

Quick References

This reference summary provides a concise overview of key grammatical points, essential phrases, and helpful resources for your travels in Japan.

I. Essential Grammar

Verb Conjugation Chart (Polite Form)

The guide primarily uses the polite form of verbs, which ends in ~ます (masu) or ~ません (masen). Here's a summary of the polite conjugations for present/future and past tenses:

Verb Type	Affirmative (Present/Future)	Negative (Present/Future)	Affirmative (Past)	Negative (Past)
General Verbs	~ます (masu)	~ません (masen)	~ました (mashita)	~ませんでした (masen deshita)
Example: 食べます (tabemasu - to eat)	食べます (tabemasu - eat/will eat)	食べません (tabemasen - don't eat/won't eat)	食べました (tabemashita - ate)	食べませんでした (tabemasen deshita - didn't eat)
Example: 行きます (ikimasu - to go)	行きます (ikimasu - go/will go)	行きません (ikimasen - don't go/won't go)	行きました (ikimashita - went)	行きませんでした (ikimasen deshita - didn't go)
Special Verb: します (shimasu - to do/play)	します (shimasu - do/will do)	しません (shimasen - don't do/won't do)	しました (shimashita - did)	しませんでした (shimashita - didn't do)

Note on Adjectives:

- **い-adjectives:** To make them past tense polite, drop the final い (i) and add かったです (katta desu).
 - Example: おいしい (oishii - delicious) → おいしかったです (oishikatta desu - was delicious)
 - Irregular: いい (ii - good) → よかったです (yokatta desu - was good)
- **な-adjectives:** For present affirmative polite, add です (desu) (e.g., きれいです - kirei desu - is beautiful). For past tense, use でした (deshita) (e.g., しずかでした - shizuka deshita - was quiet). (Though the guide only briefly touches on adjective past tense, it's consistent with です becoming でした.)

Particle Cheat Sheet

Particles are small words that follow nouns, verbs, adjectives, or phrases to indicate their grammatical function in a sentence.

Particle	Pronunciation	Primary Function(s)	Example from Guide
は	wa	Marks the topic of the	わたしはマイクです。

Particle	Pronunciation	Primary Function(s)	Example from Guide
		sentence	(Watashi wa Maiku desu.) - I am Mike.
を	o	Marks the direct object of a verb	コーヒーを飲みます。(Koohii o nomimasu.) - I drink coffee.
に	ni	1. Indicates location where something exists (with あります/います). 2. Marks a specific point in time. 3. Marks destination (with へ (e) and verbs of motion).	ここにペンがあります。(Koko ni pen ga arimasu.) - There is a pen here. 6時に起きます。(Rokuji ni okimasu.) - I wake up at 6 o'clock. 駅に行きます。(Eki ni ikimasu.) - I will go to the station.
へ	e	Marks destination (emphasizes direction)	京都へ行きます。(Kyouto e ikimasu.) - I will go to Kyoto.
が	ga	Marks the subject of existence (the thing that is there)	ここにペンがあります。(Koko ni pen ga arimasu.) - A pen exists here.
か	ka	Turns a polite statement into a question	マイクさんですか。(Maiku-san desu ka .) - Are you Mike?
の	no	1. Indicates possession ('s). 2. Connects two nouns where the first modifies the second.	私の名前 (Watashi no namae) - my name 日本語の本 (Nihongo no hon) - Japanese language book
から	kara	Means "from"	アメリカから来ました。(Amerika kara kimashita.) - I came from America.
と	to	1. Connects nouns meaning "and". 2. Means "with" (for people).	パンとチーズ (Pan to chiizu) - Bread and cheese. 友達と映画を見ました。(Tomodachi to eiga o mimashita.) - I watched a movie with a friend.

II. Traveler's Phrasebook & Vocabulary

Survival Phrase Table

Here are essential phrases covered in the guide, useful for various situations:

Category	Japanese Phrase (Romaji)	English Meaning
Greetings	おはようございます。(Ohayou gozaimasu.)	Good morning.
	こんにちは。(Konnichiwa.)	Hello / Good afternoon.
	こんばんは。(Konbanwa.)	Good evening.
	さようなら。(Sayounara.)	Goodbye.
	おやすみなさい。 (Oyasuminasai.)	Good night.
Courtesies	ありがとうございます。(Arigatou gozaimasu.)	Thank you very much.
	どういたしまして。(Dou itashimashite.)	You're welcome.
	すみません。(Sumimasen.)	Excuse me / I'm sorry / Thank you for your trouble.
	はい。(Hai.)	Yes.
	いいえ。(Iie.)	No.
Introducing Yourself	はじめまして。(Hajimemashite.)	Nice to meet you (for the first time).
	私は [Your Name] です。 (Watashi wa [Your Name] desu.)	I am [Your Name].
	[Country] から来ました。 ([Country] kara kimashita.)	I came from [Country].
	どうぞよろしくお願いします。 (Douzo yoroshiku onegaishimasu.)	Pleased to make your acquaintance.
	お名前は何ですか。(O-namae wa nan desu ka.)	What is your name?
Shopping/Asking Price	これは何ですか。(Kore wa nan desu ka.)	What is this?
	これはいくらですか。(Kore wa ikura desu ka.)	How much is this?
Locations	トイレはどこですか。(Toire wa doko desu ka.)	Where is the toilet?
	トイレはどちらですか。(Toire wa dochira desu ka.)	Where is the toilet? (Very polite)
	ここです。(Koko desu.)	It is here.
	あそこです。(Asoko desu.)	It is over there.
	~があります。(~ga arimasu.)	There is/are ~ (inanimate)

Category	Japanese Phrase (Romaji)	English Meaning
		objects).
	~がいます。(~ga imasu.)	There is/are ~ (animate objects).
Ordering Food	すみません。(Sumimasen.)	Excuse me! (To call staff)
	メニューをください。(Menyuu o kudasai.)	Menu, please.
	これをお願いします。(Kore o onegaishimasu.)	This one, please. / I'll have this.
	[Item] をひとつください。([Item] o hitotsu kudasai.)	One [Item], please.
	おすすめは何ですか。 (Osusume wa nan desu ka.)	What do you recommend?
	お会計をお願いします。(Okaikei o onegaishimasu.)	Check/bill, please.
	いただきます。(Itadakimasu.)	Thank you for the meal (before eating).
	ごちそうさまでした。 (Gochisousama deshita.)	Thank you for the meal (after eating).
	おいしかったです。(Oishikatta desu.)	It was delicious.

Numbers and Counting

Numbers are fundamental for daily interactions:

Number	Kanji/Kana	Romaji
0	ゼロ / れい	zero / rei
1	一 (いち)	ichi
2	二 (に)	ni
3	三 (さん)	san
4	四 (し / よん)	shi / yon
5	五 (ご)	go
6	六 (ろく)	roku
7	七 (しち / なな)	shichi / nana
8	八 (はち)	hachi
9	九 (きゅう / く)	kyuu / ku
10	十 (じゅう)	juu
100	百 (ひゃく)	hyaku
1,000	千 (せん)	sen
10,000	万 (まん)	man

Important Note on Counters: When counting specific objects, Japanese uses various "counters." For general counting of items (e.g., "one item," "two items") or for asking "how many," the -tsu series (ひとつ hitotsu, ふたつ futatsu, etc.) is often used for small numbers. For

larger numbers, you typically just use the number followed by the noun.

Key Transportation Terms & Phrases

Navigating Japan's excellent public transport system:

Japanese Phrase	Romaji	English Meaning
駅 (えき)	eki	Station
地下鉄 (ちかてつ)	chikatetsu	Subway
電車 (でんしゃ)	densha	Train
バス	basu	Bus
タクシー	takushii	Taxi
きっぷ	kippu	Ticket
プラットホーム	purattohoomu	Platform
入口 (いりぐち)	iriguchi	Entrance
出口 (でぐち)	deguchi	Exit
こちら	kochira	This way (polite)
あちら	achira	That way (polite)
~まで (まで)	~ made	To ~ (destination)
~はどこですか。	~ wa doko desu ka.	Where is ~?

Emergency & Assistance Phrases

For unexpected situations, these phrases can be vital:

Japanese Phrase	Romaji	English Meaning
助けて！ (たすけて！)	Tasukete!	Help!
警察 (けいさつ)	Keisatsu	Police
病院 (びょういん)	Byouin	Hospital
道に迷いました。(みちにまよいました。)	Michi ni mayoimashita.	I'm lost.
具合が悪いです。(ぐあいがわるいです。)	Guai ga warui desu.	I feel sick.
英語を話せますか。(えいごをはなせますか。)	Eigo o hanasemasu ka.	Can you speak English?
大丈夫です。(だいじょうぶです。)	Daijoubu desu.	It's okay. / I'm fine.

Commonly Encountered Kanji

Kanji/Kana	Romaji	Meaning	Typical Usage
入口	iriguchi	Entrance	Doors, gates, stations
出口	deguchi	Exit	Doors, gates, stations
男	otoko	Male / Men	Restrooms

Kanji/Kana	Romaji	Meaning	Typical Usage
女	onna	Female / Women	Restrooms
開 (あく)	aku	Open	Shops, facilities
閉 (しめる)	shimeru	Closed	Shops, facilities
無料 (むりょう)	muryou	Free (of charge)	Free Wi-Fi, samples
止まれ (とまれ)	tomare	Stop	Traffic signs
禁煙 (きんえん)	kin'en	No Smoking	Public places
お手洗い (おてあらい)	otearai	Restroom / Toilet	Common euphemism for toilet
案内 (あんない)	annai	Information	Information desks, signs
食事 (しょくじ)	shokuji	Meal / Food	Restaurants, dining areas

III. Useful Online Learning Resources

Here are some recommended online resources to further your Japanese learning journey, including both established platforms and more niche options:

General Learning Platforms

- **Tofugu:** Offers comprehensive guides on Japanese grammar, vocabulary, and culture, known for its in-depth articles and WaniKani kanji learning system. [Tofugu](#)
- **Duolingo:** A popular language-learning app that uses gamification to teach basic Japanese vocabulary and grammar through short lessons. [Duolingo](#)
- **Memrise:** Focuses on vocabulary acquisition through spaced repetition and various memory aids, often incorporating native speaker audio and video. [Memrise](#)
- **NHK World-Japan - Easy Japanese:** Provides free audio lessons with scripts and explanations, ideal for beginners wanting to learn practical phrases and cultural insights. [NHK World-Japan - Easy Japanese](#)
- **Japan Guide:** While primarily a travel guide, it also offers useful sections on Japanese etiquette, basic phrases, and cultural tips that complement language learning. [Japan Guide](#)

YouTube Channels

- **YuYu Nihongo:** Praised for variety of subjects, great energy, and entertaining stories that even native speakers enjoy. [YuYu Nihongo](#)
- **Miku Real Japanese:** Offers philosophical reflections, easy-to-understand Japanese (around N3 level), and also provides grammar and listening practice for beginner to intermediate learners. [Miku Real Japanese](#)
- **Japanese Ammo with Misa:** A channel by a native Japanese tutor, highly recommended for grammar lessons, particularly for JLPT levels. [Japanese Ammo with Misa](#)
- **That Japanese Man Yuta:** An entertaining and educational channel by a Japanese native who discusses Japanese language, culture, and interesting topics. [That Japanese Man](#)

[Yuta](#)

- **ToKini Andy:** Offers hundreds of videos about learning Japanese, with his wife Yuki, covering a wide range of topics. [ToKini Andy](#)
- **KemushiChan:** A vlogging channel about life and language in Japan, offering a real look at life in Japan, including attending university, JLPT study, and daily life. [KemushiChan](#)
- **Sambon Juku (三本塾):** Mostly provides grammar explanations for intermediate to advanced learners (JLPT N3 to N1), with explanations entirely in Japanese, spoken slowly and clearly. [Sambon Juku](#)
- **Comprehensible Japanese:** Videos are entirely in Japanese but use drawings and gestures to aid understanding, with playlists for various levels. [Comprehensible Japanese](#)
- **Moshi Moshi Yusuke (もしもしゆうすけ):** Good for comprehensible input, especially for beginners and intermediate learners, though posting might be less regular. [Moshi Moshi Yusuke](#)
- **Akane's Japanese Class (あかね的日本語教室):** Offers comprehensive lessons and is popular for good reason, often recommended for structured learning. [Akane's Japanese Class](#)
- **Nihongo Dekita with Sayaka:** Focuses on natural Japanese conversation and cultural insights, with videos that are easy to understand for various levels. [Nihongo Dekita with Sayaka](#)

Other Resources

- **Tae Kim's Guide to Learning Japanese:** A popular, free online grammar guide that can be used as an alternative to textbooks. [Tae Kim's Guide to Learning Japanese](#)
- **jpdb.io:** A platform for learning Japanese vocabulary and kanji, highly recommended by some users as an alternative to Anki. [jpdb.io](#)
- **Anki:** A powerful flashcard program that uses spaced repetition. While it's a "big" tool, many enthusiasts create and share niche, specialized decks for specific learning goals, making it highly customizable. [Anki](#)
- **Yomichan/Yomikiri:** Browser extensions that allow you to hover over Japanese words on web pages to get instant definitions, which is excellent for immersion and learning from native content.
- **Language Reactor:** A browser extension for learning languages with Netflix, YouTube, and other sites, allowing you to view subtitles in two languages simultaneously and easily look up words.

IV. Hiragana and Katakana Refresher

Even if you've studied them before, a quick refresher and some practical tips can make a world of difference when recognizing and using Kana in real-world Japanese.

Learning Strategies & Tips

1. **Stroke Order Matters:** While not strictly necessary for basic recognition, learning correct stroke order helps with character recognition, writing speed, and even understanding how characters are formed, which can aid memorization. Many apps and websites show animated stroke orders.

2. **Mnemonic Devices:** Don't just memorize by rote. Create silly stories or associate characters with images. For instance, の (no) looks like a fishing hook (no, I won't use it!). め (me) looks like an eyebrow/eye.
3. **Practice Writing by Hand:** Even in the digital age, physically writing characters helps solidify them in your memory. Use a notebook and practice sheets.
4. **Flashcards (Physical or Digital):** Spaced repetition systems (like Anki) are incredibly effective. Regularly reviewing characters, especially those you struggle with, is key.
5. **Immerse Yourself Early:** Once you know a few characters, start trying to read simple Japanese. Look for them on signs, product packaging, or children's books. This makes learning less abstract and more applicable.
6. **Learn in Chunks (Go-jū-on and Dakuten/Handakuten):** Understand the basic 46 Hiragana characters (the "go-jū-on" chart, typically ordered by vowel then consonant), then learn how ˘ (dakuten) (two small dashes, changing ka to ga, sa to za, etc.) and ° (handakuten) (a small circle, changing ha to pa) modify sounds.
7. **Small Characters (拗音 - Youon):** Learn combinations like きゃ (kya), しょ (sho), ちゅ (chu). The small や, ゆ, よ are always paired with an i-ending kana. These represent single sounds, not two separate ones. き + や is kya, not kiya.

