word order changes in the following two sentences. In the first one, *no hō ga* is used, in the second, *ori* is used alone. Both sentences have the same meaning, but including *no hō ga* makes for stronger contrast in the comparison.

Examples

Basu yori, chikatetsu no hō ga benri desu. / **The subway is more convenient than the bus.**

Chikatetsu wa, basu yori benri desu. / **The subway is more convenient than the bus.**

| | |
subway bus than

Another way to answer questions about comparisons is with a simple statement.

Examples

Ringo to momo to, dochira ga suki desu ka.

| | | | |
apples or peaches or which like

/ **Which do you like better, apples or peaches?**

Ringo ga suki desu. / **I like apples better.**

Another option is to use the word *motto*, which means **more**, for emphasis. It connotes **much (more, better, etc.)**. If you use this with *no hō ga*, the emphasis is even stronger.

Examples

Ringo ga motto suki desu. / **I like apples much more.**

Ringo no hō ga, motto suki desu. / **I like apples much more.**

To convey a superlative meaning, use the word *ichiban* / **most, -est, etc.**

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Examples

Dono kudamono ga ichiban suki desu ka. / **Which fruit**

 | | | |
which fruit best like

**do you like
best?**

Banana ga ichiban suki desu. / **I like bananas best.**

Nihon de wa, dono tsuki ga ichiban samui desu ka.

 | |
month cold

/ **Which month is the coldest in Japan?**

§8.5 NOMINALIZATION

Adjectives can be *nominalized*, or made into nouns, by a simple device for each of the two kinds.

For *-i* adjectives, add *-no* to the basic, or dictionary, form.

-i Adjective	Noun Form
ōkii / big	ōkiino / big one
atarashii / new	atarashiino / new one
hayai / fast	hayaino / fast one
shiroi / white	shiroino / white one
amai / sweet	amaino / sweet one
akai / red	akaino / red one
kiroi / yellow	kiroino / yellow one

As with English, this form usually occurs in a context, that is, answering a question, or referring to something mutually understood.

Examples

Ringo o kudasai. / **I want some apples.**

Akaino to kiirino to, dochira ga ii desu ka.
 | | | | |
red ones or yellow ones or which

/ **Which do you want, red ones or yellow ones?**

Look at two ways of saying the same thing. Note the difference in emphasis.

Atarashii eiga o mitai desu. / **I want to see a new film.**

| |
new film

Eiga wa, atarashiino o mitai desu. / **(As for a film), I want to see a new one.**

| |
film new one

Here are some more examples of nominalized adjectives used in sentences:

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Examples

Kēki wa, amaino o kudasai. / **(As for the cake), give me the sweet one.**

| |
cake sweet one

Hoteru no heya wa, chiisaino ga hoshii desu. / **(As for a hotel room), I want a small one.**

| | |
hotel room small one

For *-na* adjectives, add *-no* to the *-na* form.

-na Adjective, -na Form	Noun Form
shizukana / quiet	shizukanano / quiet one
kireina / pretty	kireinano / pretty one
yūmeina / famous	yūmeinano / famous one
sukina / like, favorite	sukinano / favorite one
benrina / convenient	benrinano / convenient one
teineina / polite	teineinano / polite one, politeness
hetana / not good at	hetanano / unskillful one

Here are some sentences with these forms. The uses are the same as for the *-i* adjective sentences above.

§9.

Adverbs

§9.1 WHAT ARE ADVERBS?

Adverbs are words which modify or describe verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. They indicate *time*, *place*, *manner*, and *degree*. They answer such questions as **when**, **where**, **how**, and **to what extent**.

As in English, some words in Japanese that are adverbs in one sentence can be a different part of speech in another sentence.

Examples

Kyō Tōkyō ni ikimasu. / **Today I'm going to Tokyo.**

|
Today

|
adverb

Kyō wa nichiyōbi desu. / **Today is Sunday.**

|
Today

|
noun

§9.2 ADVERBS OF PLACE

Some of the demonstrative pronouns (see §5.5) function as adverbs of place.

koko / here soko / there asoko / over there

Examples

Jon san ga, koko ni kimashita. / **John came here.**

here	came

Soko ni ikitai desu. / **I want to go there.**

there	want to go

Gakkō wa, asoko ni arimasu. / **The school is over there.**

school	over there

§9.4 ADVERBS OF MANNER AND DEGREE

As in English, adjectives can be made into adverbs of manner and degree:

Adjective	Adverb
hayai / quick	hayaku / quick, quickly
warui / bad	waruku / bad, badly
shizuka / quiet	shizuka ni / quiet, quietly
shinsetsu / kind	shinsetsu ni / kindly

See §8.2–3 and §8.3–3 for more information on the adverbial forms of adjectives.

Some of the demonstrative pronouns are adverbs of manner (see §5.5).

kō / this way, like this
sō / that way, like that
ā / that way, like that
dō / how

Examples

Kō shimashō. / **Let's do it this way.**
 | |
this way **let's do**

Sō shite kudasai. / **Please do it that way.**
 | |
that way **please do**

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Ā suru to yoku dekimasu. / **If you do it that way, you can do better.**
 | | | |
that way if better can do

Ōsaka ni wa, dō ikimasu ka. / **How do you get to Osaka?**
 | |
how go

Here are some other adverbs of manner and degree

amari / not much, not often	sukoshi / a little, few
bakkari / only	tabitabi / often
chotto / a little, for a moment	tabun / maybe, perhaps, probably
dandan / gradually	taihen / very (in the sense of extreme degree, positive or negative), greatly
futsū / usually	taitei / generally, mainly, perhaps, probably
hotondo / almost, all but, hardly	takusan / a lot
ikaga / how	tamani / occasionally
itsumo / always	tokidoki / sometimes
kitto / certainly, surely	totemo / very
mata / again	yoku / well, often, much
minna / all	yukkuri / slowly
mō / more, already	zenzen / at all (with negative verbs)
motto / more	zuibun / rather, quite
nakanaka / quite, rather, completely, at all	

Examples

Pan wa, amari suki dewa arimasen. / **I don't like bread much.**
 | |
 much don't like

Chotto matte kudasai. / **Wait a moment, please.**
 | |
 a moment wait

Merī san wa, itsumo hataraitte imasu. / **Mary is always working.**
 | |
 always is working

Mata Amerika e ikitai desu. / **I want to go to America again.**
 | |
 again want to go

Mō bangohan o tabemashita. / **I ate dinner already.**
 | | |
 already dinner ate

Motto arukimashō. / **Let's walk some more.**
 | |
 more let's walk

Doitsugo o sukoshi shitte imasu. / **I know German a little.**
 | | |
 German little know

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Taihen | omoshirokatta desu. | / **It was very interesting.**
|
very **was interesting**

Ano hito wa, takusan hanashimasu. / **He talks a lot.**
| |
a lot **talks**

Tokidoki Tōkyō ni ikimasu. / **I sometimes go to Tokyo.**
| |
sometimes **go**

Totemo | oishikatta desu. | / **It was very delicious.**
|
very **was delicious**

Rokugatsu wa, ame ga yoku furimasu. / **It rains often in June.**
| | | |
June **rain** **often** **falls**

Yukkuri | hanashite kudasai. | / **Please speak slowly.**
|
slowly **speak**

Eiga wa, zenzen omoshiroku | arimasen deshita. |
| | |
movie **at all** **interesting** **wasn't**

/ **The movie wasn't interesting at all.**

Special Topics

§10.

