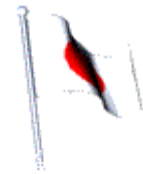


# JAPANESE LANGUAGE

# 日本語

にほんご



# Before starting, what do you know about Japan?

Choose the products of Japan from the following options.

1. Pocket monster(Pokemon)
2. Wii
3. Nintendo DS
4. Apple Mac
5. Karaoke
6. Xbox
7. Playstation
8. Doraemon
9. Doctor Who
10. Shinkansen (Bullet Train)

[Click here for the correct answers.](#)

1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10

# What do you know about Japan?

Choose the Japanese car manufacturers from the following options.

1. Matsuda
2. Citroen
3. Toyota
4. Mercedes
5. Audi
6. Honda
7. Seat
8. Ford
9. Nissan
10. Suzuki

[Click here for the correct answers.](#)

1, 3, 6, 9, 10

# Find out more about Japan

The following sites will give you thorough information on Japan.

*So, check it out!*

1. <http://web-japan.org/kidsweb/> (Fun to brows through)
2. <http://www.uk.emb-japan.go.jp>
3. <http://www.japan-guide.com/>

# Origins of Japanese Language

The closest language to Japanese is Korean. There are definite commonalities in the syntax. However, there is no evidence that they belong to the same linguistic family.

There are many theories about the origins of the Japanese language: one of the Ural-Atlantic languages; one of the southern, Malayo-Polynesian languages; a relative to the Indo-Tibetan languages; or one of the Tamil languages.

While its origins remain uncertain, the Japanese language has incorporated many Chinese words and its characters as the Japanese did not have their own writing system. The hiragana and katakana syllabaries were created based on the Chinese readings for the characters, resulting in a language that incorporated both Chinese characters and kana syllabaries.

# Writing System

わたし は ケーシー 久美 です。  
wa ta shi wa kē shī ku mi de su.  
I Casey Kumi am

- 1) **Hiragana** --- Phonetic Syllables
- 2) **Katakana** --- Phonetic Syllables for foreign origin words
- 3) **Kanji (Chinese Character)** --- Ideographs, each character conveys an idea and most have more than two readings.










## **Extra.**

**Romaji (Roman letters)** --- Japanese is sometimes written in romaji (Roman letters), particularly for the convenience of foreigners. And also used for typing on keyboard and mobile phone.

# Writing & Pronunciation

<Romaji and Hiragana >

Basic 46 Hiragana syllables below + 58 modified syllables

C\V	a	あ	i	い	u	う	e	え	o	お	
<b>k</b>	Ka	か	Ki	き	Ku	く	Ke	け	Ko	こ	
<b>s</b>	Sa	さ	Shi	し	Su	す	Se	せ	So	そ	
<b>t</b>	Ta	た	Chi	ち	Tsu	つ	Te	て	To	と	
<b>n</b>	Na	な	Ni	に	Nu	ぬ	Ne	ね	No	の	
<b>h</b>	Ha	は	Hi	ひ	Fu	ふ	He	へ	Ho	ほ	
<b>m</b>	Ma	ま	Mi	み	Mu	む	Me	め	Mo	も	
<b>y</b>	Ya	や	yi	い	Yu	ゆ	ye	え	Yo	よ	
<b>r*</b>	Ra	ら	Ri	り	Ru	る	Re	れ	Ro	ろ	
<b>w</b>	Wa	わ	yi	い	<del>wu</del>	う	<del>we</del>	え	o	を	
<b>n, m</b>	n /m ん										



Ra, Ri, Ru, Re, Ro should be pronounced with “L”, La, Li, Lu, Le, Lo, but place your tongue slightly backwards from your front teeth.

# Writing & Pronunciation

<Romaji and Hiragana >

modified syllables 1

C\V	a	あ	i	い	u	う	e	え	o	お	
<b>g</b>	Ga	が	Gi	ぎ	Gu	ぐ	Ge	げ	Go	ご	
<b>z</b>	Za	ざ	Ji	じ	Zu	ず	Ze	ぜ	Zo	ぞ	
<b>d</b>	Da	だ	Ji	ぢ	Zu	づ	De	で	Do	ど	
<b>b</b>	Ba	ば	Bi	び	Bu	ぶ	Be	べ	Bo	ぼ	
<b>p</b>	Pa	ぱ	Pi	ぴ	Pu	ぷ	Pe	ぺ	Po	ぽ	

N. B.

The pronunciations of the following syllables are the same, but not interchangeable in writing.