Common Pitfalls and How to Avoid Them

1. **Confusing Similar-Looking Characters:**
 - **Hiragana:** あ (a) vs. お (o), ん (nu) vs. め (me), ね (ne) vs. れ (re), ろ (ro) vs. る (ru), わ (wa) vs. れ (re), り (ri) vs. ソ (so - Katakana).
 - **Katakana:** シ (shi) vs. ツ (tsu), ソ (so) vs. ン (n), イ (i) vs. リ (ri), ク (ku) vs. ケ (ke), コ (ko) vs. ニ (ni).
 - **Tip:** Pay close attention to stroke direction, angles, and the presence/absence of hooks or loops. Use tracing apps or practice sheets that highlight stroke order.
2. **Mixing Up Hiragana and Katakana:** They have different shapes for the same sounds. It's easy to get confused when switching between them.
 - **Tip:** Practice writing both versions of each sound side-by-side. Try exercises where you convert words from Hiragana to Katakana and vice-versa.
3. **Mispronouncing Double Consonants (っ):** Forgetting the small っ results in pronouncing words incorrectly.
 - **Tip:** Exaggerate the pause or the "double" sound when practicing. Think of it as a momentary stop before the next consonant. E.g., きて (kitte) is like "kit-te."
4. **Ignoring Long Vowels:** Japanese is a pitch-accent language, and vowel length can change a word's meaning. Forgetting a long vowel can lead to misunderstandings.
 - **Tip:** Always pay attention to う (u) after お (o) or え (e) in Hiragana, and the ー (chōonpu) in Katakana. Practice pronouncing them distinctly. おばさん (obasan) (aunt) vs. おばあさん (obāsan) (grandmother).
5. **Over-relying on Romaji:** While useful initially, clinging to Romaji can hinder your progress. It doesn't accurately represent Japanese phonetics (e.g., tsu, shi, chi are single sounds, not t-s-u, s-h-i, c-h-i).
 - **Tip:** Transition away from Romaji as quickly as possible. Force yourself to read Hiragana and Katakana directly.

Japanese Guide for Travelers

Welcome! こんにちは！ (Konnichiwa!)

This guide is designed for English-speaking travelers who already know hiragana and katakana and want to learn essential polite Japanese for their trip to Japan. We'll focus on practical phrases and grammar that you can use in everyday situations.

How to Use This Guide:

- **Hiragana First:** All Japanese words that might typically use complex characters (kanji) will be written in **hiragana** first.
- **Romaji:** Immediately after any Japanese text (a word or a sentence), you'll see the **romaji** (Roman alphabet version) to help with pronunciation.
- **Polite Forms:** We'll be using the polite form of Japanese (often ending in 「～です」 (desu) or 「～ます」 (masu)), which is perfect for travelers.
- **Structure:** Each lesson includes:
 1. A friendly introduction.
 2. Key Phrases & Examples.
 3. A simple Grammar Breakdown.
 4. Relevant Cultural Notes.
 5. Exercises to test your understanding (with solutions!).

Let's get started! がんばりましょう！ (Ganbarimashou! - Let's do our best!)

Lesson 1: Hello, Goodbye, and Basic Courtesies

1. Introduction

First impressions count! Knowing how to greet people politely is your first step to smooth interactions in Japan. In this lesson, we'll cover the essential greetings for different times of day, how to say thank you, and excuse me – super useful words you'll use constantly!

2. Key Phrases & Examples

- **Greetings:**
 - おはようございます。 *Ohayou gozaimasu.* (Good morning. - Use this until about 10 or 11 AM)
 - こんにちは。 *Konnichiwa.* (Hello. / Good afternoon. - Use this from late morning until evening)
 - こんばんは。 *Konbanwa.* (Good evening.)
 - さようなら。 *Sayounara.* (Goodbye. - Can sound a bit final, like you won't see them for a while. For more casual goodbyes with people you'll see soon, 「じゃあ、また」 (Jaa, mata - Well then, see you) or 「またあした」 (Mata ashita - See you tomorrow) are common, but 「さようなら」 (Sayounara) is safe.)
 - おやすみなさい。 *Oyasuminasai.* (Good night. - Said when leaving for the night or going to bed.)
- **Essential Courtesies:**
 - ありがとう ございます。 *Arigatou gozaimasu.* (Thank you very much.) A simple 「ありがとう」 (Arigatou) is "Thanks," but adding 「ございます」 (gozaimasu) makes it much more polite.
 - どういたしまして。 *Dou itashimashite.* (You're welcome.)

- すみません。 *Sumimasen.* (Excuse me. / I'm sorry. / Thank you for your trouble.)
This is a fantastic multi-purpose word! Use it to get someone's attention, apologize for a small bump, or even as a thank you if someone does something for you that causes them a little trouble (like picking up something you dropped).
- はい。 *Hai.* (Yes.)
- いいえ。 *Iie.* (No.)

3. Grammar Breakdown

- **Politeness Levels:** Japanese has different levels of politeness. The phrases here, especially those ending in 「～ございます」 (gozaimasu), are polite and suitable for travelers.
- 「すみません」 (**Sumimasen**) vs. 「ありがとう」 (**Arigatou**): While both can express gratitude, 「すみません」 (sumimasen) often acknowledges the inconvenience or effort someone else went through for you. For a gift, 「ありがとう ございます」 (arigatou gozaimasu) is more appropriate. If someone helps you pick up your dropped items, 「すみません」 (sumimasen) works well.

4. Cultural Notes

- **Bowing (おじぎ - ojigi):** Bowing is very common.
 - When greeting someone, a slight nod of the head or a small bow (about 15 degrees) is fine for travelers.
 - The depth and duration of the bow show the level of respect or apology.
 - You don't need to bow excessively, but a polite nod when saying hello or thank you will be appreciated.
- **Using 「すみません」 (Sumimasen):** Don't be afraid to use this word. It's used frequently to initiate interactions (like calling a waiter), apologizing for minor things, or expressing thanks for a small favor.

5. Exercises

1. How do you say "Good morning" politely?
2. You accidentally bump into someone. What should you say?
3. Someone holds a door open for you. What's a polite way to say "Thank you very much"?
4. How do you say "Hello" in the afternoon?
5. What is a polite way to say "No"?
6. When would you say 「おやすみなさい」 (Oyasuminasai)?
7. What's the difference in nuance between 「ありがとう」 (Arigatou) and 「ありがとう ございます」 (Arigatou gozaimasu)?

6. Solutions

1. おはようございます。 (Ohayou gozaimasu.)
2. すみません。 (Sumimasen.)
3. ありがとう ございます。 (Arigatou gozaimasu.)
4. こんにちは。 (Konnichiwa.)
5. いいえ。 (Iie.)
6. When going to bed or leaving a place for the night.
7. 「ありがとう ございます」 (Arigatou gozaimasu) is more polite than just 「ありがとう」 (Arigatou).

Lesson 2: Introducing Yourself

1. Introduction

Meeting new people is part of the adventure! Let's learn the standard polite way to introduce yourself. This is a set phrase that's used everywhere, so mastering it will make you feel much more confident.

2. Key Phrases & Examples

- はじめまして。 *Hajimemashite*. (Nice to meet you for the first time. - Use this *only* the very first time you meet someone.)
- わたしは [Your Name] です。 *Watashi wa [Your Name] desu*. (I am [Your Name].) *Example*: わたしは マイク です。 (*Watashi wa Maiku desu*.) - I am Mike.
- [Country] から きました。 *[Country] kara kimashita*. (I came from [Country].) *Example*: アメリカから きました。 (*Amerika kara kimashita*.) - I came from America. *Common countries*:
 - アメリカ (Amerika) - America
 - イギリス (Igirisu) - UK
 - カナダ (Kanada) - Canada
 - オーストラリア (Oosutoraria) - Australia
 - ドイツ (Doitsu) - Germany
 - フランス (Furansu) - France
 - ちゅうごく (Chuugoku) - China
 - かんこく (Kankoku) - South Korea
- どうぞ よろしく おねがいします。 *Douzo yoroshiku onegaishimasu*. (Pleased to make your acquaintance. / Please be kind to me. / I look forward to our good relationship.) *This is a very important phrase said at the end of a self-introduction. It doesn't have a perfect English equivalent.*
- **Full Introduction Sequence**: はじめまして。 *Hajimemashite*. わたしは [Your Name] です。 *Watashi wa [Your Name] desu*. [Country] から きました。 (Optional, but good for travelers) *[Country] kara kimashita*. どうぞ よろしく おねがいします。 *Douzo yoroshiku onegaishimasu*.
- **Responding to an Introduction**:
 - If someone introduces themselves to you, after they say 「どうぞ よろしく おねがいします」 (*Douzo yoroshiku onegaishimasu*), you can reply: こちらこそ よろしく おねがいします。 *Kochira koso yoroshiku onegaishimasu*. (Likewise, pleased to make your acquaintance.)
- **Asking Someone's Name (Polite)**:
 - おなまえは なんです。 *O-naamae wa nan desu ka*. (What is your name?) The 「お」 (*o*) before 「なまえ」 (*naamae* - name) makes it polite. 「なん」 (*nan*) means "what."

3. Grammar Breakdown

- 「わたしは ～ です」 (**Watashi wa ~ desu**) - I am ~
 - 「わたし」 (*Watashi*) means "I."
 - 「は」 (*wa*) is a particle that marks the topic of the sentence. (Pronounced "wa," not "ha," when used as a particle).
 - 「～ です」 (*desu*) is a polite "to be" verb (am, is, are). It makes statements polite.
 - So, 「わたしは マイク です」 (*Watashi wa Maiku desu*) literally means "As for me, (I) am Mike."
- 「～ から きました」 (**~ kara kimashita**) - I came from ~
 - 「から」 (*kara*) is a particle meaning "from."
 - 「きました」 (*kimashita*) is the polite past tense of the verb "to come" (きます - *kimasu*). We'll learn more about verb tenses later! For now, memorize this as a set phrase.
- 「～ か」 (**ka**) - Question Marker

- Adding 「か」 (ka) to the end of a polite statement (ending in 「です」 (desu) or 「～ます」 (masu)) turns it into a question.
- Example: マイクさんですか。 (Maiku-san desu ka.) - Are you Mike?
- 「～さん」 (-san) - Mr./Ms./Mrs.
 - This is a title of respect added to names. Use it for other people, *never* for yourself.
 - Example: やまださん (Yamada-san), リサさん (Risa-san).

4. Cultural Notes

- **Business Cards** (めいし - **meishi**): If you're in a business context, exchanging business cards is common during introductions. Receive a card with both hands, read it, and treat it respectfully. For travelers, this is less common unless you're meeting people for professional reasons.
- **Order of Introduction**: The sequence given above (Hajimemashite -> Name -> (Origin) -> Douzo yoroshiku onegaishimasu) is standard.
- **Omitting 「わたしは」 (Watashi wa)**: Once it's clear you're talking about yourself, you can often omit 「わたしは」 (Watashi wa). For example, after saying 「わたしは マイク です」 (Watashi wa Maiku desu), you could just say 「アメリカから きました」 (Amerika kara kimashita).

5. Exercises

1. You meet someone for the first time. What is the very first thing you should say?
2. How do you say "I am [Your Name]"?
3. How do you say "I came from Canada"?
4. What is the important phrase you say at the end of your self-introduction?
5. How do you politely ask someone "What is your name?"
6. If someone introduces themselves to you and finishes with 「どうぞ よろしく おねがいします」 (Douzo yoroshiku onegaishimasu), what is a polite reply?
7. What does the particle 「は」 (wa) do in the sentence 「わたしは リサ です」 (Watashi wa Risa desu)?
8. Put the following phrases in the correct order for a self-introduction:
 - どうぞ よろしく おねがいします (Douzo yoroshiku onegaishimasu)
 - わたしは [Your Name] です (Watashi wa [Your Name] desu)
 - はじめまして (Hajimemashite)

6. Solutions

1. はじめまして。 (Hajimemashite.)
2. わたしは [Your Name] です。 (Watashi wa [Your Name] desu.)
3. カナダから きました。 (Kanada kara kimashita.)
4. どうぞ よろしく おねがいします。 (Douzo yoroshiku onegaishimasu.)
5. おなまえは なんですか。 (O-namae wa nan desu ka.)
6. こちらこそ よろしく おねがいします。 (Kochira koso yoroshiku onegaishimasu.)
7. It marks 「わたし」 (watashi - I) as the topic of the sentence.
8.
 1. はじめまして (Hajimemashite)
 2. わたしは [Your Name] です (Watashi wa [Your Name] desu)
 3. どうぞ よろしく おねがいします (Douzo yoroshiku onegaishimasu)

Lesson 3: This, That, and Asking "How Much?"

1. Introduction

When you're out and about, especially shopping or sightseeing, you'll want to point to things and ask what they are or how much they cost. This lesson covers the basics of "this," "that," numbers, and the all-important question: "How much is this?"

2. Key Phrases & Examples

- **Pointing Words (for things):**

- これ (kore) - This (thing near me, the speaker)
 - これは 何ですか。 *Kore wa nan desu ka.* (What is this?)
- それ (sore) - That (thing near you, the listener)
 - それは 本です。 *Sore wa hon desu.* (That is a book.) (ほん - hon: book)
- あれ (are) - That (thing over there, far from both of us)
 - あれは とうきょうタワーです。 *Are wa Toukyou Tawaa desu.* (That over there is Tokyo Tower.) (とうきょうタワー - Toukyou Tawaa: Tokyo Tower)

- **Pointing Words (modifying nouns):**

- この + Noun (kono + Noun) - This Noun (near me)
 - この りんごは おいしいです。 *Kono ringo wa oishii desu.* (This apple is delicious.) (りんご - ringo: apple; おいしい - oishii: delicious)
- その + Noun (sono + Noun) - That Noun (near you)
 - その かばんは すてきですね。 *Sono kaban wa suteki desu ne.* (That bag is lovely, isn't it?) (かばん - kaban: bag; すてき - suteki: lovely; ね - ne: isn't it?/right?)
- あの + Noun (ano + Noun) - That Noun over there (far from both)
 - あの たてものは 何ですか。 *Ano tatemono wa nan desu ka.* (What is that building over there?) (たてもの - tatemono: building)

- **Asking "How much?":**

- これは いくらですか。 *Kore wa ikura desu ka.* (How much is this?) (いくら - ikura: how much money)
- この とけいは いくらですか。 *Kono tokei wa ikura desu ka.* (How much is this watch?) (とけい - tokei: watch/clock)

- **Numbers (いち, に, さん... - ichi, ni, san...)**

- 1: いち (ichi)
- 2: に (ni)
- 3: さん (san)
- 4: よん (yon) / し (shi) - 「よん」 (yon) is more common to avoid confusion with 「し」 (shi) which can mean death.
- 5: ご (go)
- 6: ろく (roku)
- 7: なな (nana) / しち (shichi) - 「なな」 (nana) is often more common.
- 8: はち (hachi)
- 9: きゅう (kyuu) / く (ku) - 「きゅう」 (kyuu) is often more common.
- 10: じゅう (juu)
- 11: じゅういち (juuichi) (10 + 1)
- 20: にじゅう (nijuu) (2 x 10)
- 35: さんじゅうご (sanjuugo) (3 x 10 + 5)
- 100: ひゃく (hyaku)
- 1,000: せん (sen)
- 10,000: いちまん (ichiman)
- Example Price: これは さんぜんえんです。 (*Kore wa sanzen en desu.*) - This is 3,000 yen. (えん - en: yen)

3. Grammar Breakdown

- 「これ・それ・あれ」(kore/sore/are) vs. 「この・その・あの」(kono/sono/ano):
 - 「これ」(kore), 「それ」(sore), and 「あれ」(are) are pronouns. They stand alone and mean "this thing," "that thing," "that thing over there."
 - Example: これは ペンです。(Kore wa pen desu.) - This is a pen.
 - 「この」(kono), 「その」(sono), and 「あの」(ano) are determiners (like "this" or "that" in "this book"). They *must* be followed by a noun.
 - Example: この ペンは あかいです。(Kono pen wa akai desu.) - This pen is red.
- Particle 「の」(no) - Possessive / Connector
 - We saw 「おなまえ」(o-namae) in Lesson 2. 「の」(no) can show possession, like 's in English.
 - わたしの なまえ (watashi no namae) - my name
 - やまださんの くるま (Yamada-san no kuruma) - Mr. Yamada's car (くるま - kuruma: car)
 - It can also connect two nouns where the first noun describes or modifies the second.
 - にほんごの ほん (Nihongo no hon) - Japanese language book (a book of Japanese)
- Number Sound Changes (Important for listening!):
 - 300: さんびゃく (sanbyaku) (not sanhyaku)
 - 600: ろっぴゃく (roppyaku) (not rokuhyaku)
 - 800: はっぴゃく (happyaku) (not hachihyaku)
 - 3,000: さんぜん (sanzen) (not sansen)
 - 8,000: はっせん (hassen) (not hachisen)
 - 10,000 is 「いちまん」(ichiman). So 20,000 is 「にまん」(niman), 30,000 is 「さんまん」(sanman).