Numbers

§10.1 CARDINAL NUMBERS

Zero to One Hundred Million

From 1 to 10 only, there are two sets of numbers. The set on the right, of Japanese origin, stops at 10. The set on the left, of Chinese origin, continues indefinitely.

rei	0	
ichi	1	hitotsu
ni	2	futatsu
san	3	mittsu
shi/yon	4	yottsu
go	5	itsutsu
roku	6	muttsu
shichi/nana	7	nanatsu
hachi	8	yattsu
ku/kyū	9	kokonotsu
jū	10	tō

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To form numbers from 11 to 19, start with *jū*, 10, and then add the number you need from the column on the left in the preceding chart.

11 <i>jūichi</i>	12 <i>jūni</i>	13 <i>jūsan</i>	14 <i>jūshi/yon</i>	15 <i>jūgo</i>
16 <i>jūroku</i>	17 <i>jūshichi / nana</i>	18 <i>jūhachi</i>	19 <i>jūku</i>	

The rest is easy. Twenty is two tens, or *ni jū*, and for 21, just add the 1: *ni jū ichi*.

20 <i>nijū</i>	30 <i>sanjū</i>	40 <i>yonjū</i>	50 <i>gojū</i>
21 <i>nijūichi</i>	31 <i>sanjūichi</i>	41 <i>yonjūichi</i>	51 <i>gojūichi</i>
60 <i>rokJū</i>	70 <i>nanajū</i>	80 <i>hachijū</i>	90 <i>kyūjū</i>
61 <i>rokJūichi</i>	71 <i>nanajūichi</i>	81 <i>hachijūichi</i>	91 <i>kyūjūichi</i>

With 100, *hyaku*, and 1,000, *sen*, the pattern is basically the same, but there are some sound changes, as you will see in the chart below:

100	<i>hyaku</i>	1,000	<i>sen</i>
200	<i>nihyaku</i>	2,000	<i>nisen</i>
300	<i>sanbyaku</i>	3,000	<i>sanzen</i>
400	<i>yonhyaku</i>	4,000	<i>yonsen</i>
500	<i>gohyaku</i>	5,000	<i>gosen</i>
600	<i>roppyaku</i>	6,000	<i>rokusen</i>
700	<i>nanahyaku</i>	7,000	<i>nanasen</i>
800	<i>happyaku</i>	8,000	<i>hassen</i>
900	<i>kyūhyaku</i>	9,000	<i>kyūsen</i>

Japanese uses 10,000 as a counting unit. Each unit of 10,000 is called *man*.

So 10,000 is *ichiman*, 20,000 is *niman*, 100,000 is *jūman*, 200,000 is *nijūman*, 1,000,000 is *hyakuman* (100 units of 10,000). This continues until 100,000,000, *ichioku*.

§10.2 ORDINAL NUMBERS

The ordinal numbers are formed by adding *banme* to the cardinal numbers.

first	ichibanme	sixth	rokubanme
second	nibanme	seventh	nanabanme
third	sanbanme	eighth	hachibanme
fourth	yonbanme	ninth	kyūbanme
fifth	gobanme	tenth	jūbanme

To continue, follow the pattern for the cardinal numbers, adding *banme*. **Eleventh** is *jūichibanme*, **twelfth** is *jūnibanme*, and so forth.

§11.

Telling Time

To express time in Japanese, we start with a list of the **hours**, then a list of the **minutes**, and then we put them together.

Here are the **hours**:

1 o'clock	ichiji	7 o'clock	shichiji
2 o'clock	niji	8 o'clock	hachiji
3 o'clock	sanji	9 o'clock	kuji
4 o'clock	yoji	10 o'clock	jūji
5 o'clock	goji	11 o'clock	jūichiji
6 o'clock	rokuji	12 o'clock	jūni

Now the **minutes**:

1 minute	ippun	7 minutes	nanafun
2 minutes	nifun	8 minutes	happun
3 minutes	sanpun	9 minutes	kyūfun
4 minutes	yonpun	10 minutes	jūppun
5 minutes	gofun	11 minutes	jūippun
6 minutes	roppun	12 minutes	jūnifun

13 minutes	jūsanpun	21 minutes	nijūippun
14 minutes	jūyonpun	22 minutes	nijūnifun
15 minutes	jūgofun	23 minutes	nijūsanpun
16 minutes	jūroppun	24 minutes	nijūyonpun
17 minutes	jūnanafun	25 minutes	nijūgofun
18 minutes	jūhappun	30 minutes	sanjuppun
19 minutes	jūkyūfun	40 minutes	yonjuppun
20 minutes	nijūppun	50 minutes	gojuppun

Now we can put them together. Say the hour first, then the minutes, then add *desu*.

Examples

Nanji desu ka. / **What time is it?**

Jūji jūgofun desu. / **It's 10:15.**

- Using *sugi*, which means **past** or **after**, is optional.

Jūji jūgofun sugi desu. / **It's 10:15.**

|
after

- At 15 minutes before the hour, start using *mae*, which means **to** or **before**.

Jūji jūgofun mae desu. / **It's a quarter to ten.**

|
before

- *Han* means **half**, as in **half past** the hour.

Goji desu.	It's 5 o'clock.
Goji gofun desu.	It's 5:05.
Goji juppun desu.	It's 5:10.
Goji jūgofun desu.	It's 5:15.
Goji nijuppun desu.	It's 5:20.
Goji nijūgofun desu.	It's 5:25.
Goji han desu.	It's 5:30.
Goji sanjūgofun desu.	It's 5:35.
Goji yonjuppun desu.	It's 5:40.
Goji yonjūgofun desu.	It's 5:45.
Rokuji jūgofun mae desu.	It's a quarter to six.
Rokuji juppun mae desu.	It's 5:50/ten to six.
Rokuji gofun mae desu.	It's 5:55/five to six.

- *Gozen* is **A.M.** *Gogo* is **P.M.** Say them *before* you say the hour.

Examples

Gozen kuji desu. / **It's 9 A.M.**

|
A.M.

Gogo jūji desu. / **It's 10 P.M.**

|
P.M.

Tip

For time schedules, as in railway and airline timetables, numbers 1 to 59 are used for minutes, *not a quarter to or ten to the hour.*

Transportation timetables are based on the 24-hour clock. Airline and train schedules are expressed in terms of a point within a 24-hour sequence.

Examples

Watakushi no kisha wa, jūsanji yonjūhappun ni demasu.
/ **My train departs at 13:48.**

Watakushi no hikōki wa, jūji gojūsanpun ni tsukimasu.
/ **My plane arrives at 10:53.**

§12.

Classifiers

To count things in Japanese, you use special classifiers, or counters. Here are some of the most common ones:

Counting Different Kinds of Things

People				
1 hitori	2 futari	3 sannin	4 yonin	5 gonin
6 rokunin	7 nananin	8 hachinin	9 kunin	10 jūnin

Long, thin objects (pencils, bottles, trees, etc.)				
1 ippon	2 nihon	3 sanbon	4 yonhon	5 gohon
6 roppon	7 nanahon	8 happon	9 kyūhon	10 jūppon

Bound objects (books, magazines, notebooks, etc.)				
1 issatsu	2 nisatsu	3 sansatsu	4 yonsatsu	5 gosatsu
6 rokusatsu	7 nanasatsu	8 hassatsu	9 kyūsatsu	10 jussatsu

Thin, flat objects (paper, bills, cloth, tickets, dishes, etc.)				
1 ichimai	2 nimai	3 sanmai	4 yomai	5 gomai
6 rokumai	7 nanamai	8 hachimai	9 kyūmai	10 jūmai

Liquid or dry measures (glasses or cups of water, coffee, tea, etc.)