じ&ぢ → Ji












ず&づ → Zu



# Writing & Pronunciation

<Romaji and Hiragana >

modified syllables 2

C\V	a	あ	u	う	o	お	
<b>ky</b>	Kya	きゃ	Kyu	きゅ	Kyo	きょ	
<b>sh</b>	Sha	しゃ	Shu	しゅ	Sho	しょ	
<b>ch</b>	Cha	ちゃ	Chu	ちゅ	Cho	ちょ	
<b>ny</b>	Nya	にゃ	Nyu	にゅ	Nyo	にょ	
<b>hy</b>	Hya	ひゃ	Hyu	ひゅ	Hyo	ひょ	
<b>my</b>	Mya	みゃ	My	みゅ	Myo	みょ	
<b>ry</b>	Rya	りゃ	Ryu	りゅ	Ryo	りょ	
<b>gy</b>	Gya	ぎゃ	Gyu	ぎゅ	Gyo	ぎょ	
<b>j</b>	Ja	じゃ	Ju	じゅ	Jo	じょ	
<b>by</b>	Bya	びゃ	Byu	びゅ	Byo	びょ	
<b>py</b>	Pya	ぴゃ	Pyu	ぴゅ	Pyo	ぴょ	

# Pronunciation

Vowels --- a i u e o



**Important!**

The sound of each vowel does not change regardless of consonants or spelling except long vowels.

For example,

“shark” in Japanese is

さめ  
same













“that” in Japanese is

あれ  
are



# Pronunciation

## Long vowels


Romaji	Hiragana	Katakana	example
$\bar{a}$ , aa 	ああ	アー	ハート( heart)  hāto
īi, $\bar{i}$ 	いい	イー	いいてんき (fine weather)  iitenki
$\bar{u}$ , uu 	うう	ウー	じゅうしょ (address)  jūsho
$\bar{e}$ , ee, ei 	ええ、えい	エー	えいが (film)  eiga
$\bar{o}$ , oo, ou 	おう、おお	オー	コート (coat)  koto

# Pronunciation

Small つ

is written in double consonants in romaji and not pronounced as “tsu”. There should be a pause for the length of one syllable after the syllable before つ.

Example)







き **っ** ぷ (ticket)   
kippu

ち ょ **っ** と (a little bit)   
chotto




# Greetings (あいさつ)

- おはよう (O ha yō) --- Good Morning 📢  
おはようございます (O ha yō go za i ma su) 📢
- こんにちは (Kon ni chi wa) 📢  
--- Good Afternoon  
Hello
- こんにちは (Kon ban wa) --- Good Evening 📢

# Useful Expressions



- ありがとう (A ri ga tō) --- Thank you   
 ありがとうございます (A ri ga tō go za i ma su) 
- どういたしまして (Dō i ta shi ma shi te )   
 --- Your welcome
- じゃあ、また (Jā ma ta) --- See you later   
 では、また (De wa ma ta) 
- さようなら (Sa yō na ra) --- Good bye 

# Introduce yourself (じこしょうかい)

- はじめまして   
Hajimemashite.  
How do you do?
- わたし は \_\_\_\_\_ です。   
Watashi wa\* (surname) (first name) desu.  
I am
- どうぞ よろしく。   
Dozo yoroshiku.  
Nice to meet you.

\* A **particle** (joshi) is a word that shows the relationship of a word, a phrase, or a clause to the rest of the sentence. は、が、を、に、で、へ, etc.

# Numbers (かず)

- 1 ichi
- 2 ni
- 3 san
- 4 shi/yon 
- 5 go
- 6 roku\* (loku)
- 7 shichi/nana
- 8 hachi
- 9 kyū/ku
- 10 jū
- 11 jū ichi
- 12 jū ni
- 13 jū san
- 14 jū shi/yon 
- 15 jū go
- 16 jū roku\* (loku)
- 17 jū shichi/nana
- 18 jū hachi
- 19 jū kyū/ku
- 20 ni jū



# ～さん

## ～さん

is a title of respect added to a name, equivalent to Mr, Mrs, Ms and Miss. It can be added to a surname or first name regardless of the gender. However, Japanese people tend to call someone with his/her surname in formal situations.