4. Cultural Notes

- **Money Handling:** When paying, you'll often see a small tray at the cashier. Place your money on this tray rather than directly into the cashier's hand. They will also place your change on the tray.
- **Tipping:** Tipping is not customary in Japan. The price you see is the price you pay. Excellent service is standard.
- **Pointing:** While pointing with a finger is understood, it's generally more polite to gesture towards an object with an open hand, especially when interacting with staff.

5. Exercises

1. You want to ask "What is this?" pointing to something in your hand. What do you say?
2. You want to ask "How much is that hat?" (The hat is near the shop assistant). (hat: ぼうし - boushi)
3. How do you say "That building over there is a hotel"? (building: たてもの - tatemono; hotel: ホテル - hoteru)
4. Write the number 700 in hiragana.
5. Write the number 4,500 せん (en - yen) in hiragana.
6. What is the difference between 「これ」(kore) and 「この」(kono)?
7. Translate: "My friend's book." (friend: ともだち - tomodachi; book: ほん - hon)
8. A price tag says 「¥1,500」. How would a shopkeeper likely say this price in Japanese?

6. Solutions

1. これは なんですか。(Kore wa nan desu ka.)

2. その ぼうしは いくらですか。(Sono boushi wa ikura desu ka.)
3. あの たてものは ホテルです。(Ano tatemono wa hoteru desu.)
4. ななひゃく (nanahyaku)
5. よんせんごひゃくえん (yonsen gohyaku en)
6. 「これ」(kore) is a pronoun (e.g., "This is a pen"). 「この」(kono) is a determiner and must be followed by a noun (e.g., "This pen is red").
7. ともだちの ほんです。(Tomodachi no hon desu.) (or ともだちの ほん (tomodachi no hon) if not a full sentence)
8. せんごひゃくえんです。(Sen gohyaku en desu.)

Lesson 4: Asking "Where is...?" and Basic Locations

1. Introduction

Finding your way around is crucial! This lesson teaches you how to ask "Where is X?" and understand simple location words. We'll also learn how to say something "exists" or "is there," which is very useful for finding restrooms, stations, or specific items.

2. Key Phrases & Examples

- **Asking "Where?":**
 - トイレはどこですか。 *Toire wa doko desu ka.* (Where is the toilet?) トイレ (*toire*) - toilet; どこ (*doko*) - where
 - えきはどこですか。 *Eki wa doko desu ka.* (Where is the station?) (えき - eki: station)
- **Indicating Location (Places):**
 - ここ (*koko*) - Here (place near the speaker)
 - わたしの ホテルは ここです。 *Watashi no hoteru wa koko desu.* (My hotel is here.)
 - そこ (*soko*) - There (place near the listener, or the place just mentioned)
 - ゆうびんきょくは そこです。 *Yuubinkyoku wa soko desu.* (The post office is there.) (ゆうびんきょく - yuubinkyoku: post office)
 - あそこ (*asoko*) - Over there (place distant from both speaker and listener)
 - レストランは あそこです。 *Resutoran wa asoko desu.* (The restaurant is over there.) (レストラン - resutoran: restaurant)
- **Saying Something Exists (Inanimate Objects, Plants):**
 - ～が あります (*ga arimasu*) - There is/are ~ / ~ exists / I have ~
 - ここに ペンが あります。 *Koko ni pen ga arimasu.* (There is a pen here. / A pen exists here.)
 - テーブルの うえに ほんが あります。 *Teeburu no ue ni hon ga arimasu.* (There is a book on the table.) テーブル (*teeburu*) - table; うえ (*ue*) - on/above
 - ちかくに コンビニが ありますか。 *Chikaku ni konbini ga arimasu ka.* (Is there a convenience store nearby?) ちかく (*chikaku*) - nearby; コンビニ (*konbini*) - convenience store
- **Saying Something Exists (Animate: People, Animals):**
 - ～が います (*ga imasu*) - There is/are ~ (living things) / ~ exists
 - あそこに ねこが います。 *Asoko ni neko ga imasu.* (There is a cat over there.) (ねこ - neko: cat)
 - へやに だれか いますか。 *Heya ni dareka imasu ka.* (Is anyone in the room?) (へや - heya: room; だれか - dareka: someone/anyone)
- **Basic Position Words (used with 「の」(no)):**

- まえ (mae) - front (Example: えきの まえ - eki no mae - in front of the station)
- うしろ (ushiro) - back, behind
- うえ (ue) - on, above
- した (shita) - under, below
- みぎ (migi) - right
- ひだり (hidari) - left
- なか (naka) - inside
- となり (tonari) - next to (for similar things, e.g., a building next to a building)
- ちかく (chikaku) - nearby

Example using position words: ぎんこうの となりに スーパーがあります。Ginkou no tonari ni suupaa ga arimasu. (There is a supermarket next to the bank.) ぎんこう (ginkou) - bank; スーパー (suupaa) - supermarket

3. Grammar Breakdown

- 「X は どこですか」 (X wa doko desu ka) - Where is X?
 - This is the standard pattern. 「どこ」 (doko) is the question word for "where."
- **Particles 「に」 (ni) and 「が」 (ga) with 「あります/います」 (arimasu/imasu):**
 - 「に」 (ni): Indicates the location where something exists.
 - Example: ここに あります。 (Koko ni arimasu.) - It is **here**.
 - 「が」 (ga): Marks the subject of existence – the thing that is there. When you first introduce something that exists, it's often marked with 「が」 (ga).
 - Example: ペンが あります。 (Pen ga arimasu.) - **A pen** is there.
 - Combined: [Location] に [Thing] が あります/います。 ([Location] ni [Thing] ga arimasu/imasu.)
- 「あります」 (arimasu) vs. 「います」 (imasu):
 - Use 「あります」 (arimasu) for inanimate objects (books, buildings, plants, ideas).
 - Use 「います」 (imasu) for animate things (people, animals).
 - Both mean "to exist," "to be (in a place)," or "to have."
- **Polite Location Words:**
 - 「こちら」 (kochira) - this way / here (politer than ここ - koko)
 - 「そちら」 (sochira) - that way / there (politer than そこ - soko)
 - 「あちら」 (achira) - that way over there (politer than あそこ - asoko)
 - 「どちら」 (dochira) - where (politer than どこ - doko)
 - Example: トイレは どちらですか。 (Toire wa dochira desu ka.) - Where is the toilet? (very polite)

4. Cultural Notes

- **Asking for Directions:** Japanese people are generally very helpful. If you ask for directions, they will often try their best to help, sometimes even walking you part of the way!
- **Addresses in Japan:** The Japanese address system can be quite different from what you're used to. It's often based on areas, blocks, and building numbers within blocks, rather than street names. Using a map app on your phone is highly recommended.
- **Public Restrooms:** Public restrooms are generally clean and widely available in stations, department stores, and parks.

5. Exercises

1. How do you ask "Where is the exit?" (exit: でぐち - deguchi)
2. Translate: "The convenience store is over there." (convenience store: コンビニ - konbini)
3. A friend is looking for their keys. You see them on the table. How do you say "The keys are on the table"? (keys: かぎ - kagi; table: テーブル - teeburu; on: うえ - ue) *Hint: Keys*

are inanimate.

4. How do you say "Mr. Tanaka is in the classroom"? (classroom: きょうしつ - kyoushitsu)
5. What is the difference between 「あります」 (arimasu) and 「います」 (imasu)?
6. Translate: "Is there a hospital nearby?" (hospital: びょういん - byouin; nearby: ちかく - chikaku)
7. How do you say "The cat is under the chair"? (cat: ねこ - neko; chair: いす - isu; under: した - shita)
8. Your friend is looking for you in a park. You want to tell them "I am here." What do you say?

6. Solutions

1. でぐちは どこですか。 (Deguchi wa doko desu ka.)
2. コンビニは あそこです。 (Konbini wa asoko desu.)
3. かぎは テーブルの うえに あります。 (Kagi wa teeburu no ue ni arimasu.)
4. たなかさんは きょうしつに います。 (Tanaka-san wa kyoushitsu ni imasu.)
5. 「あります」 (arimasu) is for inanimate objects (things, plants). 「います」 (imasu) is for animate objects (people, animals).
6. ちかくに びょういんが ありますか。 (Chikaku ni byouin ga arimasu ka.)
7. ねこは いすの したに います。 (Neko wa isu no shita ni imasu.)
8. わたしは ここに います。 (Watashi wa koko ni imasu.) or just ここに います。 (Koko ni imasu.)

Lesson 5: Basic Actions - Eating, Drinking, Going (Present/Future)

1. Introduction

Let's get moving with verbs! Verbs are action words. In this lesson, you'll learn how to talk about common daily actions like eating, drinking, going, and seeing, using the polite present/future tense. This form is used for things you do regularly or things you will do.

2. Key Phrases & Examples

● Common Verbs (ます - masu form - polite present/future):

- たべます (tabemasu) - to eat / will eat
 - わたしは あさごはんを たべます。 *Watashi wa asagohan o tabemasu.* (I eat breakfast. / I will eat breakfast.) (あさごはん - asagohan: breakfast)
- のみます (nomimasu) - to drink / will drink
 - コーヒーを のみます。 *Koohii o nomimasu.* (I drink coffee. / I will drink coffee.) (コーヒー - koohii: coffee)
- いきます (ikimasu) - to go / will go
 - あした きょうとへ いきます。 *Ashita Kyouto e ikimasu.* (Tomorrow, I will go to Kyoto.) (あした - ashita: tomorrow; きょうと - Kyouto: Kyoto)
- みます (mimasu) - to see, to watch / will see, will watch
 - テレビを みます。 *Terebi o mimasu.* (I watch TV. / I will watch TV.) (テレビ - terebi: TV)
- かいます (kaimasu) - to buy / will buy
 - あたらしい くつを かいます。 *Atarashii kutsu o kaimasu.* (I will buy new shoes.) (あたらしい - atarashii: new; くつ - kutsu: shoes)
- します (shimasu) - to do, to play (sports) / will do, will play
 - しゅくだいを します。 *Shukudai o shimasu.* (I do homework. / I will do

- homework.) (しゅくだい - shukudai: homework)
 - テニスをします。 *Tenisu o shimasu.* (I play tennis. / I will play tennis.) (テニス - tennis: tennis)
- よみます (yomimasu) - to read / will read
 - ほんを よみます。 *Hon o yomimasu.* (I read books. / I will read a book.)
- ききます (kikimasu) - to listen, to hear / will listen, will hear
 - おんがくを ききます。 *Ongaku o kikimasu.* (I listen to music.) (おんがく - ongaku: music)
- **Negative Form (ません - masen - polite present/future negative):**
 - たべません (tabemasen) - do not eat / will not eat
 - わたしは さかなを たべません。 *Watashi wa sakana o tabemasen.* (I don't eat fish.) (さかな - sakana: fish)
 - いきません (ikimasen) - do not go / will not go
 - きょうは がっこうへ いきません。 *Kyou wa gakkou e ikimasen.* (I am not going to school today.) (きょう - kyou: today; がっこう - gakkou: school)

3. Grammar Breakdown

- **The 「～ます」 (masu) Form:**
 - This is the standard polite ending for verbs in the present or future tense. Japanese doesn't distinguish between present habitual actions ("I eat") and future actions ("I will eat") with this verb form alone. Context (like time words: 「あした」 - ashita - tomorrow, 「まいにち」 - mainichi - every day) helps clarify.
 - The verb always comes at the end of the sentence in simple structures.
- **The 「～ません」 (masen) Form:**
 - To make a 「～ます」 (masu) verb negative (to say you *don't* or *won't* do something), change 「～ます」 (masu) to 「～ません」 (masen).
 - Example: のみます (nomimasu - to drink) -> のみません (nomimasen - do not drink)
- **Particle 「を」 (o) - Direct Object Marker:**
 - The particle 「を」 (o) (pronounced "o," like the letter) marks the direct object of the verb. The direct object is the noun that the action is performed on.
 - Structure: **Noun (object) を Verb.**
 - Example: パンを たべます。 (Pan o tabemasu.) - I eat bread. (パン - pan: bread)
- **Particle 「へ」 (e) and 「に」 (ni) - Destination Markers:**
 - With verbs of motion like 「いきます」 (ikimasu - go), 「きます」 (kimasu - come), and 「かえります」 (kaerimasu - return home/to base), you use 「へ」 (e) or 「に」 (ni) to mark the destination.
 - 「へ」 (e) (pronounced "e") emphasizes the direction *towards* a place.
 - 「に」 (ni) emphasizes the arrival point or specific location.
 - For beginners, they are often interchangeable when talking about going to a place.
 - Example: とうきょうへ いきます。 (Toukyou e ikimasu.) - I will go to Tokyo. えきに いきます。 (Eki ni ikimasu.) - I will go to the station.
- **Particle 「に」 (ni) - Specific Time Marker:**
 - 「に」 (ni) is also used to mark a specific point in time when an action occurs.
 - Example: ろくじに おきます。 (Rokuji ni okimasu.) - I wake up at 6 o'clock. (ろくじ - rokuji: 6 o'clock; おきます - okimasu: to wake up) にちようびに えいがを みます。 (Nichiyoubi ni eiga o mimasu.) - I will watch a movie on Sunday. (にちようび - nichiyoubi: Sunday; えいが - eiga: movie)

4. Cultural Notes

- **Omitting the Subject:** If it's clear who you're talking about (usually yourself in a

conversation), you can often omit 「わたしは」 (Watashi wa). So, instead of 「わたしは コーヒーを のみます」 (Watashi wa koohii o nomimasu), you can just say 「コーヒーを のみます」 (Koohii o nomimasu).