1 ippai	2 nihai	3 sanbai	4 yonhai	5 gohai
6 roppai	7 nanahai	8 happai	9 kyūhai	10 juppai

Houses, buildings, etc.

1 ikken	2 niken	3 sangen	4 yonken	5 goken
6 rokken	7 nanaken	8 hakken	9 kyūken	10 jukken

Floors of buildings

1 ikkai	2 nikai	3 sangai	4 yonkai	5 gokai
6 rokkai	7 nanakai	8 hakkai	9 kyūkai	10 jukkai

Animals, fish, insects

1 ippiki	2 nihiki	3 sanbiki	4 yonhiki	5 gohiki
6 roppiki	7 nanahiki	8 happiki	9 kyūhiki	10 juppiki

Small objects not in categories listed above (apples, candy, etc.)

1 ikko / hitotsu	2 niko / futatsu	3 sanko / mittsu
4 yonko / yottsu	5 goko / itsutsu	6 rokko / muttsu
7 nanako / nanatsu	8 hakko / yattsu	9 kyūko / kokonotsu
10 jukko / tō		

Tip

To form the question word for the classifiers, do the following:

- Start with the word for counting three of anything.
- Instead of *san*, use *nan*.

For example:

sangen becomes *nangen*/**how many houses, buildings, etc.**

sanbai becomes *nanbai*/**how many glasses, cups, etc.**

§13.

Days, Months, Seasons, the Weather

§13.1 DAYS OF THE WEEK

getsuyōbi / Monday	mokuyōbi / Thursday
kayōbi / Tuesday	kinyōbi / Friday
suiyōbi / Wednesday	doyōbi / Saturday
nichiyōbi / Sunday	
asa / morning	gogo / afternoon
yūgata / evening	yoru / night

Related Expressions

Kyō wa, nani yōbi desu ka. / **What day is today?**

Kyō wa, _____ desu. / **It's** _____.

ichinichi / **a day**

kyō / **today**

kinō / **yesterday**

ototoi / **the day before
yesterday**

raishū / **next week**

isshūkan / **for one week**

nishūkan / **for two weeks**

isshūkan de / **in one week**

ashita / **tomorrow**

asatte / **the day after
tomorrow**

shū / **week**

konshū / **this week**

yūgata / **in the early evening**

yoru / **in the evening, at night**

asa made ni / **by morning**

kayōbi made ni / **by Tuesday**

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nishūkan de / **in two weeks**

futsuka kan / **for two days**

ichi nichi de / **in one day**

futsuka de / **in two days**

mikka mae / **three days ago**

kesa / **this morning**

kyō no gogo / **this afternoon**

konban / **tonight, this evening**

ashita no ban / **tomorrow night**

gozen chū / **in the morning**

gogo / **in the afternoon**

heijitsu / **weekday**

shūmatsu / **weekend**

mainichi / **every day**

kyō kara isshūkan go / **a week from today**

kyō kara / **from today on**

yasumi / **day off**

kyūjitsu / **holiday**

shigoto bi / **work day**

ichinichi ni tsuki / **per day**

kyō jū ni / **during the day**

konshū jū ni / **during the week**

§13.2 MONTHS OF THE YEAR

ichigatsu / **January**

nigatsu / **February**

sangatsu / **March**

shigatsu / **April**

gogatsu / **May**

rokugatsu / **June**

shichigatsu / **July**

hachigatsu / **August**

kugatsu / **September**

jūgatsu / **October**

jūichigatsu / **November**

jūnigatsu / **December**

nan gatsu / **which month**

§13.3 DAYS OF THE MONTH

tsuitachi / 1st	jūrokunichi / 16th
futsuka / 2nd	jūshichinichi / 17th
mikka / 3rd	jūhachinichi / 18th
yokka / 4th	jūkunichi / 19th
itsuka / 5th	hatsuka / 20th
muika / 6th	nijūichinichi / 21st
nanoka / 7th	nijūninichi / 22nd
yōka / 8th	nijūsannichi / 23rd
kokonoka / 9th	nijūyokka / 24th
tōka / 10th	nijūgonichi / 25th
jūichinichi / 11th	nijūrokunichi / 26th
jūninichi / 12th	nijūshichinichi / 27th
jūsannichi / 13th	nijūhachinichi / 28th
jūyokka / 14th	nijūkunichi / 29th
jūgonichi / 15th	sanjūnichi / 30th
sanjūichinichi / 31st	

nan nichi / **which day**

§13.4 COUNTING DAYS

ichinichi / one day	nanoka / seven days
futsuka / two days	yōka / eight days
mikka / three days	kokonoka / nine days
yokka / four days	tōka / ten days
itsuka / five days	jūichinichi / eleven days
muika / six days	jūninichi / twelve days

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Related Expressions

Nikagetsu mae / **2 months ago**

sengetsu / **last month**

kongetsu / **this month**

raigetsu / **next month**

_____ gatsu chū ni / **during the month of** _____

_____ gatsu irai / **since the month of** _____

_____ gatsu ni / **for the month of** _____

mai tsuki / **every month**

ikkagetsu ni tsuki / **per month**

ikkagetsu / **one month**

sūkagetsu / **a few months**

Kyō wa, nan nichi desu ka. / **What's today's date?**

Kyō wa, _____ desu. / **Today is** _____.

gogatsu tsuitachi, getsuyōbi / **Monday, May 1**

rokugatsu futsuka, kayōbi / **Tuesday, June 2**

Note: For these expressions, use the days of the month listed in §13.3.

§13.5 SEASONS

fuyu / **winter**

natsu / **summer**

haru / **spring**

aki / **fall**

Related Expressions

Fuyu desu. / **It's winter.**

Haru desu. / **It's spring.**

Natsu desu. / **It's summer.**

Aki desu. / **It's fall.**

§13.6 THE WEATHER

Tenki wa dō desu ka. / **How's the weather?**

Samui desu. / **It's cold.**

Totemo samui desu. / **It's very cold.**

Yuki ga futte imasu. / **It's snowing.**

Atatakai desu. / **It's warm.**

Hi ga tette imasu. / **It's sunny.**

Atsui desu. / **It's hot.**

Shikke ga takai desu. / **It's humid.**

Mushiatsui desu. / **It's hot and humid.**

Ii tenki desu. / **It's a beautiful day.**

Ame ga futte imasu. / **It's raining.**

Arashi desu. / **It's stormy.**

Kaminari ga natte, inazuma ga hikatte imasu. / **It's
thundering and lightning.**

Suzushii desu. / **It's cool.**

Kiri desu. / **It's foggy.**

Ame ga, hageshiku futte imasu. / **It's raining heavily.**

§14.

Family Relationships

Choose a term from the appropriate column in the chart below when talking about family members. In Japanese, the terms for family relationships differ according to whether you are talking about your own family to someone else, or about the other person's family. You refer to your own family with a set of neutral forms, to another person's family with a set of honorific terms.

Family Member	Talking about Your Family	Talking about Another's Family
grandfather	sofu	ojiisan
grandmother	sobo	obāsan
father	chichi	otōsan
mother	haha	okāsan
husband	otto/shujin	goshujin
wife	tsuma	okusan
uncle	oji	ojisan
aunt	oba	obasan
son	musuko	musukosan
daughter	musume	ojōsan
cousin	itoko	itoko

elder brother	ani	oniisan
younger brother	otōto	otōtosan
elder sister	ane	onēsan
younger sister	imōto	imōtosan

§15.

Useful Words and Phrases

You will find this section useful in communicating with the Japanese. Just find the category you want, and choose the expression you need!