For example,

たなかさん (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss Tanaka) 

スミスさん (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss Smith) 

マイクさん (Mike) 

# ～ちゃん

## ～ちゃん

is a term most commonly added to a first name of small child. However it can be added to a first name or even surname of adult regardless of his/her gender in informal situations depending on the relationship between speakers. For example,

ゆみちゃん (girl's name , Yumi) 

たろうちゃん (boy's name , Taro) 

おがわちゃん (surname, Ogawa) 

# ～くん

## ～くん

is a term most commonly added to a first name of a boy. However it can be added to a first name or surname of adult in informal situations depending on the relationship between speakers.

For example,

たろうくん (boy's name , Taro) 📢

おがわくん (surname, Ogawa) 📢

# ～せんせい

## ～せんせい

is a term of respect for those who are in a certain professions such as teachers, doctors and lawyers regardless of their gender. Normally used with surnames, but occasionally with first names.







For example,

ケーシーせんせい 🔊

すずきせんせい 🔊

# Nationality & Language

## こくせき と げんご

	Country くに	Nationality こくせき	Language げんご
Japan	Nihon にほん	Nihon jin にほんじん	Nihon go にほんご 
France	Furansu フランス	Furansu jin フランスじん	Furansu go フランスご 
Germany	Doitsu ドイツ	Doitsu jin ドイツじん	Doitsu go ドイツご 
England	Igirisu イギリス	Igirisu jin イギリスじん	Eigo えいご 
China	Chūgoku ちゅうごく	Chūgoku jin ちゅうごくじん	Chūgoku go ちゅうごくご 
South Korea	Kankoku かんこく	Kankoku jin かんこくじん	Kankoku go かんこくご 

X は Y です。  
X wa Y desu.

わたし は ケーシー くみ です。   
Watashi wa Keshi Kumi desu.  
I (particle) Casey Kumi am

わたし は にほんじん です。   
Watashi wa Nihon jin desu.

マイクさん は イギリスじん です。   
Maiku san wa igirisu jin desu.

A **particle** (joshi) is a word that shows the relationship of a word, a phrase, or a clause to the rest of the sentence. は、が、を、に、で、へ, etc.

X は Y じゃ ありません。  
X wa Y ja arimasen.

マイクさん は にほんじん じゃ ありません。🔊  
Maiku san wa Nihon jin ja arimasen.  
Mike (particle) Japanese isn't

わたし は イギリスじん じゃ ありません。🔊  
Watashi wa igirisu jin ja arimasen.

では ありません。🔊  
dewa arimasen.

X は Y ですか。  
X wa Y desuka.

Q. マイクさん は イギリスじん ですか。🔊  
Maiku san wa igirisu jin desuka.

(Are you British?)

A. はい、イギリスじんです。🔊  
Hai, igirisu jin desu.  
Yes

か turns the  
sentence into a  
question! How  
easy, is that?

いいえ、イギリスじん じゃ ありません。🔊  
lie, igirisu jin ja arimasen.  
No (では ありません。)🔊  
dewa arimasen.



# How much do you know about Japanese language now?

Choose the correct answers.

Q1. How do you say “Hello”?

Q2. Count one to ten.

Q3. What is your nationality?

Q4. Introduce yourself.

[Click here for the correct answers.](#)

Q1.



Q2.



Q3.

Nationality & Language こくせき と げんご

If you cannot find one from the list, please contact Kumi Casey on [kumi.casey@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:kumi.casey@ncl.ac.uk).

Q4.

Introduce yourself (じこしょうかい)

# If you want to study further,

I hope you enjoyed this short introduction of Japanese language. As you have found, learning Japanese language is not as difficult as you may have thought. It always gives me a great pleasure to know that there are young people who are interested in our unique language and culture and I would like to share my knowledge and experience as much as I can to help you gain language skills as well as insights into Japanese culture.

This is the link to our school and you are always welcome to ask any questions.

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/sml/>

*I hope to see you all soon.*

Kumi Casey