- 「～します」 (**shimasu**) **Verbs:** Many nouns that represent actions can be turned into verbs by adding 「します」 (shimasu - to do).
 - Example: べんきょう (benkyou - study (noun)) -> べんきょうします (benkyoushimasu - to study (verb)) かいもの (kaimono - shopping (noun)) -> かいものします (kaimonoshimasu - to shop (verb))

5. Exercises

1. How do you say "I will drink tea"? (tea: おちゃ - ocha)
2. How do you say "I do not watch TV"?
3. Translate: "I will go to the supermarket tomorrow." (supermarket: スーパー - suupaa)
4. What does 「まいにち パンを たべます」 (Mainichi pan o tabemasu) mean? (まいにち - mainichi: every day)
5. Change to the negative: 「おんがくを ききます」 (Ongaku o kikimasu - I listen to music).
6. What particle marks the direct object of a verb?
7. How do you say "I will do my homework tonight"? (tonight: こんばん - konban; homework: しゅくだい - shukudai)
8. What are two uses of the particle 「に」 (ni) you learned in this lesson?

6. Solutions

1. おちゃを のみます。 (Ocha o nomimasu.)
2. テレビを みません。 (Terebi o mimasen.)
3. あした スーパーへ いきます。 (Ashita suupaa e ikimasu.) OR あした スーパーに いきます。 (Ashita suupaa ni ikimasu.)
4. "I eat bread every day."
5. おんがくを ききません。 (Ongaku o kikimasen.)
6. 「を」 (o)
7. こんばん しゅくだいを します。 (Konban shukudai o shimasu.)
8. To mark the destination with verbs of motion, AND to mark a specific point in time.

Lesson 6: Talking About the Past

1. Introduction

You've done things, seen places! Now you need to talk about what happened. This lesson covers the polite past tense of verbs. It's a small change from the present/future 「～ます」 (masu) form, making it easy to learn.

2. Key Phrases & Examples

- **Past Affirmative (ました - mashita):**
 - きのう えいがを みました。 *Kinou eiga o mimashita.* (I watched a movie yesterday.)
きのう (kinou) - yesterday; みました (mimashita) - watched (past tense of みます - mimasu)
 - せんしゅう きょうとへ 行きました。 *Senshuu Kyouto e ikimashita.* (I went to Kyoto last week.)
せんしゅう (senshuu) - last week; 行きました (ikimashita) - went (past tense of いきます - ikimasu)
 - けさ コーヒーを のみました。 *Kesa koohii o nomimashita.* (I drank coffee this morning.)
けさ (kesa) - this morning; のみました (nomimashita) - drank
- **Past Negative (ませんでした - masen deshita):**

- おととい すしを たべませんでした。 *Ototoi sushi o tabemasen deshita.* (I did not eat sushi the day before yesterday.) おととい (*ototoi*) - day before yesterday; たべませんでした (*tabemasen deshita*) - did not eat
- きのは べんきょうしませんでした。 *Kinou wa benkyoushimasen deshita.* (I did not study yesterday.) べんきょうしませんでした (*benkyoushimasen deshita*) - did not study
- **Asking Questions in the Past:**
 - きのう なにを しましたか。 *Kinou nani o shimashita ka.* (What did you do yesterday?) (しましたか - *shimashita ka*: did you do?)
 - ラーメンを たべましたか。 *Raamen o tabemashita ka.* (Did you eat ramen?)
Response: はい、たべました。 (*Hai, tabemashita.*) - Yes, I ate. Response: いいえ、たべませんでした。 (*ie, tabemasen deshita.*) - No, I didn't eat.
- **More Time Words (Past):**
 - きのう (*kinou*) - yesterday
 - けさ (*kesa*) - this morning
 - おととい (*ototoi*) - the day before yesterday
 - せんしゅう (*senshuu*) - last week
 - せんげつ (*sengetsu*) - last month
 - きょねん (*kyonen*) - last year

3. Grammar Breakdown

- **Polite Past Affirmative: 「～ました」 (mashita)**
 - To change a polite present/future verb (「～ます」 - *masu* form) to the polite past affirmative, change 「～ます」 (*masu*) to 「～ました」 (*mashita*).
 - Examples:
 - かいます (*kaimasu* - buy) -> かいました (*kaimashita* - bought)
 - よみます (*yomimasu* - read) -> よみました (*yomimashita* - read (past))
 - します (*shimasu* - do) -> しました (*shimashita* - did)
- **Polite Past Negative: 「～ませんでした」 (masen deshita)**
 - To change a polite present/future verb to the polite past negative, change 「～ます」 (*masu*) to 「～ませんでした」 (*masen deshita*). It's like taking the present negative 「～ません」 (*masen*) and adding 「でした」 (*deshita*).
 - Examples:
 - みます (*mimasu* - see/watch) -> みませんでした (*mimasen deshita* - did not see/watch)
 - いきます (*ikimasu* - go) -> いきませんでした (*ikimasen deshita* - did not go)
- **Particle 「と」 (to) - "and" (for nouns), "with" (for people)**
 - You can use 「と」 (*to*) to connect nouns, meaning "and."
 - パンと たまごを たべました。 *Pan to tamago o tabemashita.* (I ate bread and eggs.) (たまご - *tamago*: egg)
 - It can also mean "with (a person)."
 - ともだちと えいがをみました。 *Tomodachi to eiga o mimashita.* (I watched a movie with a friend.) (ともだち - *tomodachi*: friend)

4. Cultural Notes

- **Recounting Experiences:** When people ask what you did, being able to use the past tense is key. Even simple sentences about where you went or what you ate can make for good conversation.
- **「～でした」 (deshita) for Nouns/Adjectives:** For statements that end in 「～です」 (*desu*) (like 「わたしは がくせいです」 - *Watashi wa gakusei desu* - I am a student), the past tense

is 「～でした」 (deshita).

- Example: きのうは あめでした。 (Kinou wa ame deshita.) - Yesterday was rain / It rained yesterday. (あめ - ame: rain) あの レストランは おいしかったです。 (Ano resutoran wa oishikatta desu.) - That restaurant was delicious. (We'll cover adjective past tense more in Lesson 8!)

5. Exercises

1. How do you say "I bought a souvenir"? (souvenir: おみやげ - omiyage)
2. How do you say "I did not drink sake last night"? (sake: おさけ - o-sake; last night: きのうの よる - kinou no yoru or さくばん - sakuban)
3. Translate: "What did you eat this morning?"
4. How do you say "I went to the park with my family last week"? (park: こうえん - kouen; family: かぞく - kazoku)
5. Change to the past affirmative: 「しんぶんを よみます」 (Shinbun o yomimasu - I read the newspaper). (しんぶん - shinbun: newspaper)
6. Change to the past negative: 「ともだちに あいます」 (Tomodachi ni aimasu - I meet my friend). (あいます - aimasu: to meet)
7. Someone asks: 「きのう テレビを みましたか。」 (Kinou terebi o mimashita ka. - Did you watch TV yesterday?) How do you answer "Yes, I watched it."?
8. How do you say "I came to Japan last year."? (Japan: にほん - Nihon)

6. Solutions

1. おみやげを かいました。 (Omiyage o kaimashita.)
2. きのうの よる おさけを のみませんでした。 (Kinou no yoru o-sake o nomimasen deshita.) OR さくばん おさけを のみませんでした。 (Sakuban o-sake o nomimasen deshita.)
3. けさ なにを たべましたか。 (Kesa nani o tabemashita ka.)
4. せんしゅう かぞくと こうえんへ 行きました。 (Senshuu kazoku to kouen e ikimashita.)
5. しんぶんを よみました。 (Shinbun o yomimashita.)
6. ともだちに あいませんでした。 (Tomodachi ni aimasen deshita.)
7. はい、みました。 (Hai, mimashita.)
8. きょねん にほんへ きました。 (Kyonen Nihon e kimashita.) OR きょねん にほんに きました。 (Kyonen Nihon ni kimashita.)

Lesson 7: Ordering Food and Drinks

1. Introduction

Trying local cuisine is a highlight of any trip! This lesson will give you the essential phrases for ordering in restaurants and cafes. Knowing these will make your dining experiences much smoother. Let's learn how to ask for what you want!

2. Key Phrases & Examples

- **Getting Attention / Asking for Menu:**
 - すみません。 *Sumimasen*. (Excuse me. - Use this to call a waiter/waitress.)
 - メニューを ください。 *Menyuu o kudasai*. (Please give me a menu. / Menu, please.) (メニュー - menyuu: menu) 「ください」 (*kudasai*) is a polite way to ask for something.
- **Ordering (General Items):**
 - これをお願いします。 *Kore o onegaishimasu*. (This one, please. / I'll have this.) Used when pointing at a menu item. 「おねがいします」 (*onegaishimasu*) is another polite way to request something, often used for services or orders.
 - ラーメンを ください。 *Raamen o kudasai*. (Ramen, please.)

- コーヒーをおねがいします。 *Koohii o onegaishimasu.* (Coffee, please.)
- **Ordering Specific Quantities (Counters ひとつ - hitotsu, ふたつ - futatsu):**
 - For general items, you can use these native Japanese counters:
 - ひとつ (hitotsu) - one item
 - ふたつ (futatsu) - two items
 - みっつ (mittsu) - three items
 - よっつ (yottsu) - four items
 - いつつ (itsutsu) - five items
 - ビールをひとつください。 *Biiru o hitotsu kudasai.* (One beer, please.) (ビール - biiru: beer)
 - みずをふたつおねがいします。 *Mizu o futatsu onegaishimasu.* (Two waters, please.) (みず - mizu: water)
 - これとこれをください。 *Kore to kore o kudasai.* (This and this, please.) Using 「と」 (to) for "and" with nouns.
- **Asking for Recommendations / Clarifications:**
 - おすすめはなんですか。 *Osusume wa nan desu ka.* (What do you recommend?) (おすすめ - osusume: recommendation)
 - これはなんですか。 *Kore wa nan desu ka.* (What is this?) *Pointing at a food item or picture.*
- **At the End of the Meal:**
 - おかいけいをおねがいします。 *Okaikei o onegaishimasu.* (Check/bill, please.) (おかいけい - okaikei: check/bill)
 - ごちそうさまでした。 *Gochisousama deshita.* (Thank you for the meal. - Said after finishing.) *It expresses gratitude for the food and the effort in preparing it.*
 - おいしかったです。 *Oishikatta desu.* (It was delicious.) (Past tense of おいしいです - oishii desu - it is delicious)

3. Grammar Breakdown

- 「Noun を ください」 (Noun o kudasai) - Please give me Noun.
 - A direct and polite way to ask for a tangible item.
 - Example: フォークをください。 (Fooku o kudasai.) - Please give me a fork. (フォーク - fooku: fork)
- 「Noun を おねがいします」 (Noun o onegaishimasu) - Noun, please / I'd like Noun.
 - Also very polite, often used when placing an order. It can feel slightly softer or more formal than 「ください」 (kudasai) in some ordering contexts.
 - Example: サラダをおねがいします。 (Sarada o onegaishimasu.) - Salad, please. (サラダ - sarada: salad)
- **Using Counters like 「ひとつ」 (hitotsu), 「ふたつ」 (futatsu):**
 - When ordering, you state the item, then the quantity using the counter, then 「ください」 (kudasai) or 「おねがいします」 (onegaishimasu).
 - Structure: **Item を [Number with Counter]** ください/おねがいします。
 - Example: オレンジジュースを みっつ ください。 (Orenji juusu o mittsu kudasai.) - Three orange juices, please. (オレンジジュース - orenji juusu: orange juice)
- 「～かったです」 (-katta desu) - Past Tense of い-adjectives:
 - We saw 「おいしかったです」 (oishikatta desu - was delicious). Adjectives ending in 「い」 (i) (like おいしい - oishii) are called い-adjectives.
 - To make them past tense polite: drop the final 「い」 (i) and add 「かったです」 (katta desu).
 - Example: たのしい (tanoshii - fun) -> たのしかったです (tanoshikatta desu - was fun)

いい (ii - good) -> よかったです (yokatta desu - was good) *This one is irregular!*

- We'll cover adjectives in more detail in Lesson 8.

4. Cultural Notes

- 「いらっしゃいませ！」 (**Irasshaimase!**): You'll hear this greeting, meaning "Welcome!", as soon as you enter most shops and restaurants. You don't need a specific verbal response; a slight nod or smile is fine.
- 「いただきます」 (**Itadakimasu**): Before starting to eat, Japanese people say 「いただきます」 (itadakimasu). It's an expression of gratitude, meaning "I humbly receive." It's polite to say this.
- **Calling Staff**: To get a server's attention, a polite 「すみません」 (Sumimasen) is standard. Some restaurants have call buttons on the table.
- **No Tipping**: Tipping is not customary in Japan. The service is included in the price.
- **Slurping Noodles**: It's okay to slurp noodles like ramen or soba! It's often seen as enjoying the meal and helps cool them down.

5. Exercises

1. You enter a restaurant. How do you politely ask for the menu?
2. You want to order "this one" (pointing to the menu) and "that one" (also pointing). What do you say?
3. How do you order "two coffees"? (coffee: コーヒー - koohii)
4. After a wonderful meal, what two phrases should you say? One for the deliciousness, and one general thank you for the meal.
5. How do you ask for the bill?
6. What does 「おすすめは なんですか」 (Osusume wa nan desu ka) mean?
7. If a dish was "fun" (e.g., a very unique presentation), how would you say "It was fun"? (fun: たのしい - tanoshii)
8. What do you say *before* you start eating your meal?

6. Solutions

1. すみません、メニューをください。 (Sumimasen, menyuu o kudasai.)
2. これとこれをください。 (Kore to kore o kudasai.) OR これとこれをおねがいします。 (Kore to kore o onegaishimasu.)
3. コーヒーをふたつください。 (Koohii o futatsu kudasai.) OR コーヒーをふたつおねがいします。 (Koohii o futatsu onegaishimasu.)
4. おいしかったです。 (Oishikatta desu.) and ごちそうさまでした。 (Gochisousama deshita.)
5. おかいけいをおねがいします。 (Okaikei o onegaishimasu.)
6. "What do you recommend?"
7. たのしかったです。 (Tanoshikatta desu.)
8. いただきます。 (Itadakimasu.)

Lesson 8: Describing Things (Basic Adjectives)

1. Introduction

Want to say that ramen was delicious, the temple was beautiful, or the train was fast? You need adjectives! Adjectives are words that describe nouns. In Japanese, there are two main types. Let's learn how to use them to add more detail to your descriptions.