§15.1 GREETINGS

To begin, you should know that Japanese does not have a word that is the equivalent of the English word **Hello**. Instead, use the words for **Good morning**, **Good afternoon**, etc.

Ohayō gozaimasu. / **Good morning.**

Konnichiwa. / **Good afternoon.**

Konbanwa. / **Good evening.**

Oyasuminasai. / **Good night.** (This is used at the end of the evening, or at bedtime.)

Sayōnara. / **Goodbye.**

Japanese has no equivalent for the English expression **How are you?** that is used as a daily greeting. The following expression is used only when you have not seen someone for a while.

Ogenki desu ka. / **How are you?**

Hai, okagesama de. / **Fine, thank you.**

§15.2 COMMON EXPRESSIONS

You will find these expressions handy in daily life.

Hai. / **Yes.**

lie. / **No.**

san / **Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms.**

Dōmo arigatō. / **Thank you.**

lie, dō itashimashite. / **You're welcome.**

Sumimasen. / **Excuse me**
(to get someone's
attention).

Gomennasai. / **I'm sorry**
(apology).

Onegai shimasu. / **Please**
(request).

Dōzo. / **Please** (go ahead,
begin).

Moshi moshi. / **Hello.** (This is
used for telephone calls, or
for getting someone's
attention.)

Sumimasen ga. / **Pardon me,**
but _____.

Daijōbu desu. / **It's all right.**

Yorokonde. / **With pleasure.**

li desu yo. / **I don't mind.**

Ā, sō desu ka. / **Oh, I see.**

Ikimashō ka. / **Shall we go?**

Sā. / **Let's (go/eat/etc.)**

lie, kekkō desu. / **No, thank**
you.

Sō da to omoimasu. / **I think**
so.

Sō omoimasen. / **I don't**
think so.

Omoshiroi desu. / **It's**
interesting.

Owarimashita. / **It's over /**
I'm finished.

Hai, sō desu. / **Yes, it is.**

lie, chigaimasu. / **No, it isn't.**

Chotto, matte kudasai. / **Just**
a moment, please.

Sugu, onegai shimasu. /
Right away (request).

Soredewa nochi hodo. / **See**
you later.

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Soredewa mata ashita. / **See you tomorrow.**

Wakarimasu ka. / **Do you understand?**

Hai, wakarimasu. / **Yes, I understand.**

Iie, wakarimasen. / **No, I don't understand.**

Eigo ga wakarimasu ka. / **Do you understand English?**

Nihongo ga, sukoshi hanasemasu. / **I speak a little Japanese.**

Nihongo wa, wakarimasen. / **I don't understand Japanese.**

Mō ichido onegai shimasu. / **Could you repeat it, please?**

Mō sukoshi, yukkuri hanshite kudasai. / **Please speak slowly.**

Eigo o hanashimasu ka. / **Do you speak English?**

Kore wa, Nihongo de nan to iimasu ka. / **What's this called in Japanese?**

Kore wa, nan to iimasu ka. / **What do you call this?**

Sumimasen ga, tasukete itadakemasen ka. / **Excuse me, could you help me, please?**

§15.3 SOME QUESTIONS AND QUESTION WORDS

Dō ka, shimashita ka. / **What's the matter?**

Kore wa, nan desu ka. / **What's this?**

Itsu. / **When?**

Doko. / **Where?**

Naze. / Dōshite. / **Why?**

Dare. / Donata. / **Who?**

Dore. / Dochira. / **Which?**

Nani. / **What?**

Dono kurai. / **How much?**

Ikura. / **How much (money)?**

§15.4 YOUR PERSONAL CONDITION

Nodo ga, kawaite imasu. / **I'm thirsty.**

Onaka ga, suite imasu. / **I'm hungry.**

Onaka ga, ippai desu. / **I'm full.**

Tsukarete imasu. / **I'm tired.**

Nemui desu. / **I'm sleepy.**

Byōki desu. / **I'm sick.**

Genki desu. / **I'm fine.**

Daijōbu desu. / **I'm all right.**

§15.5 INTRODUCTIONS

Tip

Proper introductions are important in Japan. When possible, it's preferable to have a Japanese friend introduce you to another Japanese. If not, you will find the expressions you need below.

Ano kata wa, donata desu ka. / **Who is that?**

Ano kata wa, donata ka gozonji desu ka. / **Do you know who that is?**

Ano kata ni, ome ni kakaritai no desu ga. / **I would like to meet him / her.**

Ano kata ni, shōkai shite itadakemasen ka. / **Would you introduce me to him / her?**

Totsuzen shitsurei desu ga, jiko shōkai shitemo yoroshii desu ka. / **Pardon me, may I introduce myself?**

Watakushi no namae wa ____ desu. / **My name is ____**

Onamae o ukagaemasu ka. / **May I ask your name?**

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Hajimemashite. Dōzo yoroshiku. / **How do you do?**

Hajimemashite. Kochira koso yoroshiku. / **How do you do?**
(reply)

Ome ni kakarete, kōei desu. / **I'm honored to meet you.**

Yoroshiku onegai shimasu. / **I'm glad to meet you.**

meishi / **business card**

Meishi o dōzo. / **Here's my card.**

Arigatō gozaimasu. / **Thank you very much.**

Watakushi no mo dōzo. / **Here's mine.**

Meishi o chōdai dekimasu ka. / **May I have your card?**

§16.

Borrowed Words

Countless words borrowed from English are in everyday use in Japan. But even for an English speaker, there are pitfalls. Why? With borrowed words in Japan, you can never assume that they have made the trip across the Pacific intact.

Trust These!

Tip

These words *are* what they seem. If you can understand the pronunciation, you have the meaning.

orenji / **orange**

kōhī / **coffee**

poketto / **pocket**

takushī / **taxi**

rajio / **radio**

banana / **banana**

kukkī / **cookie**

reinkōto / **raincoat**

bīru / **beer**

pinku / **pink**

gasorin / **gasoline**

basu / **bus**

tomato / **tomato**

batā / **butter**

sūpu / **soup**

beddo / **bed**

Careful!

Tip

Some element in each of these words connects it to the original meaning.

wāpuro / word processor	depāto / department store
pasokon / personal computer	hankachi / handkerchief
waishatsu / dress shirt	irasuto / illustration
sūpā / supermarket	amefuto / American football
basuke / basketball	
puro / professional	

Made in Japan!

Tip

With words like these, all bets are off. Don't even think of them as coming from English. How different *are* they? If you are invited for *mōningu baikingu*, don't put on your biking clothes. You are going for a smorgasbord breakfast, *not* morning biking!

baikingu / **smorgasbord (Viking)**
 mōningu baikingu / **smorgasbord breakfast**
 kēki baikingu / **dessert smorgasbord**
 manshon / **condominium, modern apartment**
 manshon rifōmu / **condominium renovations**
 spaman / **condominium at a hot springs resort**
 (spa + mansion)
 wanpīsu / **dress (one piece)**

Here are some more borrowed words. The meaning in parentheses lets you see the origin. Enjoy them, but remember the tips you have just seen!

anime / **animation**

baburu (keizai) / **bubble economy**

bakansu / **vacation** / (*vacances*—French)

bea / **wage hike** / (base-up)

bigguban / **financial reform** / (big bang)

defure supairaru / **deflationary spiral**

dejikame / **digital camera**

esute / **total beauty care** / (*esthetique*—French)

furītā / **free-lancer** / (free + *Arbeiter*—German)

kānabi / **car navigation system**

koin randorī / **laundromat** / (coin laundry)

konbini / **convenience store**

meiku / **makeup**

nego / **negotiation**

nōto pasokon / **notebook computer**

panku / **flat tire** / (puncture)

pansuto / **pantyhose** / (panty stockings)

pokeberu / **beeper** / (pocket bell)

poruno / **pornography**

rafu / **casual (fashion)** / (rough)

reshipi / **recipe**

rifōmu / **alteration, renovation** / (reform)

rinyūaru / **store renovation** / (renewal)

risutora / **restructuring of business** / (restructuring)

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sekuhara / **sexual harassment**

sumāto / **stylish, slim** / (smart)

supakon / **supercomputer**

uirusu / **virus**

wakuchin / **vaccine**

wan puraisu shoppu / **dollar shop** / (one-price shop)

wanrūmu manshon / **studio apartment** / (one-room mansion)

zenekon / **general contractor**

§17.