2. Key Phrases & Examples (い-adjectives)

- い-adjectives (adjectives ending in い - i):
 - おいしい (oishii) - delicious

- この ケーキは おいしいです。 *Kono keeki wa oishii desu.* (This cake is delicious.) (ケーキ - keeki: cake)
- あたらしい (atarashii) - new
 - それは あたらしい じしょです。 *Sore wa atarashii jisho desu.* (That is a new dictionary.) (じしょ - jisho: dictionary)
- おおきい (ookii) - big
 - あの いぬは おおきいです。 *Ano inu wa ookii desu.* (That dog over there is big.) (いぬ - inu: dog)
- ちいさい (chiisai) - small
 - この へやは ちいさいです。 *Kono heya wa chiisai desu.* (This room is small.) (へや - heya: room)
- たかい (takai) - expensive; high
 - ふじさんは たかいです。 *Fuji-san wa takai desu.* (Mt. Fuji is high.) (ふじさん - Fuji-san: Mt. Fuji)
- やすい (yasui) - inexpensive, cheap
 - この シャツは やすいです。 *Kono shatsu wa yasui desu.* (This shirt is cheap.) (シャツ - shatsu: shirt)
- たのしい (tanoshii) - fun, enjoyable
 - りょこうは たのしいです。 *Ryokou wa tanoshii desu.* (The trip is fun.) (りょこう - ryokou: trip)
- さむい (samui) - cold (weather, atmosphere)
 - きょうは さむいです。 *Kyou wa samui desu.* (It's cold today.)
- あつい (atsui) - hot (weather, objects)
 - この スープは あついです。 *Kono suupu wa atsui desu.* (This soup is hot.) (スープ - suupu: soup)
- いい (ii) - good (Special: often uses よい (yoi) for conjugations)
 - てんきがいいですね。 *Tenki ga ii desu ne.* (The weather is good, isn't it?) (てんき - tenki: weather)

Key Phrases & Examples (な-adjectives)

- な-adjectives (adjectives that take な - na before a noun):
 - きれい (kirei) - beautiful, clean (Looks like an い-adjective, but it's a な-adjective!)
 - この はなは きれいです。 *Kono hana wa kirei desu.* (This flower is beautiful.) (はな - hana: flower)
 - きれいな しゃしんですね。 *Kirei na shashin desu ne.* (It's a beautiful photo, isn't it?) (しゃしん - shashin: photo)
 - しずか (shizuka) - quiet
 - としょかんは しずかです。 *Toshokan wa shizuka desu.* (The library is quiet.) (としょかん - toshokan: library)
 - しずかな ところが すきです。 *Shizuka na tokoro ga suki desu.* (I like quiet places.) (ところ - tokoro: place; すき - suki: like)
 - げんき (genki) - healthy, energetic, cheerful
 - やまださんは げんきです。 *Yamada-san wa genki desu.* (Mr. Yamada is energetic/well.)
 - げんきな こどもですね。 *Genki na kodomo desu ne.* (What an energetic child, huh?) (こども - kodomo: child)
 - べんり (benri) - convenient
 - この アプリは べんりです。 *Kono apuri wa benri desu.* (This app is convenient.) (アプリ - apuri: app)

- べんりな ちずをください。 *Benri na chizu o kudasai.* (Please give me a convenient map.) (ちず - chizu: map)

3. Grammar Breakdown

- **Two Types of Adjectives:**

1. **い-adjectives:** End with 「い」 (i) in their dictionary (plain) form (e.g., 「おいしい」 (oishii)).
 - **Present Affirmative (polite):** い-adjective + です (desu)
 - Example: あついです。 (Atsui desu.) - It is hot.
 - **Modifying a Noun:** The い-adjective goes directly before the noun. No change needed.
 - Example: あたらしい ほん (atarashii hon) - a new book.
2. **な-adjectives:** Do *not* end in 「い」 (i) (e.g., 「しずか」 (shizuka)), OR they might look like they end in 「い」 (i) but are exceptions (e.g., 「きれい」 (kirei), 「ゆうめい」 (yuumei - famous)).
 - **Present Affirmative (polite):** な-adjective + です (desu)
 - Example: しずかです。 (Shizuka desu.) - It is quiet.
 - **Modifying a Noun:** The な-adjective needs 「な」 (na) between it and the noun.
 - Example: しずかな へや (shizuka na heya) - a quiet room. きれいな え (kirei na e) - a beautiful picture. (え - e: picture)

- **Negatives and Past Tenses (Brief Introduction):**

- **い-adjectives:**
 - Negative: Change 「い」 (i) to 「くないです」 (ku nai desu) or 「くありません」 (ku arimasen).
 - おいしいです (oishii desu) -> おいしくありません (oishiku nai desu) - is not delicious.
 - Past: Change 「い」 (i) to 「かったです」 (katta desu). (As seen in Lesson 7)
 - おいしいです (oishii desu) -> おいしかったです (oishikatta desu) - was delicious.
 - Past Negative: Change 「い」 (i) to 「なかったです」 (ku nakatta desu) or 「くありませんでした」 (ku arimasen deshita).
 - おいしいです (oishii desu) -> おいしくなかったです (oishiku nakatta desu) - was not delicious.
- **な-adjectives:**
 - Negative: Add 「ではありません」 (dewa arimasen) or 「じゃありません」 (ja arimasen).
 - きれいです (kirei desu) -> きれいではありません (kirei dewa arimasen) - is not beautiful.
 - Past: Add 「でした」 (deshita).
 - きれいです (kirei desu) -> きれいでした (kirei deshita) - was beautiful.
 - Past Negative: Add 「ではありませんでした」 (dewa arimasen deshita) or 「じゃありませんでした」 (ja arimasen deshita).
 - きれいです (kirei desu) -> きれいではありませんでした (kirei dewa arimasen deshita) - was not beautiful.

- **Adverbs 「とても」 (totemo - very) and 「あまり」 (amari - (not) very):**

- 「とても」 (totemo) is used with affirmative statements.
 - Example: この ラーメンは とても おいしいです。 (Kono raamen wa totemo oishii desu.) - This ramen is very delicious.

- 「あまり」(amari) is used with negative statements.
 - Example: この まちは あまりしずかではありません。(Kono machi wa amari shizuka dewa arimasen.) - This town is not very quiet. (まち - machi: town)

4. Cultural Notes

- **Expressing Opinions:** When describing something, especially if it's a compliment (e.g., "delicious!"), Japanese people appreciate it. 「おいしいです！」(Oishii desu!) is a great phrase to use when eating.
- 「～ですね」(～desu ne): Adding 「ね」(ne) at the end of a sentence is like saying "..., isn't it?", "..., right?", or "..., eh?". It invites agreement or softens a statement.
 - Example: あついですね。(Atsui desu ne.) - It's hot, isn't it?

5. Exercises

1. How do you say "This book is interesting"? (interesting: おもしろい - omoshiroi - an い-adjective)
2. How do you say "That temple is famous"? (temple: おてら - otera; famous: ゆうめい - yuumei - a な-adjective)
3. Translate: "The food was not very expensive." (food: たべもの - tabemono; expensive: たかい - takai)
4. How do you say "a quiet park"? (park: こうえん - kouen; quiet: しずか - shizuka)
5. Make this sentence past tense: 「この えいがは たのしいです。」(Kono eiga wa tanoshii desu. - This movie is fun.)
6. Make this sentence negative: 「あの レストランは きれいです。」(Ano resutoran wa kirei desu. - That restaurant is clean/beautiful.)
7. How do you say "It was a good trip"? (good: いい - ii; trip: りょこう - ryokou)
8. What is the difference in how い-adjectives and な-adjectives modify a noun directly?

6. Solutions

1. この ほんは おもしろいです。(Kono hon wa omoshiroi desu.)
2. あの おてらは ゆうめいです。(Ano otera wa yuumei desu.)
3. たべものは あまり たかくなかったです。(Tabemono wa amari takaku nakatta desu.) OR たかくありませんでした。(takaku arimasen deshita.)
4. しずかな こうえん (shizuka na kouen)
5. この えいがは たのしかったです。(Kono eiga wa tanoshikatta desu.)
7. あの レストランは きれいではありません。(Ano resutoran wa kirei dewa arimasen.) OR きれいじゃありません。(kirei ja arimasen.)
8. いい りょこうでした。(Ii ryokou deshita.) OR よい りょこうでした。(Yoi ryokou deshita.) OR りょこうは よかったです。(Ryokou wa yokatta desu.)
9. い-adjectives connect directly to the noun (e.g., あたらしい ほん - atarashii hon). な-adjectives need 「な」(na) between the adjective and the noun (e.g., きれいな え - kirei na e).

Lesson 9: Asking "Why?", "How?", "Who?", "When?" and More

1. Introduction

To understand more and navigate situations better, you need a full set of question words! We've learned 「どこ」(doko - where), 「いくら」(ikura - how much), and 「なん」(nan - what). Now let's add "why," "how," "who," and "when." These will open up more conversational possibilities.

2. Key Phrases & Examples

- **What? (Review)**
 - これは 何ですか。 *Kore wa nan desu ka.* (What is this?)
- **Who?**
 - だれ (dare) - who
 - あの 人は だれですか。 *Ano hito wa dare desu ka.* (Who is that person over there?) (ひと - hito: person)
 - *Polite version of だれ (dare) is どなた (donata).*
 - あのかたは どなたですか。 (*Ano kata wa donata desu ka.*) - Who is that person (polite)? (かた - kata: person (polite))
- **When?**
 - いつ (itsu) - when
 - パーティーは いつですか。 *Paathii wa itsu desu ka.* (When is the party?) (パーティー - paathii: party)
 - たんじょうびは いつですか。 *Tanjoubi wa itsu desu ka.* (When is your birthday?) (たんじょうび - tanjoubi: birthday)
 - *Note: 「いつ」 (itsu) does not usually take the particle 「に」 (ni).*
- **Why?**
 - どうして (doushite) - why
 - なぜ (naze) - why (can be a bit more formal or direct)
 - どうして がっこうへ いきませんでしたか。 *Doushite gakkou e ikimasen deshita ka.* (Why didn't you go to school?) *Response often uses 「～から です」 (~kara desu) - because...*
 - びょうきだったからです。 *Byouki datta kara desu.* (Because I was sick.) (びょうき - byouki: sick; だった - datta: was (plain past of です - desu))
- **How? / By what means?**
 - どうやって (douyatte) - how, in what way
 - えきまで どうやって いきますか。 *Eki made douyatte ikimasu ka.* (How do I get to the station?) (まで - made: until, to) *Response often uses 「～で」 (~de) for means of transport.*
 - バスで いきます。 *Basu de ikimasu.* (You go by bus.) (バス - basu: bus)
- **Which?**
 - どれ (dore) - which (of three or more items)
 - あなたのかばんは どれですか。 *Anata no kaban wa dore desu ka.* (Which is your bag?) (あなた - anata: you)
 - どちら (dochira) - which (of two items); which way/direction (polite "where")
 - コーヒーとおちゃと どちらがいいですか。 *Koohii to ocha to dochira ga ii desu ka.* (Which would you prefer, coffee or tea?) (いい - ii: good)

3. Grammar Breakdown

- **Placement of Question Words:**
 - Unlike English where question words often go to the front, in Japanese, they usually stay in the position where the answer would be.
 - Example: 「パーティーは いつ ですか。」 (*Paathii wa itsu desu ka.*) - The party is *when*? 「あの人は だれ ですか。」 (*Ano hito wa dare desu ka.*) - That person is *who*?
- **Particle 「で」 (de) - By means of / At a place of action:**
 1. **By means of:** Indicates the tool, method, or transportation used.
 - でんしゃで いきます。 (*Densha de ikimasu.*) - I go by train. (でんしゃ - densha:

train)

- はしで たべます。(Hashi de tabemasu.) - I eat with chopsticks. (はし - hashi: chopsticks)

2. **Place of action:** Indicates where an action takes place (different from 「に」 (ni) which indicates existence or destination).

- レストランで ごはんを たべました。(Resutoran de gohan o tabemashita.) - I ate a meal *at* the restaurant.
- としょかんで べんきょうします。(Toshokan de benkyoushimasu.) - I study *at* the library.

● 「～から です」 (~kara desu) - **Because...**

- A common way to answer a 「どうして」 (doushite) or 「なぜ」 (naze) question. 「から」 (kara) means "because."
- Example: あついですから、エアコンを つけました。(Atsui desu kara, eakon o tsukemashita.) - Because it's hot, I turned on the air conditioner. (エアコン - eakon: air conditioner; つけました - tsukemashita: turned on)

4. Cultural Notes

- **Asking "Why?":** While 「どうして」 (doushite) is fine, repeatedly asking "why" can sometimes sound demanding or a bit childlike, especially if you don't know the person well.
- 「どちら」 (**Dochira**) for **Politeness:** As seen with locations, 「どちら」 (dochira) can also be a politer way to ask "who" (instead of だれ - dare, it becomes どなた - donata, but どちらさま - dochira-sama is even more formal) or "where" (instead of どこ - doko). When choosing between two things, 「どちら」 (dochira) is standard.

5. Exercises

1. How do you ask "Who is that person?" (referring to someone near the listener, fairly polite)
2. You want to know when a shop opens. A simpler way to ask might be "When is the shop?" (shop: みせ - mise)
3. How do you ask "How did you come to Japan?"
4. Someone asks you: 「どうして にほんごを べんきょうしますか。」 (Doushite Nihongo o benkyoushimasu ka. - Why do you study Japanese?). How could you start your answer meaning "Because Japanese is interesting.?" (interesting: おもしろい - omoshiroi)
5. What particle is used to indicate the place *where an action occurs*?
6. How do you ask, "What did you buy at the department store?" (department store: デパート - depaato)
7. There are three pens (red, blue, black). How do you ask "Which is your pen?"
8. How would you say "I came by plane.?" (plane: ひこうき - hikouki)

6. Solutions

1. そのかたは どなたですか。(Sono kata wa donata desu ka.) OR そのひとは だれですか。(Sono hito wa dare desu ka.)
2. みせは いつですか。(Mise wa itsu desu ka.) (More naturally: みせは なんじからですか。 - Mise wa nanji kara desu ka. - From what time is the shop open?)
3. どうやって にほんへ きましたか。(Douyatte Nihon e kimashita ka.)
4. にほんごは おもしろいですから。(Nihongo wa omoshiroi desu kara.)
5. 「で」 (de)
6. デパートで なにを かいましたか。(Depaato de nani o kaimashita ka.)
7. あなたのペン は どれですか。(Anata no pen wa dore desu ka.)
8. ひこうきで きました。(Hikouki de kimashita.)

Lesson 10: Expressing Wants and Making Simple Requests (Te-form Basics)

1. Introduction

Knowing how to say what you want, or ask someone to do something, is incredibly useful! This lesson covers how to say "I want (a thing)" and "I want to do (an action)." We'll also get our first taste of a very important verb form called the "te-form," which is used for making requests like "Please do X."