Synonyms

Synonyms are words with the same or nearly the same meaning.

benkyō suru / manabu / **to study**
betsu no / chigatta / **different**
chōshoku / asagohan / **breakfast**
chūshoku / hirugohan / **lunch**
daidokoro / okatte / **kitchen**
denwa suru / denwa o kakeru / **to telephone**
depāto / hyakkaten / **department store**
furoba / yokushitsu / **bathroom**
genzai / ima / **now**
hajime / saisho / **beginning**
hashiru / kakeru / **to run**
hataraku / shigoto suru / **to work**
henna / okashina / **strange**
honya / shoten / **bookstore**
isu / koshikake / **chair**
kaeru / modoru / **to return**
kaiko sareru / kubi ni naru / **to be fired**
katazukeru / seiton suru / **to clean up**
kau / kōnyū suru / **to buy**
keikan / omawarisan / **police officer**

keredomo / dakedo / **but**
ki o tsukeru / chūi suru / **to be careful**
kireina / utsukushii / **beautiful**
komu / konzatsu suru / **to be crowded**
kūkō / hikōjō / **airport**
kuruma / jidōsha / **car**
mata / futatabi / **again**
michi / dōro / **road**
muzukashii / konnan na / **difficult**
nakusu / ushinau / **to lose**
nedan / kakaku / **price**
Nihon ryōri / washoku / **Japanese food**
otearai / toire / **toilet**
otozureru / hōmon suru / **to visit**
owari / saigo / **ending**
seiyō ryōri / yōshoku / **western food**
shikujiru / shippai suru / **to fail**
shinsetsuna / yasashii / **kind**
shuppatsu suru / deru / **to depart**
sotto / shizuka ni / **quietly**
sugu ni / tadachi ni / **immediately**
tabi / ryokō / **travel**
tada no / muryō no / **free (cost)**
tasu / kuwaeru / **to add**
tōchaku suru / tsuku / **to arrive**
tomaru / shukuhaku suru / **to stay (overnight)**
totemo / hijō ni / **very**

uchi / ie / **house**

wakaru / rikai suru / **to understand**

waribiku / makeru / **to discount**

yakkyoku / kusuriya / **pharmacy**

yamai / byōki / **illness**

yasumu / kyūkei suru / **to rest**

yūshoku / bangohan / **dinner**

§18.

Antonyms

Antonyms are words with opposite meanings.

agaru / **to rise**

akarui / **bright**

atsui / **hot (weather)**

atsui / **hot**

atsui / **thick**

futoi / **thick**

genki / **well**

hajimaru / **to begin**

hashiru / **to run**

hayai / **early**

hayai / **fast**

hirou / **to pick up**

ii / **good**

jōzu / **good at**

katai / **hard**

kiru / **to put on**

manabu / **to study**

mitsukeru / **to find**

nagai / **long**

noboru / **to climb**

noru / **to get on**

sagaru / **to fall**

kurai / **dark**

samui / **cold (weather)**

tsumetai / **cold**

usui / **thin**

hosoi / **thin**

byōki / **ill**

owaru / **to end**

aruku / **to walk**

osoi / **late**

osoi / **slow**

suteru / **to discard**

warui / **bad**

heta / **poor at**

yawarakai / **soft**

nugu / **to take off**

asobu / **to play**

nakusu / **to lose**

mijikai / **short**

kudaru / **to descend**

oriru / **to get off**

omoi / **heavy**

onaji / **same**

sannsei suru / **to agree**

seikō suru / **to succeed**

shizuka / **quiet**

shuppatsu suru / **to depart**

surudo / **sharp**

takai / **high**

takai / **expensive**

tsukeru / **to turn on**

warau / **to laugh**

yasashii / **easy**

yorokobu / **to be pleased**

karui / **light**

chigau / **different**

hanntai suru / **to oppose**

shippai suru / **to fail**

urusai / **noisy**

tōchaku suru / **to arrive**

nibui / **dull**

hikui / **low**

yasui / **cheap**

kesu / **to turn off**

naku / **to cry**

muzukashii / **difficult**

kanashimu / **to be sad**

§19.

Short Vowel, Long Vowel

Although the words in the two columns look alike, a closer look shows those on the right contain one or more long vowel. Hold these vowel sounds twice as long as the short vowels.

goi / vocabulary	gōi / agreement
jōho / concession	jōhō / information
josei / woman	jōsei / situation
kokyō / hometown	kōkyō / public
koritsu / isolation	kōritsu / publicly funded
koru / to get into	kōru / to freeze
koshō / breakdown	kōshō / negotiation
kuki / stem	kūki / air
kyoka suru / to permit	kyōka suru / to strengthen
roka suru / to filter	rōka suru / to age
sato / village	satō / sugar
seito / student	seitō / political party
shochi suru / to deal with	shōchi suru / to consent
shoki no / early	shōki no / sane
shomei suru / to sign	shōmei suru / to prove
soshiki / organization	sōshiki / funeral
suji / plot	sūji / figure
teki / enemy	teiki / regular
toki / time	tōki / registration

toru / **to take**

toshi / **year**

tsuchi / **soil**

yoji / **four o'clock**

yuki / **snow**

yume / **dream**

tōru / **to go through**

tōshi / **investment**

tsūchi / **notice**

yōji / **business**

yūki / **courage**

yūmei / **famous**

§20.

Double Consonants

Although the words in the two columns look similar, those on the right contain a double consonant. Don't say the consonant twice: just hold the sound twice as long.

boshū suru / **to recruit**

bushi / **samurai**

dakai suru / **to break through**

fukyū suru / **to become widespread**

futō / **unfair**

gashō / **art dealer**

haken suru / **to dispatch**

haki suru / **to cancel**

jikan / **time**

jiken / **incident**

jikō / **matters**

jitai / **situation**

kaki / **summertime**

keshō / **makeup**

kokyō / **hometown**

koshi / **hips**

machi / **town**

maki / **firewood**

bosshū suru / **to confiscate**

busshi / **goods**

dakkai suru / **to regain**

fukkyū suru / **to be restored**

futtō / **boiling**

gasshō / **chorus**

hakken suru / **to discover**

hakki suru / **to display**

jikkan / **sense of reality**

jikken / **experiment**

jikkō / **execution**

jittai / **actual condition**

kakki / **vigor**

kesshō / **finals**

kokkyō / **border**

kosshi / **gist**

macchi / **matches**

makki / **the last stage**

niki / **two terms**

oto / **sound**

saka / **slope**

sasuru / **to stroke**

seken / **society**

shiki / **four seasons**

shisaku suru / **to**

contemplate

shoki / **the early stage**

shuchō suru / **to assert**

nikki / **diary**

otto / **one's own husband**

sakka / **writer**

sassuru / **to guess**

sekken / **soap**

shikki / **lacquerware**

shissaku suru / **to make a**

mistake

shokki / **tableware**

shucchō suru / **to go on a**

business trip

§21.