2. Key Phrases & Examples

- **Wanting Things (Noun が ほしいです - ga hoshii desu):**
 - あたらしい カメラが ほしいです。 *Atarashii kamera ga hoshii desu.* (I want a new camera.) カメラ (*kamera*) - camera; ほしい (*hoshii*) - want (for things); acts like an い -adjective.
 - おみずが ほしいです。 *O-mizu ga hoshii desu.* (I want water.)
- **Wanting to Do Actions (Verb Stem + たいです - tai desu):**
 - To say you want to do an action:
 1. Take the 「～ます」 (*masu*) form of the verb (e.g., たべます - *tabemasu*).
 2. Remove 「ます」 (*masu*) to get the verb stem (e.g., たべ - *tabe*).
 3. Add 「たいです」 (*tai desu*) (e.g., たべたいです - *tabetai desu* - I want to eat).
 - すしが たべたいです。 *Sushi ga tabetai desu.* (I want to eat sushi.)
 - えいがが みたいです。 *Eiga ga mitai desu.* (I want to watch a movie.) (みます - *mimasu* -> み - *mi* -> みたい - *mitai*)
 - どこへ いきたいですか。 *Doko e ikitai desu ka.* (Where do you want to go?) (いきます - *ikimasu* -> いき - *iki* -> いきたい - *ikitai*)
- **Making Simple Requests (Verb て-form + ください - te kudasai - Please do...):**
 - The "te-form" is a verb conjugation essential for many patterns. For now, let's learn some common ones as set phrases for requests:
 - みせます (*misemasu* - to show) -> みせて (*misete*)
 - これを みせてください。 *Kore o misete kudasai.* (Please show me this.)
 - まちます (*machimasu* - to wait) -> まって (*matte*)
 - ちょっと まってください。 *Chotto matte kudasai.* (Please wait a moment.) (ちょっと - *chotto*: a little, a moment)
 - いいます (*iimasu* - to say) -> いて (*itte*)
 - もういちど いてください。 *Mou ichido itte kudasai.* (Please say it again.) (もういちど - *mou ichido*: one more time)
 - すわります (*suwarimasu* - to sit) -> すわって (*suwatte*)
 - ここに すわってください。 *Koko ni suwatte kudasai.* (Please sit here.)
 - かきます (*kakimasu* - to write) -> かいて (*kaite*)
 - なまえを かいてください。 *Namae o kaite kudasai.* (Please write your name.)

3. Grammar Breakdown

- 「ほしいです」 (*hoshii desu*) - I want (a thing):
 - Used for tangible items or sometimes abstract things (like time).
 - The thing wanted is usually marked by the particle 「が」 (*ga*).
 - 「ほしい」 (*hoshii*) conjugates like an い-adjective:
 - Negative: ほしくないです (*hoshiku nai desu*) - I don't want.

- Past: ほしかったです (hoshikatta desu) - I wanted.
 - Past Negative: ほしくなかったです (hoshiku nakatta desu) - I didn't want.
- **Verb Stem + 「たいです」 (tai desu) - I want to do (verb):**
 - Used to express your desire to perform an action.
 - The 「～たい」 (tai) part also conjugates like an い-adjective:
 - Negative: ～たくないです (taku nai desu) (e.g., たべたくないです - tabetaku nai desu - I don't want to eat)
 - Past: ～たかったです (takatta desu) (e.g., たべたかったです - tabetakatta desu - I wanted to eat)
 - Past Negative: ～たくなかったです (taku nakatta desu) (e.g., たべたくなかったです - tabetaku nakatta desu - I didn't want to eat)
 - The object of the verb you want to do can be marked with 「を」 (o) or 「が」 (ga). 「が」 (ga) is common with 「～たい」 (tai) to emphasize the desired thing/action.
- **The Te-form (A Glimpse):**
 - The te-form is a crucial verb conjugation used for connecting verbs, making requests, asking permission, describing ongoing actions, and much more.
 - Learning to make the te-form for all verbs is a bigger topic. For now, focus on recognizing and using the te-forms provided in common request patterns like 「～てください」 (～te kudasai).
 - 「**Verb て-form + ください**」 (kudasai): This is the standard polite way to ask someone to do something.
- **Particle 「が」 (ga) vs. 「を」 (o) with 「ほしい」 (hoshii) / 「たい」 (tai):**
 - Generally, 「が」 (ga) is preferred to mark the object of desire with 「ほしい」 (hoshii) and 「～たい」 (tai) forms, as it puts more emphasis on the thing that is wanted. However, 「を」 (o) is sometimes used, especially if the "wanting" is part of a more complex sentence or if the speaker wants to emphasize the action itself more than the object. For beginners, using 「が」 (ga) is a safe bet.

4. Cultural Notes

- **Expressing Your Wants:** While these forms are correct, in some situations, especially when asking for something from someone you don't know well, Japanese people might be more indirect. However, as a traveler, using 「～がほしいです」 (ga hoshii desu) or 「～たいです」 (tai desu) clearly is perfectly fine and understood.
- 「ちょっと」 (Chotto): This word means "a little." 「ちょっとまってください」 (Chotto matte kudasai) is a very common and polite way to say "Please wait a moment."

5. Exercises

1. How do you say "I want a new bag"? (bag: かばん - kaban)
2. How do you say "I want to drink Japanese tea"? (Japanese tea: にほんちゃ - nihoncha or おちゃ - ocha)
3. What does 「なにが かいたいですか。」 (Nani ga kaitai desu ka.) mean? (かいたい - kaitai from かります - kaimasu)
4. You are at a shop. How do you ask the staff to show you a specific item (e.g., "this watch"? (watch: とけい - tokei)
5. How do you politely ask someone to "Please speak slowly"? (speak: はなします - hanashimasu -> te-form はなして - hanashite; slowly: ゆっくり - yukkuri)
6. Change to the negative: 「りょうが したいです。」 (Ryokou ga shitai desu. - I want to travel.) (したい - shitai from します - shimasu)
7. How would you say "I wanted that book"? (that book: そのほん - sono hon)
8. What is the basic structure for asking someone politely to do an action?

6. Solutions

1. あたらしい かばんが ほしいです。(Atarashii kaban ga hoshii desu.)
2. にほんちゃが のみたいです。(Nihoncha ga nomitai desu.) OR おちゃが のみたいです。(Ocha ga nomitai desu.)
3. "What do you want to buy?"
4. このとけいを みせてください。(Kono tokei o misete kudasai.)
5. ゆっくり はなしてください。(Yukkuri hanashite kudasai.)
6. りょこうは したくないです。(Ryokou wa shitaku nai desu.) (Note: Using は (wa) here is natural when negating, implying "As for travel, I don't want to do it.") OR りょこうが したくないです。(Ryokou ga shitaku nai desu.)
7. そのほんが ほしかったです。(Sono hon ga hoshikatta desu.)
8. Verb て-form + ください (kudasai).

BONUS: A Gentle Introduction to Kanji

1. Introduction

You've seen hiragana and katakana. Now, let's talk about the third script: **kanji** (かんじ - **kanji**)! Kanji are characters borrowed from Chinese, and they form the backbone of written Japanese. Each kanji usually has a meaning (or several) and one or more pronunciations. For a traveler, you *don't* need to learn to write or master kanji. However, recognizing a few common ones can be surprisingly helpful for understanding signs, menus, and station names. This lesson is just a tiny peek to make them less mysterious!

2. What are Kanji?

- **Ideograms/Logograms:** Unlike hiragana and katakana which represent sounds (syllables), most kanji represent ideas or words. For example, the kanji 「山」 means "mountain."
- **Why Use Kanji?**
 - **Clarity:** Japanese has many homophones (words that sound the same but have different meanings). Kanji help distinguish them in writing. For example, 「はな」 (hana) can mean "flower" (花) or "nose" (鼻).
 - **Conciseness:** Kanji can convey a lot of meaning in a single character, making sentences shorter than if written purely in kana.
 - **Readability:** Once you get used to them, kanji help break up text and make it easier to read quickly by providing visual cues for meaning.

3. Onyomi and Kunyomi (The Readings)

Most kanji have at least two types of readings (pronunciations):

- **くんよみ (kunyomi - Kun reading / Japanese reading):** This is usually the native Japanese word associated with the kanji's meaning. Kunyomi are often used when a kanji stands alone or is followed by hiragana (called おくりがな - okurigana).
 - Example: The kanji 「山」 (mountain). Its kunyomi is 「やま」 (yama).
 - Example: The kanji 「食」 (eat). Its kunyomi in the verb 「食べる」 (たべる - taberu) is 「た」 (ta).
- **おんよみ (onyomi - On reading / Chinese-based reading):** This is derived from the original Chinese pronunciation of the character (though it has changed over time). Onyomi are often used when kanji are combined to form compound words.
 - Example: 「山」 (mountain). One onyomi is 「サン」 (SAN) as in 「富士山」 (ふじサン - Fuji-san - Mt. Fuji).

- Example: 「食」 (eat). One onyomi is 「シヨク」 (SHOKU) as in 「食事」 (シヨクジ - shokuji - meal).

Don't worry too much about these terms now! Just be aware that one kanji can be read in different ways depending on the context.

4. Some Common Kanji for Travelers

Here are a few simple and common kanji you might encounter. Recognizing these can be helpful!

Kanji	Common Kunyomi (Hiragana)	Common Onyomi (Katakana)	Meaning(s)	Example Word (with Hiragana Reading)
一	ひと(つ) (hito(tsu))	イチ (ICHI), イツ (ITSU)	one	いちがつ (ichigatsu) - January
二	ふた(つ) (futa(tsu))	ニ (NI)	two	にがつ (nigatsu) - February
三	み(っつ) (mi(ttsu))	サン (SAN)	three	さんかく (sankaku) - triangle
人	ひと (hito)	ジン (JIN), ニン (NIN)	person	にほんじん (nihonjin) - Japanese person
口	くち (kuchi)	コウ (KOU), ク (KU)	mouth, entrance	いりぐち (iriguchi) - entrance
出	で(る) (de(ru))	シュツ (SHUTSU)	exit, go out	でぐち (deguchi) - exit
入	はい(る) (hai(ru)), い(る) (i(ru))	ニュウ (NYUU)	enter, put in	いりぐち (iriguchi) - entrance
日	ひ (hi), か (ka)	ニチ (NICHI), ジツ (JITSU)	day, sun	きょうはなんにち (kyou wa nan nichi) - what date is it?
月	つき (tsuki)	ゲツ (GETSU), ガツ (GATSU)	moon, month	らいげつ (raigetsu) - next month
大	おお(きい) (oo(kii))	ダイ (DAI), タイ (TAI)	big, large	だいがく (daigaku) - university
小	ちい(さい) (chii(sai)), こ (ko), お (o)	ショウ (SHOU)	small, little	しょうがっこう (shougakkou) - elementary school
上	うえ (ue), あ(がる) (a(garu))	ジョウ (JOU)	up, above, on	つくえのうえ (tsukue no ue) - on the desk
下	した (shita), さ(がる) (sa(garu))	カ (KA), ゲ (GE)	down, below, under	いすのした (isu no shita) - under the chair
左	ひだり (hidari)	サ (SA)	left	ひだりがわ (hidarigawa) - left side

Kanji	Common Kunyomi (Hiragana)	Common Onyomi (Katakana)	Meaning(s)	Example Word (with Hiragana Reading)
右	みぎ (migi)	ウ (U), ユウ (YUU)	right	みぎがわ (migigawa) - right side
円	まる(い) (maru(i))	エン (EN)	yen, circle	ごひゃくえん (gohyaku en) - 500 yen
見	み(る) (mi(ru))	ケン (KEN)	see, look, watch	はなみをみる (hanami o miru) - see cherry blossoms
食	た(べる) (ta(beru))	ショク (SHOKU)	eat, food	たべもの (tabemono) - food
何	なに (nani), なん (nan)	カ (KA)	what	これはなに (kore wa nani) - what is this?
時	とき (toki)	ジ (JI)	time, hour	なんじ (nanji) - what time?
駅	(none common)	エキ (EKI)	station	とうきょうえき (Toukyou eki) - Tokyo Station

5. Tips for Travelers and Kanji

- **Don't Panic!** You are not expected to read all kanji. Most important signs (especially in tourist areas, airports, and major train stations) will have hiragana, romaji, and often English.
- **Look for Patterns:** You might start noticing that 「口」 (kuchi - mouth) often appears in words related to entrances (入口 - iriguchi) and exits (出口 - deguchi).
- **Use a Dictionary App:** Apps like Google Translate (with camera function) or Jisho.org can be very helpful if you encounter a kanji you want to understand.
- **Focus on Kana First:** Your knowledge of hiragana and katakana is your primary tool. Many things are written in kana, or kanji will have hiragana (called ふりがな - furigana) written above or beside them to show the pronunciation.

6. This is Just the Beginning!

Learning kanji is a long journey, usually involving memorizing hundreds or even thousands for fluency. This lesson was just to give you a little familiarity. Enjoy spotting these few characters during your travels!

Vocabulary Appendix

I. Essential Courtesy & Basic Phrases

A. Essential Courtesy Phrases

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
おはようございます。	Ohayou gozaimasu.	Good morning.	おはようございます。	Good morning.
こんにちは。	Konnichiwa.	Hello. / Good afternoon.	こんにちは。	Hello.
こんばんは。	Konbanwa.	Good evening.	こんばんは。	Good evening.
さようなら。	Sayounara.	Goodbye.	さようなら。	Goodbye.
じゃあ、また	Jaa, mata	Well then, see you.	じゃあ、また。	Well then, see you.
またあした	Mata ashita	See you tomorrow.	またあした。	See you tomorrow.
おやすみなさい。	Oyasuminasai.	Good night.	おやすみなさい。	Good night.
ありがとうございます。	Arigatou gozaimasu.	Thank you very much.	ありがとうございます。	Thank you very much.
ありがとう	Arigatou	Thanks.	ありがとう。	Thanks.
どういたしまして。	Dou itashimashite.	You're welcome.	どういたしまして。	You're welcome.
すみません。	Sumimasen.	Excuse me. / I'm sorry. / Thank you for your trouble.	すみません、メニューをください。	Excuse me, a menu please.
はい。	Hai.	Yes.	はい、わかります。	Yes, I understand.
いいえ。	Iie.	No.	いいえ、ちがいます。	No, that's wrong.
はじめまして。	Hajimemashite.	Nice to meet you for the first time.	はじめまして。	Nice to meet you for the first time.
わたしは [Your Name] です。	Watashi wa [Your Name] desu.	I am [Your Name].	わたしはマイクです。	I am Mike.
[Country] からきました。	[Country] kara kimashita.	I came from [Country].	アメリカからきました。	I came from America.
アメリカ	Amerika	America	わたしはアメリカからきました。	I came from America.
イギリス	Igirisu	UK	イギリスからきました。	I came from the UK.
カナダ	Kanada	Canada	カナダからきました。	I came from Canada.
オーストラリア	Oosutoraria	Australia	オーストラリアからきました。	I came from Australia.
ドイツ	Doitsu	Germany	ドイツからきました。	I came from Germany.

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
フランス	Furansu	France	フランスからきました。	I came from France.
ちゅうごく	Chuugoku	China	ちゅうごくからきました。	I came from China.
かんこく	Kankoku	South Korea	かんこくからきました。	I came from South Korea.
どうぞよろしくおねがいします。	Douzo yoroshiku onegaishimasu.	Pleased to make your acquaintance. / Please be kind to me. / I look forward to our good relationship.	どうぞよろしくおねがいします。	Pleased to make your acquaintance.
こちらこそよろしくおねがいします。	Kochira koso yoroshiku onegaishimasu.	Likewise, pleased to make your acquaintance.	こちらこそよろしくおねがいします。	Likewise, pleased to make your acquaintance.
おなまえはなんですか。	O-namae wa nan desu ka.	What is your name?	おなまえはなんですか。	What is your name?
なまえ	namae	name	なまえをかいてください。	Please write your name.
めいし	meishi	Business Cards	めいしをこうかんします。	I will exchange business cards.

B. Common Request Phrases

This subsection provides practical polite request patterns, primarily utilizing **~kudasai (ください)**, which is fundamental for politely asking for items or actions.

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
ください	kudasai	Please give me. / Please do.	メニューをください。	Please give me a menu.
おねがいします	onegaishimasu	Please. / I'd like.	コーヒーをおねがいします。	Coffee, please.
これをお願いします。	Kore o onegaishimasu.	This one, please. / I'll have this.	これをおねがいします。	I'll have this one, please.
ちょっとまってください。	Chotto matte kudasai.	Please wait a moment.	ちょっとまってください。	Please wait a moment.
もういちどいってください。	Mou ichido itte kudasai.	Please say it again.	もういちどいってください。	Please say it again.
これをみてください。	Kore o misete kudasai.	Please show me this.	これをみてください。	Please show me this.
ここにすわってください。	Koko ni suwatte kudasai.	Please sit here.	ここにすわってください。	Please sit here.

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
なまえを かいてください。	Namae o kaite kudasai.	Please write your name.	なまえをかいてください。	Please write your name.
ゆっくり はなしてください。	Yukkuri hanashite kudasai.	Please speak slowly.	ゆっくりはなしてください。	Please speak slowly.
どうぞ	Douzo	Please go ahead. / Here you are.	こちらへどうぞ。	This way, please.
こちらへどうぞ。	Kochira e douzo.	This way, please.	こちらへどうぞ。	This way, please.
どうぞおはいりください。	Douzo ohairi kudasai.	Please come in.	どうぞおはいりください。	Please come in.

The pattern of using a verb's te-form followed by **ください (kudasai)** is a fundamental grammatical structure for making polite requests. While the full intricacies of te-form conjugations are extensive, recognizing and utilizing common phrases like **みせてください (misete kudasai)** (please show me) or **まってください (matte kudasai)** (please wait) empowers travelers to make a wide range of practical requests. This structure allows for dynamic communication, enabling individuals to adapt and formulate new requests simply by knowing the te-form of a relevant verb, moving beyond mere memorization to a more generative understanding of the language.

Furthermore, there are subtle differences in politeness and directness among request phrases. **~ください (~kudasai)** is a direct and polite way to ask for a tangible item, such as a menu. In contrast, **~をおねがいします (~o onegaishimasu)** is also very polite and frequently used for ordering or requesting services, often conveying a slightly softer or more formal tone. The word *onegaishimasu* originates from a verb meaning "to hope" or "to wish," adding a nuanced sense of deference to the request. Additionally, **どうぞ (Douzo)** is used when offering something or inviting someone to proceed, such as saying "this way, please" when guiding someone. Being aware of these distinctions enables travelers to choose the most appropriate phrasing for different social contexts, enhancing their interactions and demonstrating a deeper appreciation for Japanese etiquette.

II. Nouns & Adjectives for Practical Use

This section provides essential nouns and adjectives that are indispensable for navigating one's surroundings, discussing food, shopping, and describing people and things encountered during travels.

A. Around Town & Directions

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
どこ	doko	Where	トイレはどこですか。	Where is the toilet?
トイレ	toire	Toilet	トイレはどこですか。	Where is the toilet?
えき	eki	Station	えきはどこですか。	Where is the station?

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
ここ	koko	Here (place near speaker)	わたしのホテルはここです。	My hotel is here.
そこ	soko	There (place near listener, or just mentioned)	ゆうびんきょくはそこです。	The post office is there.
あそこ	asoko	Over there (place distant from both)	レストランはあそこです。	The restaurant is over there.
ゆうびんきょく	yuubinkyoku	Post office	ゆうびんきょくはどこですか。	Where is the post office?
レストラン	resutoran	Restaurant	レストランはあそこです。	The restaurant is over there.
コンビニ	konbini	Convenience store	ちかくにコンビニがありますか。	Is there a convenience store nearby?
ちかく	chikaku	Nearby	ちかくにびょういんがありますか。	Is there a hospital nearby?
まえ	mae	Front	えきのまえにいます。	I am in front of the station.
うしろ	ushiro	Back, behind	えきのうしろです。	It's behind the station.
うえ	ue	On, above	テーブルのうえにあります。	It is on the table.
した	shita	Under, below	いすのしたにあります。	It is under the chair.
みぎ	migi	Right	みぎにまがってください。	Please turn right.
みぎがわ	migigawa	Right side	みぎがわにあります。	It is on the right side.
ひだり	hidari	Left	ひだりにまがってください。	Please turn left.
ひだりがわ	hidarigawa	Left side	ひだりがわにあります。	It is on the left side.
なか	naka	Inside	はこのなかにあります。	It is inside the box.
となり	tonari	Next to (for similar things)	ぎんこうのとなりにスーパーがあります。	There is a supermarket next to the bank.
ぎんこう	ginkou	Bank	ぎんこうはどこですか。	Where is the bank?
スーパー	suupaa	Supermarket	スーパーへいきます。	I will go to the supermarket.
ホテル	hoteru	Hotel	わたしのホテルはここです。	My hotel is here.
でぐち	deguchi	Exit	でぐちはどこです。	Where is the exit?

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
			か。	
いりぐち	iriguchi	Entrance	いりぐちはあそこです。	The entrance is over there.
まっすぐ	massugu	Straight ahead	まっすぐ行ってください。	Please go straight.
びょういん	byouin	Hospital	びょういんはどこですか。	Where is the hospital?
こうえん	kouen	Park	こうえんであそびます。	I will play in the park.
みせ	mise	Shop	みせはいつですか。	When is the shop open?
ちず	chizu	Map	べんりなちずをください。	Please give me a convenient map.
でんしゃ	densha	Train	でんしゃでいきます。	I will go by train.
バス	basu	Bus	バスでいきます。	I will go by bus.
タクシー	takushii	Taxi	タクシーでいきます。	I will go by taxi.
ひこうき	hikouki	Plane	ひこうきでいきます。	I will go by plane.
たてもの	tatemono	Building	あのたてものはなんですか。	What is that building over there?

When inquiring about locations, Japanese offers different levels of politeness. While **どこ (doko)** is a standard "where," more polite alternatives such as **どちら (dochira)** exist, particularly when addressing strangers or service staff. For example, asking **トイレはどちらですか (Toire wa dochira desu ka)** is considered a very polite way to ask for the toilet. This subtle distinction in word choice, beyond just using polite verb endings, demonstrates a deeper understanding and respect for Japanese social norms, which can lead to more helpful and patient responses from locals.

Furthermore, the inclusion of numerous positional words such as **まえ (mae)** (front), **うしろ (ushiro)** (back), **うえ (ue)** (on/above), and **した (shita)** (under/below) is highly practical for travelers. These terms, when combined with gestures or pointing, can be incredibly effective in overcoming language barriers. For instance, if verbally explaining a location becomes challenging, simply pointing and saying "migi" (right) can convey the intended direction. This highlights that effective communication for travelers extends beyond complete sentences, incorporating simple vocabulary and non-verbal cues to navigate and understand their surroundings.

B. Food & Dining

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
みず	mizu	Water	みずをふたつおね	Two waters,

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
			がいします。	please.
おちゃ	ocha	Tea	おちゃをのみます。	I will drink tea.
にほんちゃ	nihoncha	Japanese tea	にほんちゃをのみたいです。	I want to drink Japanese tea.
コーヒー	koohii	Coffee	コーヒーをのみます。	I drink coffee.
ビール	biiru	Beer	ビールをひとつください。	One beer, please.
ごはん	gohan	Cooked rice / Meal / Food in general	ごはんをたべました。	I ate a meal.
にく	niku	Meat	わたしはにくをたべません。	I don't eat meat.
さかな	sakana	Fish	わたしはさかなをたべません。	I don't eat fish.
やさい	yasai	Vegetables	やさいをたべます。	I eat vegetables.
おいしい	oishii	Delicious	このケーキはおいしいです。	This cake is delicious.
おいしかったです。	Oishikatta desu.	It was delicious.	ラーメンはおいしかったです。	The ramen was delicious.
からい	karai	Spicy	このカレーはからいですね！	This curry is spicy, isn't it!
あまい	amai	Sweet	このケーキはあまいです。	This cake is sweet.
あつい	atsui	Hot (weather, objects)	このスープはあついです。	This soup is hot.
さむい	samui	Cold (weather, atmosphere)	きょうはさむいです。	It's cold today.
つめたい	tsumetai	Cold (to the touch, for inanimate objects)	つめたいみずをください。	Please give me cold water.
メニュー	menyuu	Menu	メニューをください。	Please give me a menu.
おかいけい	okaikai	Check / Bill	おかいけいをおねがいします。	Check, please.
アレルギー	arerugii	Allergy	アレルギーがあります。	I have an allergy.
おすすめ	osusume	Recommendation	おすすめはなんですか。	What do you recommend?
ごちそうさまでした。	Gochisousama deshita.	Thank you for the meal.	ごちそうさまでした。	Thank you for the meal.
いただきます。	Itadakimasu.	I humbly receive.	いただきます。	I humbly receive.
ラーメン	raamen	Ramen	ラーメンをたべましたか。	Did you eat ramen?
すし	sushi	Sushi	すしがたべたいです。	I want to eat sushi.

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
			す。	
たまご	tamago	Egg	パンとたまごをたべました。	I ate bread and eggs.
パン	pan	Bread	まいにちパンをたべます。	I eat bread every day.
おさけ	o-sake	Sake	おさけをのみませんでした。	I did not drink sake.
フォーク	fooku	Fork	フォークをください。	Please give me a fork.
サラダ	sarada	Salad	サラダをおねがいします。	Salad, please.
オレンジジュース	orenji juusu	Orange juice	オレンジジュースをみってください。	Three orange juices, please.

In Japanese dining culture, expressing appreciation extends beyond simply stating that food is delicious. Phrases like ごちそうさまでした (**Gochisousama deshita**), said after finishing a meal, convey gratitude not only for the food itself but also for the effort involved in its preparation and serving. Similarly, いただきます (**Itadakimasu**), spoken before eating, is an expression of humble reception and appreciation for the life that has been given for the meal. Using these culturally significant phrases demonstrates a deep respect for Japanese traditions, fostering more authentic and positive interactions with restaurant staff and hosts.

Furthermore, Japanese distinguishes between different types of "hot" and "cold" that are crucial for practical communication. While あつい (**atsui**) can refer to hot weather or objects in general, つめたい (**tsumetai**) specifically describes inanimate objects that are cold to the touch, such as water. This contrasts with さむい (**samui**), which refers to cold weather or atmosphere. For a traveler, understanding this precision is essential; for instance, asking for "cold water" requires tsumetai mizu, not samui mizu. This linguistic specificity helps prevent misunderstandings, especially when ordering drinks or describing food temperatures, leading to a more comfortable and satisfying experience.

C. Shopping & Services

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
いくら	ikura	How much money	これはいくらですか。	How much is this?
えん	en	Yen	これはさんぜんえんです。	This is 3,000 yen.
たかい	takai	Expensive; high	このとけいはたかいです。	This watch is expensive.
やすい	yasui	Inexpensive, cheap	このシャツはやすいです。	This shirt is cheap.
かばん	kaban	Bag	そのかばんはすてきですね。	That bag is lovely, isn't it?
おみやげ	omiyage	Souvenir	おみやげをかいま	I bought a

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
			した。	souvenir.
サイズ	saizu	Size	もうひとつうえのサイズはありますか。	Do you have one size bigger?
げんきん	genkin	Cash	げんきんでしはらいます。	I will pay with cash.
カード	kaado	Credit card	カードでしはらいます。	I will pay with a card.
クレジットカード	kurejittokaado	Credit card	クレジットカードはつかえますか。	Can I use a credit card?
レシート	reshiito	Receipt	レシートをください。	Please give me a receipt.
りょうしゅうしょ	ryoushuusho	Receipt	りょうしゅうしょをください。	Please give me a receipt.
もうひとつ上のサイズはありますか。	Mou hitotsu ue no saizu wa arimasu ka.	Do you have one size bigger?	もうひとつうえのサイズはありますか。	Do you have one size bigger?
もうひとつ大きいサイズはありますか。	Mou hitotsu ookii saizu wa arimasu ka.	Do you have one size bigger?	もうひとつおおきいサイズはありますか。	Do you have one size bigger?
もうひとつ下のサイズはありますか。	Mou hitotsu shita no saizu wa arimasu ka.	Do you have one size smaller?	もうひとつしたのサイズはありますか。	Do you have one size smaller?
もうひとつ小さいサイズはありますか。	Mou hitotsu chiisai saizu wa arimasu ka.	Do you have one size smaller?	もうひとつちいさいサイズはありますか。	Do you have one size smaller?
これにします。	Kore ni shimasu.	I'll take this.	これにします。	I'll take this.
あたらしい	atarashii	New	あたらしいくつをかいます。	I will buy new shoes.
ふるい	furui	Old (for things, not people)	このほんはふるいです。	This book is old.
くつ	kutsu	Shoes	あたらしいくつをかいます。	I will buy new shoes.
シャツ	shatsu	Shirt	このシャツはやすいです。	This shirt is cheap.
とけい	tokei	Watch/clock	このとけいはいくらですか。	How much is this watch?
ぼうし	boushi	Hat	そのぼうしはいくらですか。	How much is that hat?
カメラ	kamera	Camera	あたらしいカメラがほしいです。	I want a new camera.

When shopping, having precise phrases for inquiries can significantly improve the experience. For example, knowing how to ask もうひとつ上のサイズはありますか (**Mou hitotsu ue no saizu wa arimasu ka**) (Do you have one size bigger?) allows travelers to articulate their needs clearly,

rather than relying on vague gestures. This level of specificity reduces potential confusion and streamlines transactions, highlighting how even small linguistic details can have a significant impact on practical interactions.

Beyond specific phrases, understanding the cultural norms surrounding payments and tipping is essential. In Japan, tipping is not customary, and the price displayed is the final price.

Additionally, it is common practice to place money on a small tray at the cashier rather than handing it directly to the staff, with change also being returned on the tray. These practices, while not directly vocabulary, are crucial behavioral "phrases" that prevent social missteps. The absence of tipping also implies a high standard of service that is inherently included in the price, reflecting a valued aspect of Japanese customer service. Adhering to these norms demonstrates respect for local customs and contributes to more positive interactions.

D. People & General Descriptors

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
ひと	hito	Person	あのひとはだれですか。	Who is that person over there?
かた	kata	Person (polite)	あのかたはどなたですか。	Who is that person (polite)?
こども	kodomo	Child	げんきなこどもですね。	What an energetic child, huh?
ともだち	tomodachi	Friend	ともだちとえいがをみました。	I watched a movie with a friend.
かぞく	kazoku	Family	かぞくとかうえんへいきました。	I went to the park with my family.
あなた	anata	You	あなたのかばんはどれですか。	Which is your bag?
わたし	watashi	I	わたしはマイクです。	I am Mike.
~さん	~san	Mr./Ms./Mrs.	やまださん。	Mr. Yamada.
おおきい	ookii	Big	あのいぬはおおきいです。	That dog over there is big.
ちいさい	chiisai	Small	このへやはちいさいです。	This room is small.
あたらしい	atarashii	New	それはあたらしいじしょです。	That is a new dictionary.
ふるい	furui	Old (for objects, not people)	このくるまはふるいです。	This car is old.
きれい	kirei	Beautiful, clean (な-adjective)	このはなはきれいです。	This flower is beautiful.
きたない	kitanai	Dirty (い-adjective)	このへやはきたないです。	This room is dirty.
しずか	shizuka	Quiet (な-adjective)	としょかんはしずかです。	The library is quiet.
にぎやか	nigiyaka	Lively, bustling, busy (な-adjective)	このまちにはにぎやかです。	This town is lively.