Same Pronunciation, Different Meaning

These words have the same pronunciation but different meanings. Note that they are not homonyms. Although the romaji and hiragana spellings are the same, the kanji, or Japanese characters, are different.

en / **yen** / **relation**
ha / **tooth** / **leaf**
hana / **flower** / **nose**
han-ei / **reflection** / **prosperity**
hi / **fire** / **day**
kai / **shellfish** / **meeting**
kakeru / **to hang** / **to run**
kami / **paper** / **hair**
kawa / **leather** / **river**
kaze / **wind** / **cold**
ki / **spirit** / **tree**
kiji / **article** / **cloth**
kikai / **opportunity** / **machine**
kiku / **to listen to** / **to be effective**
kōgyō / **industry** / **mining**
kōtei / **school yard** / **affirmation**
kumo / **cloud** / **spider**

kyōchō suru / **to emphasize** / **to coordinate**

me / **eye** / **bud**

nami / **wave** / **ordinary**

shima / **island** / **stripe**

shita / **under** / **tongue**

tomaru / **to stay (overnight)** / **to stop**

utsu / **to hit** / **to shoot**

utsusu / **to transfer** / **to photograph**

§22.

Pitch Accent: Different Pitch, Different Meaning

English uses stress, or emphasis, to accent syllables; Japanese uses pitch, or tone. The standard dialect has two pitch levels, high and low. For the English speaker learning Japanese, this takes practice. The lists below show you one aspect of how pitch accent works. On the left, pronounce the syllables at about the same level. On the right, use a higher pitch, or tone, for the capitalized syllables. This difference in pitch results in a different meaning.

ame	(ah-meh) / candy	(AH-meh) / rain
asa	(ah-sah) / morning	(ah-SAH) / linen
fuku	(foo-koo) / to wipe	(FOO-koo) / to blow
hashi	(hah-shee) / end	(HAH-shee) / chopsticks (hah-SHEE) / bridge
ima	(ee-mah) / now	(ee-MAH) / living room
kakeru	(kah-keh-roo) / to lack	(kah-KEH-roo) / to gamble
kaki	(kah-kee) / persimmon	(KAH-kee) / oyster
kami	(kah-mee) / paper (kah-mee) / hair	(KAH-mee) / god
kau	(kah-oo) / to buy	(KAH-oo) / to keep
kiru	(kee-roo) / to cut	(kee-ROO) / to put on
kisha	(kee-shah) / train	(KEE-shah) / reporter

michi	(mee-chee) / street	(MEE-chee) / unknown
sake	(sah-keh) / sake	(SAH-keh) / salmon
saku	(sah-koo) / to bloom	(SAH-koo) / to tear
seki	(seh-kee) / seat	(seh-KEE) / cough
shiro	(shee-roh) / white	(shee-ROH) / castle

Japanese- English Vocabulary

Abbreviations: (adj.) adjective; (adv.) adverb; (conj.) conjunction; (excl.) exclamation; (n.) noun; (p.) particle; (ph.) phrase; (pron.) pronoun; (v.) verb.

- ā (adv.), (pron.) **in that manner, like that, that way**
achira (adv.), (pron.) **there, that**
ageru (v.) **to give**
ageru (v.) **to raise**
aisatsu (n.) **greeting**
akai (adj.) **red**
akarui (adj.) **bright**
aki (n.) **autumn**
aku (v.) **to open**
amai (adj.) **sweet**
amari (adv.) **not much, not often**
ame (n.) **rain**
amu (v.) **to knit**
anata (pron.) **you**
anatagata (pron.) **you (polite)**
anatatachi (pron.) **you (plural)**
ane (n.) **elder sister (one's own)**
anna (adj.) **that kind of**
ano (adj.) **that**
ano hito (ph.) **that person**
ano hitotachi (ph.) **those persons**
ano kata (ph.) **that person (polite)**
ano katatachi (ph.) **those persons (polite)**
apāto (n.) **apartment**
arau (v.) **to wash**
are (pron.) **that**
aru (v.) **(there) is/are, to be located, to exist, to have**
aruku (v.) **to walk**
asa (n.) **morning**
asatte (n.) **the day after tomorrow**
ashi (n.) **foot**
ashita (adv.), (n.) **tomorrow**
asoko (adv.), (pron.) **over there**
atama (n.) **head**
atarashii (adj.) **new**
ato (n.) **after, the following**
atsui (adj.) **hot**
au (v.) **to meet, to see**
bakari, bakkari (adv.) **only**
banana (n.) **banana**
bangohan (n.) **dinner**
basu (n.) **bus**
batā (n.) **butter**
benkyō suru (v.) **to study**
benri (adj.) **convenient**
biru (n.) **building**
bōeki gaisha (n.) **trading company**
bōnasu (n.) **bonus**
budō (n.) **grapes**
byōki (n.) **illness, sickness**
chichi (n.) **father (one's own)**
chiisai (adj.) **small**
chikatetsu (n.) **subway**
chizu (n.) **map**
chotto (adv.) **a little, for a moment**
Chūgokugo (n.) **Chinese (language)**
da (v.) **to be, plain form of desu**
dame (adj.) **no good**

- dandan (adv.) **gradually**
 dare (pron.) **who**
 dareka (pron.) **someone**
 daremo (pron.) **no one**
 dasu (v.) **to take out**
 de (p.) **among, at, from, made from, made of, of, within**
 dekakeru (v.) **to go out**
 dekiru (v.) **to be able**
 denki (n.) **light**
 desu (v.) **is, are**
 dō (adv.), (pron.) **how**
 doa (n.) **door**
 dochira (pron.) **where, which (direction, preference)**
 dōgu (n.) **tool**
 Doitsugo (n.) **German (language)**
 doko (pron.) **where (place)**
 dokoka (pron.) **somewhere**
 dokomo (pron.) **nowhere**
 donata (pron.) **which person (polite)**
 donataka (pron.) **someone (polite)**
 donatamo (pron.) **no one (polite)**
 donna (pron.), (adj.) **what kind of**
 dore (pron.) **which (persons, things)**
 doreka (pron.) **something**
 doremo (pron.) **nothing**
 dōshite (pron.) **why**
 doyōbi (n.) **Saturday**
- e (p.) **to, toward**
 ebi (n.) **shrimp**
 eiga (n.) **movie**
 eigo (n.) **English**
 eki (n.) **station**
 enpitsu (n.) **pencil**
- fuben (adj.) **inconvenient**
 Fujisan (n.) **Mt. Fuji**
 Furansugo (n.) **French (language)**
 furo (n.) **bath**
 furu (v.) **to fall (rain, snow, etc.)**
 futoru (v.) **to get fat**
 futsū (adv.) **usually**
 fuyu (n.) **winter**
- ga (p.) **and**
 ga (p.) **although, but**
 ga (p.) **subject marker**
- gakkō (n.) **school**
 ganbaru (v.) **to try hard**
 geijutsu (n.) **art**
 geijutsuka (n.) **artist**
 gēmu (n.) **game**
 genki (adj.) **healthy, well**
 getsuyōbi (n.) **Monday**
 gin (n.) **silver**
 gogo (n.) **afternoon**
 gohan (n.) **cooked rice, meal**
 gohon (n.) **book (polite)**
 gokekkon (n.) **marriage (polite)**
 gozen (n.) **(in the) morning**
- hahaoya (n.) **mother, mothers**
 hahaoyatachi (n.) **mothers**
 hairu (v.) **to enter**
 hajimeru (v.) **to begin**
 han (n.) **half past**
 hana (n.) **flower**
 hanasu (v.) **to speak, to talk**
 harau (v.) **to pay**
 haru (n.) **spring**
 hashi (n.) **chopsticks**
 hashiru (v.) **to run**
 hataraku (v.) **to work**
 hayai (adj.) **early, fast, quick**
 hayaku (adv.) **early, quick, quickly**
 heta (adj.) **bad at**
 heyā (n.) **room**
 hiragana (n.) **hiragana, one kind of Japanese syllabary**
 hiroi (adj.) **spacious**
 hito (n.) **person**
 hitsuyō (n.) **need**
 hodo (p.) **as . . . as, as much as**
 hon (n.) **book**
 honya (n.) **bookstore, bookstore clerk, bookstore owner**
 hoshii (adj.) **need, want**
 hoteru (n.) **hotel**
 hotondo (adv.) **all but, almost, hardly**
 hyōron (n.) **commentary**
 hyōronka (n.) **critic**
- ichiban (adv.), (n.) **the best, most**
 ii (adj.) **good, nice, okay**

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- iiharu (v.) **to insist**
 ikaga (adv.) **how, how about?, would you like?**
 ikeru (v.) **can go**
 iku (v.) **to go**
 ikura (pron.) **how much**
 ikuraka (pron.) **some, a little**
 ikuramo (pron.) **not much**
 ikutsu (pron.) **how many**
 ima (adv.), (n.) **now**
 imi (n.) **meaning**
 imōto (n.) **younger sister**
 inu (n.) **dog**
 iroiro (adj.) **various**
 iru (v.) **to need**
 iru (v.) **to be, to exist**
 isogashii (adj.) **busy**
 isogu (v.) **to hurry**
 issho ni (adv.) **together**
 isshōkenmei (adv.) **hard**
 isu (n.) **chair**
 itadaku (v.) **to receive (from superiors)**
 itai (adj.) **painful**
 itsu (pron.) **when**
 itsuka (pron.) **sometime**
 itsumo (adv.), (pron.) **always**
 iu (v.) **to say**
- ji (n.) **o'clock**
 jikan (n.) **time**
 jōgi (n.) **ruler**
 joyū (n.) **actress**
- ka (p.) **question marker**
 ka (p.) **or**
 kado (n.) **corner**
 kaeru (v.) **to change**
 kaeru (v.) **to return**
 kaimono (n.) **shopping**
 kaisha (n.) **company**
 kaku (v.) **to write**
 kamera (n.) **camera**
 kameraya (n.) **camera shop, camera shop owner, camera shop clerk**
 kamu (v.) **to bite**
 kan (n.) **period**
- Kanada (n.) **Canada**
 kane (n.) **money**
 kanemochi (n.) **rich person**
 kangaeru (v.) **to think**
 kanji (n.) **kanji, Chinese characters**
 kankō (n.) **tour, sightseeing**
 kanojo (pron.) **she, her**
 kanojora (pron.) **they, them (female)**
 kanojotachi (pron.) **they, them (female)**
 kara (p.) **from**
 kara (p.) **because, since**
 kara (p.) **after, ever since, since**
 kare (pron.) **he, him**
 karera (pron.) **they, them (all male or male and female)**
 kariru (v.) **to borrow**
 kasa (n.) **umbrella**
 kashu (n.) **singer**
 kasu (v.) **to lend**
 katakana (n.) **katakana, one kind of Japanese syllabary**
 kau (v.) **to buy**
 kawa (n.) **river**
 kayōbi (n.) **Tuesday**
 kēki (n.) **cake**
 kekkon (n.) **marriage**
 kekkon suru (v.) **to get married**
 keredo (p.) **and**
 keredo (p.) **although, but, however**
 ki (n.) **tree, wood**
 kiiroi (adj.) **yellow**
 kiku (v.) **to hear, to listen, to ask**
 kimochi (n.) **feeling**
 kinō (adv.), (n.) **yesterday**
 kinyōbi (n.) **Friday**
 kirei (adj.) **beautiful**
 kiru (v.) **to put on (clothing)**
 kiru (v.) **to cut**
 kisha (n.) **train**
 kitto (adv.) **certainly, surely**
 kō (adv.), (pron.) **in this manner, like this, this way**
 kōcha (n.) **tea**
 kochira (adv.), (pron.) **here, this**
 kodomo (n.) **child, children**
 kodomotachi (n.) **children**
 kōen (n.) **park**

- kōhī (n.) **coffee**
 koko (adv.), (pron.) **here**
 kokoa (n.) **cocoa**
 komu (v.) **to be crowded**
 kondo (n.) **this time**
 konna (adj.) **this kind of**
 kono (adj.) **this, these**
 konshū (n.) **this week**
 kore (pron.) **this**
 kōto (n.) **coat**
 kotoshi (n.) **this year**
 kudamono (n.) **fruit**
 kudasai (v.) **to give (me), please**
 kudasaru (v.) **to give kindly (to me or my in-group) (polite)**
 kumoru (v.) **to get clouded**
 kuni (n.) **country**
 kurasu (n.) **class**
 kureru (v.) **to give kindly (to me or my in-group)**
 kuroi (adj.) **black**
 kuru (v.) **to come**
 kuruma (n.) **car**
 kutsu (n.) **shoes**
 kyō (adv.), (n.) **today**
 kyōkasho (n.) **textbook**
 kyonen (n.) **last year**
- mada (adv.) **(not) yet, still**
 made (p.) **as far as, until**
 made ni (p.) **by, no later than**
 mado (n.) **window**
 mae (adv.), (n.) **before**
 maiasa (adv.), (n.) **every morning**
 maiban (adv.), (n.) **every night**
 mainichi (adv.), (n.) **every day**
 mata (adv.) **again**
 matsu (v.) **to wait**
 meron (n.) **melon**
 minasama (n.) **everyone, you all (very polite)**
 minasan (n.) **everyone, you all (polite)**
 minna (adv.), (n.) **all, everyone, you all**
 miru (v.) **to see, to watch**
 miruku (n.) **milk**
 mise (n.) **store**
- mo (p.) **also, too**
 mo (p.) **(not) either, neither . . . nor**
 mo (p.) **even**
 mō (adv.) **already, more**
 mokuyōbi (n.) **Thursday**
 momo (n.) **peach**
 mono (n.) **thing**
 morau (v.) **to receive**
 motsu (v.) **to hold**
 motto (adv.) **more, much more**
 muzukashii (adj.) **difficult**
- nagai (adj.) **long**
 nagara (p.) **as, while**
 nakanaka (adv.) **at all, completely, quite, rather**
 nakusu (v.) **to lose**
 namae (n.) **name**
 nan (pron.) **what**
 nandemo (pron.) **anything**
 nani (pron.) **what**
 nanika (pron.) **something**
 nanimō, nannimō (pron.) **nothing**
 nannin (pron.) **how many people**
 naosu (v.) **to fix**
 naru (v.) **to become**
 natsu (n.) **summer**
 naze (adv.) **why**
 ne (p.) **Don't you think so?, Isn't it?**
 neko (n.) **cat**
 nekutai (n.) **necktie**
 nemui (adj.) **sleepy**
 neru (v.) **to sleep**
 neteshimau (v.) **to fall asleep**
 ni tsuite (ph.) **about**
 ni (p.) **on, to**
 nichiyōbi (n.) **Sunday**
 Nihon (n.) **Japan**
 Nihongo (n.) **Japanese (language)**
 Nihonjin (n.) **Japanese**
 niku (n.) **meat**
 nikuya (n.) **butcher, butcher shop**
 no (p.) **possessive marker**
 node (p.) **because, since**
 nomu (v.) **to drink**
 noni (p.) **although, in spite of**
 noru (v.) **to get on**

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nōto (n.) **notebook**
 nuru (v.) **to paint**
 nusumu (v.) **to steal**

o (p.) **object marker**
 obasan (n.) **aunt (someone else's)**
 obāsan (n.) **grandmother (someone else's)**
 oboeru (v.) **to learn**
 ocha (n.) **Japanese tea**
 ofuro (n.) **bath (polite)**
 ohashi (n.) **chopsticks (polite)**
 ohayō gozaimasu (ph.) **Good morning (polite)**
 ohayō (excl.) **Good morning**
 oikakeru (v.) **to chase**
 oishii (adj.) **delicious**
 ojiisan (n.) **grandfather (someone else's)**
 ojisan (n.) **uncle (someone else's)**
 okane (n.) **money (polite)**
 okāsan (n.) **mother (someone else's)**
 ōkii (adj.) **big**
 omochi suru (v.) **to bring (polite)**
 omoshiroi (adj.) **good, interesting**
 omou (v.) **to think**
 onamae (n.) **name (polite)**
 oniku (n.) **meat (polite)**
 onnanoko (n.) **girl, girls**
 onnanokotachi (n.) **girls**
 orenji (n.) **orange**
 oriru (v.) **to get off**
 osake (n.) **sake, rice wine (polite)**
 ōsama (n.) **king**
 oshieru (v.) **to teach**
 osoi (adj.) **slow**
 otegami (n.) **letter (polite)**
 otenki (n.) **weather (polite)**
 otoko (n.) **male**
 otokonoko (n.) **boy, boys**
 otokonokotachi (n.) **boys**
 otōsan (n.) **father (someone else's)**
 otōto (n.) **younger brother**
 ototoi (n.) **the day before yesterday**
 owaru (v.) **to finish**
 oyasai (n.) **vegetables (polite)**
 oyogu (v.) **to swim**

pan (n.) **bread**
 purezento (n.) **gift**

raigetsu (n.) **next month**
 raishū (n.) **next week**
 rekishi (n.) **history**
 rekōdo (n.) **record**
 resutoran (n.) **restaurant**
 ringo (n.) **apple**
 rippa (adj.) **gorgeous**
 rokugatsu (n.) **June**
 rōmaji (n.) **romaji, roman letters**
 ryokō (n.) **trip**
 ryōri (n.) **cooking**

saifu (n.) **wallet**
 saikin (adv.) **recently**
 sakana (n.) **fish**
 sake (n.) **sake, rice wine**
 samui (adj.) **cold (weather)**
 san (n.) **Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms.**
 sangatsu (n.) **March**
 sashiageru (v.) **to give (to superiors)**
 sashimi (n.) **sashimi, raw fish**
 seiji (n.) **politics**
 seijika (n.) **politician**
 seiki (n.) **century**
 seki (n.) **seat**
 sensei (n.) **teacher, teachers**
 senseitachi (n.) **teachers**
 senshu (n.) **player**
 sensō (n.) **war**
 sētā (n.) **sweater**
 shachō (n.) **company president**
 shiawase (adj.), (n.) **happy, happiness**
 shigoto (n.) **work**
 shika (p.) **just, only**
 shiken (n.) **exam**
 shimaru (v.) **to close**
 shimau (v.) **to put away**
 shinbun (n.) **newspaper**
 shinpai suru (v.) **to worry**
 shinsetsu (adj.) **kind**
 shinsetsu ni (adv.) **kindly**
 shinu (v.) **to die**
 shiroi (adj.) **white**
 shiru (v.) **to know**

shizuka (adj.) **quiet**
 shizuka ni (adv.) **quiet, quietly**
 shōjiki (adj.) **honest**
 shōsetsu (n.) **novel**
 shōsetsuka (n.) **novelist**
 shū (n.) **week**
 shūmatsu (n.) **weekend**
 sō (adv.), (pron.) **in that manner, like that, that way**
 sochira (adv.), (pron.) **there, that**
 soko (adv.), (pron.) **there**
 sonna (adj.) **that kind of**
 sono (adj.) **that**
 sore (pron.) **it, that**
 subarashii (adj.) **wonderful**
 sugi (adv.), (n.) **after, past**
 sugu (adv.) **immediately**
 suiyōbi (n.) **Wednesday**
 suki (adj.) **to like**
 sukiyaki (n.) **sukiyaki**
 sukoshi (adv.) **a little, few**
 sumu (v.) **to live**
 sūpā (n.) **supermarket**
 supōtsu (n.) **sports**
 suru (v.) **to do**
 sushi (n.) **sushi**
 suwaru (v.) **to sit down**
 suzushii (adj.) **cool**

tabemono (n.) **food**
 taberu (v.) **to eat**
 tabitabi (adv.) **often**
 tabun (adv.) **maybe, perhaps, probably**
 tachi (suffix) **plural marker**
 taihen (adj.), (n.) **awful, bad**
 taihen (adv.) **greatly, very (extreme degree, positive or negative)**
 taisetsu (n.) **importance**
 taitei (adv.) **generally, mainly, perhaps, probably**
 takai (adj.) **expensive, high**
 takusan (adv.) **a lot, many**
 tamani (adv.) **occasionally**
 tara (adv.) **if, when**
 tatsu (v.) **to stand**
 te (n.) **hand**
 tēburu (n.) **table**

tegami (n.) **letter**
 teinei (adj.) **polite**
 tenisu (n.) **tennis**
 tenki (n.) **weather**
 terebi (n.) **TV**
 to (p.) **together with**
 to (p.) **if, when**
 to (p.) **and**
 tobu (v.) **to fly**
 tokidoki (adv.) **sometimes**
 tokoro (n.) **place**
 toshokan (n.) **library**
 totemo (adv.) **very**
 tsugi (n.) **next**
 tsukareru (v.) **to get tired**
 tsuki (n.) **month**
 tsuku (v.) **to arrive**
 tsukuru (v.) **to make**

uchi (n.) **home, house**
 ue (n.) **top**
 uma (n.) **horse**
 umi (n.) **beach, sea**
 untenshu (n.) **driver**
 ureshii (adj.) **glad**

wa (p.) **topic marker**
 wa (p.) **(emphatic and softening effect)**
 wakai (adj.) **young**
 wakaru (v.) **understand**
 warui (adj.) **bad**
 waruku (adv.) **bad, badly**
 watakushi (pron.) **I, me**
 watakushitachi (pron.) **we, us**

ya (p.) **and**
 yachin (n.) **rent**
 yagate (adv.) **soon**
 yakyū (n.) **baseball**
 yama (n.) **mountain**
 yasai (n.) **vegetables**
 yasashii (adj.) **easy**
 yaseru (v.) **to get thin**
 yasui (adj.) **cheap**
 yasumu (v.) **to rest**
 yo (p.) **(emphatic)**
 yobu (v.) **to call**

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yōkoso (excl.) **welcome**

yoku (adv.) **better, much, often, well**

yomu (v.) **to read**

ori (p.) **than**

yoru (n.) **night**

yotto (n.) **sailboat**

yūbin (n.) **mail**

yūbinkyoku (n.) **post office**

yūgata (n.) **evening**

yuki (n.) **snow**

yukkuri (adv.) **slowly**

yūmei (adj.) **famous**

zenzen (adv.) **at all (with negative verbs)**

zuibun (adv.) **quite, rather**