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
いそがしい	isogashii	Busy (い-adjective)	きょうはいそがしいです。	I am busy today.
ひま	hima	Free (not busy), spare time (な-adjective)	きょうはひまです。	I am free today.
いい	ii	Good (い-adjective)	てんきがいいですね。	The weather is good, isn't it?
よかった	yokatta	Was good (irregular past of いい)	えいがはよかったです。	The movie was good.
わるい	warui	Bad (い-adjective)	このパソコンはわるいです。	This computer is bad.
やさしい	yasashii	Easy (い-adjective)	このもんだいはやさしいです。	This problem is easy.
むずかしい	muzukashii	Difficult (い-adjective)	にほんごはむずかしいです。	Japanese is difficult.
むり	muri	Impossible (な-adjective)	それはむりです。	That is impossible.
おわり	owari	End, finished	えいがのおわりです。	It is the end of the movie.
まだです	mada desu	Not yet finished / Not yet	しゅくだいはまだです。	The homework is not yet finished.
げんき	genki	Healthy, energetic, cheerful (な-adjective)	やまださんはげんきです。	Mr. Yamada is energetic.
おもしろい	omoshiroi	Interesting (い-adjective)	このほんはおもしろいです。	This book is interesting.
すてき	suteki	Lovely, wonderful (な-adjective)	すてきなかばんですね。	It's a lovely bag, isn't it?
べんり	benri	Convenient (な-adjective)	このアプリはべんりです。	This app is convenient.
すき	suki	Like (な-adjective, used with が)	しずかなところがすきです。	I like quiet places.
ほしい	hoshii	Want (for things) (い-adjective)	あたらしいカメラがほしいです。	I want a new camera.
じしょ	jisho	Dictionary	それはあたらしいじしょです。	That is a new dictionary.
いぬ	inu	Dog	あのいぬはおおきいです。	That dog over there is big.
へや	heya	Room	このへやはちいさいです。	This room is small.
ふじさん	Fuji-san	Mt. Fuji	ふじさんはたかいです。	Mt. Fuji is high.
てんき	tenki	Weather	てんきがいいです	The weather is

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
			ね。	good, isn't it?
はな	hana	Flower	このはなはきれいです。	This flower is beautiful.
しゃしん	shashin	Photo	きれいなしゃしんですね。	It's a beautiful photo, isn't it?
としょかん	toshokan	Library	としょかんはしずかです。	The library is quiet.
ところ	tokoro	Place	しずかなところが好きです。	I like quiet places.
アプリ	apuri	App	このアプリはべんりです。	This app is convenient.
え	e	Picture	きれいなえですね。	It's a beautiful picture, isn't it?
おてら	otera	Temple	あのてらゆうめいです。	That temple is famous.
ゆうめい	yuumei	Famous (な-adjective)	あのてらゆうめいです。	That temple is famous.
たべもの	tabemono	Food	たべものはあまりたかくなかったです。	The food was not very expensive.
まち	machi	Town	このまちはあまりしずかではありません。	This town is not very quiet.

When describing age, it is important to note that ふるい (**furui**), meaning "old," is typically used for objects and not for people. Using furui to describe a person can be perceived as impolite, as it might imply "aged" or "old-fashioned" in a negative sense. This highlights a crucial cultural nuance where direct translation can lead to social missteps. Japanese often employs different vocabulary and expressions for age depending on whether one is referring to a person or an inanimate object. For individuals, more respectful terms like toshi o totta hito (older person) are generally preferred. Understanding this distinction is vital for travelers to avoid unintentional offense and to engage in socially appropriate communication.

Japanese adjectives are categorized into two main types: い-**adjectives (i-adjectives)** and な-**adjectives (na-adjectives)**. This classification dictates how they modify nouns and how they are conjugated for negative or past tenses. For instance, きれい (**kirei**), despite ending in the i sound, functions as a na-adjective, requiring the particle な (na) when directly preceding a noun (e.g., きれいなはな - beautiful flower). This grammatical structure is fundamental for constructing accurate and natural-sounding descriptive sentences. For travelers, grasping this classification is essential for correctly applying adjectives, enabling them to describe their observations and feelings with greater precision and fluency.

III. Numbers & Time

A. Numbers

This subsection covers basic numbers, examples of more complex numbers, general counters,

people counters, and the "~ban" (ばん) number suffix, enabling travelers to handle prices, quantities, and sequences effectively.

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
いち	ichi	1	いちえんです。	It's 1 yen.
に	ni	2	にえんです。	It's 2 yen.
さん	san	3	さんえんです。	It's 3 yen.
よん	yon	4	よんえんです。	It's 4 yen.
し	shi	4	しがつ。	April.
ご	go	5	ごえんです。	It's 5 yen.
ろく	roku	6	ろくえんです。	It's 6 yen.
なな	nana	7	ななえんです。	It's 7 yen.
しち	shichi	7	しちがつ。	July.
はち	hachi	8	はちえんです。	It's 8 yen.
きゅう	kyuu	9	きゅうえんです。	It's 9 yen.
く	ku	9	くがつ。	September.
じゅう	juu	10	じゅうえんです。	It's 10 yen.
じゅういち	juuichi	11	じゅういちえんです。	It's 11 yen.
にじゅう	nijuu	20	にじゅうえんです。	It's 20 yen.
さんじゅうご	sanjuugo	35	さんじゅうごえんです。	It's 35 yen.
ひゃく	hyaku	100	ひゃくえんです。	It's 100 yen.
せん	sen	1,000	せんえんです。	It's 1,000 yen.
いちまん	ichiman	10,000	いちまんえんです。	It's 10,000 yen.
にまん	niman	20,000	にまんえんです。	It's 20,000 yen.
さんまん	sanman	30,000	さんまんえんです。	It's 30,000 yen.
さんびゃく	sanbyaku	300	さんびゃくえんです。	It's 300 yen.
ろっぴゃく	roppyaku	600	ろっぴゃくえんです。	It's 600 yen.
はっぴゃく	happyaku	800	はっぴゃくえんです。	It's 800 yen.
さんぜん	sanzen	3,000	さんぜんえんです。	It's 3,000 yen.
はっせん	hassen	8,000	はっせんえんです。	It's 8,000 yen.
ひとつ	hitotsu	One item (general counter)	ビールをひとつください。	One beer, please.
ふたつ	futatsu	Two items (general counter)	みずをふたつおねがいします。	Two waters, please.
みっつ	mittsu	Three items (general counter)	オレンジジュースをみっつください。	Three orange juices, please.
よっつ	yottsu	Four items (general counter)	りんごをよっつください。	Please give me four apples.
いつつ	itsutsu	Five items (general counter)	いつつください。	Please give me five.

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
ひとり	hitori	One person	ひとりでいきます。	I will go alone.
ふたり	futari	Two people	ふたりでいきます。	Two people will go.
~にん	~nin	Counter for people	さんにんいます。	There are three people.
~ばん	~ban	Number suffix for simple numbers or order	じゅうばんです。	It's number 10.

Japanese numbers often undergo sound changes when combined with certain units or other numbers, which is crucial for accurate comprehension. For example, 300 is pronounced **さんびゃく (sanbyaku)**, not sanhyaku, and 600 becomes **ろっぴゃく (roppyaku)**, not rokuhyaku. These phonetic shifts are not mere quirks but are fundamental to how numbers are spoken and understood in Japan. For travelers, recognizing and practicing these specific sound changes is essential to avoid misunderstandings, especially when dealing with prices, quantities, or numerical sequences. This means that simply knowing the base numbers is insufficient; one must also learn the specific phonetic adaptations that occur in various contexts.

Beyond basic numbers, Japanese frequently employs specific counters based on the type of object or entity being counted. For instance, **ひとつ (hitotsu)** and **ふたつ (futatsu)** are used for general items, while **ひとり (hitori)** and **ふたり (futari)** are used for counting people. This system differs significantly from English, where a single numerical term often suffices for various items. For travelers, mastering these general and people-specific counters is a practical necessity for ordering multiple items, stating the number of people in their party, or understanding quantities in daily transactions. This highlights a structural difference in numerical expression that requires dedicated practice for natural and effective communication.

B. Time & Dates

This subsection covers basic terms for days, weeks, and relative time expressions, including common counters for hours and minutes, enabling travelers to manage their schedule and understand timings effectively.

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
きょう	kyou	Today	きょうはさむいです。	It's cold today.
あした	ashita	Tomorrow	あしたきょうとへいきます。	Tomorrow, I will go to Kyoto.
きのう	kinou	Yesterday	きのうえいがをみました。	I watched a movie yesterday.
おととい	ototoi	The day before yesterday	おとといすしをたべませんでした。	I did not eat sushi the day before yesterday.
あさ	asa	Morning	あさごはんをたべます。	I eat breakfast.
けさ	kesa	This morning	けさコーヒーをのみ	I drank coffee this

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
			ました。	morning.
ごご	gogo	Afternoon	ごごにいきます。	I will go in the afternoon.
よる	yoru	Evening / Night	こんばんしゅくだいをします。	I will do my homework tonight.
いま	ima	Now	いまなんじですか。	What time is it now?
あとで	atode	Later / Later on / Afterwards	あとでいきます。	I will go later.
せんしゅう	senshuu	Last week	せんしゅうきょうとへいきました。	I went to Kyoto last week.
せんげつ	sengetsu	Last month	せんげつにほんへきました。	I came to Japan last month.
きょねん	kyonen	Last year	きょねんにほんへきました。	I came to Japan last year.
にちようび	nichiyoubi	Sunday	にちようびにえいがをみます。	I will watch a movie on Sunday.
げつようび	getsuyoubi	Monday	げつようびにしごとがあります。	I have work on Monday.
かようび	kayoubi	Tuesday	かようびにやすみます。	I will rest on Tuesday.
すいようび	suiyoubi	Wednesday	すいようびにパーティーがあります。	There is a party on Wednesday.
もくようび	mokuyoubi	Thursday	もくようびにでかけます。	I will go out on Thursday.
きんようび	kinyoubi	Friday	きんようびにかいものします。	I will shop on Friday.
どようび	doyoubi	Saturday	どようびにこうえんへいきます。	I will go to the park on Saturday.
~じ	~ji	Hour / o'clock	ろくじにおきます。	I wake up at 6 o'clock.
~ふん	~fun	Minute	ごふんです。	It's 5 minutes.
~ぷん	~pun	Minute	じゅっぷんです。	It's 10 minutes.
なんじ	nanji	What time?	いまなんじですか。	What time is it now?
はん	han	Half (for time)	ろくじはんです。	It's 6:30.
こんばん	konban	Tonight	こんばんしゅくだいをします。	I will do my homework tonight.

The particle に (**ni**) plays a significant role as a "Specific Time Marker" in Japanese, indicating a precise point in time when an action occurs. For instance, stating ろくじにおきます (**Rokuji ni okimasu**) (I wake up at 6 o'clock) clearly specifies the time of the action. This grammatical precision is crucial for travelers, as it enables them to accurately make and understand appointments, interpret train schedules, and ascertain opening hours. Unlike English, where

prepositions like "on" or "at" for time can sometimes be omitted or implied, the consistent use of *ni* for specific times and days in Japanese ensures clarity in planning and helps avoid misunderstandings that could lead to missed opportunities or frustration. This grammatical point directly impacts a traveler's ability to navigate their itinerary effectively.

When expressing minutes, Japanese uses both *~ふん (~fun)* and *~ぷん (~pun)*, with specific numbers requiring one or the other, and some variations in pronunciation. For example, 4 minutes can be *よんふん (yonfun)* or *よんぷん (yonpun)*, and 7 minutes can be *ななふん (nanafun)* or *しちふん (shichifun)*. This phonetic irregularity means that simply knowing the base numbers is insufficient for accurate time-telling. Travelers must commit these specific irregularities to memory for precise communication regarding time. While this presents a practical hurdle, mastering these nuances significantly improves daily interactions and ensures clearer understanding in various situations.

IV. Essential Verbs for Action

This section presents a concise list of common verbs frequently used by travelers, provided in both their dictionary form and polite *~ます (masu)* form, along with their negative and past polite conjugations. Understanding these verbs is fundamental for expressing actions, intentions, and navigating daily situations.

Japanese (Dictionary Form)	Japanese (~ます Masu Form)	Romaji (Dictionary Form)	Romaji (~ます Masu Form)	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
いく	いきます	iku	ikimasu	To go / will go	あしたきょうとへいきます。	Tomorrow, I will go to Kyoto.
くる	きます	kuru	kimasu	To come / will come	きょねんにほんへきました。	I came to Japan last year.
たべる	たべます	taberu	tabemasu	To eat / will eat	わたしはあさごはんをたべます。	I eat breakfast.
のむ	のみます	nomu	nomimasu	To drink / will drink	コーヒーをのみます。	I drink coffee.
みる	みます	miru	mimasu	To see, to watch / will see, will watch	テレビをみます。	I watch TV.
かう	かいます	kau	kaimasu	To buy / will buy	あたらしいくつをかいます。	I will buy new shoes.
する	します	suru	shimasu	To do, to play (sports) / will do, will play	しゅくだいをします。	I do homework.
わかる	わかります	wakaru	wakarimasu	To understand / will	にほんごがわかりますか。	Do you understand Japanese?

Japanese (Dictionary Form)	Japanese (~ ます Masu Form)	Romaji (Dictionary Form)	Romaji (~ま す Masu Form)	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
				understand		
はなす	はなします	hanasu	hanashimasu	To speak / will speak	ゆっくりはなし てください。	Please speak slowly.
ある	あります	aru	arimasu	To have / to exist (inanimate objects, plants)	ここにペンが あります。	There is a pen here.
いる	います	iru	imasu	To have / to exist (animate beings: people, animals)	あそこにねこ がいます。	There is a cat over there.
きく	ききます	kiku	kikimasu	To listen, to hear / will listen, will hear	おんがくをき きます。	I listen to music.
つかう	つかいます	tsukau	tsukaimasu	To use / will use	クレジットカード をつかいま す。	I will use a credit card.
まつ	まちます	matsu	machimasu	To wait / will wait	ちょっとまって ください。	Please wait a moment.
はいる	はいります	hairu	hairimasu	To enter / will enter	へやにはいり ます。	I will enter the room.
でる	でます	deru	demasu	To exit / will exit	えきをでま す。	I will exit the station.
はじめる	はじめます	hajimeru	hajimeru	To begin / will begin	クラスははじ まります。	The class will begin.
おわる	おわります	owaru	owarimasu	To end / will end	クラスはおわ ります。	The class will end.
うる	うります	uru	urimasu	To sell / will sell	このみせはほ んをうります。	This shop sells books.
たべません			tabemasen	Do not eat / will not eat	わたしはさか なをたべませ ん。	I don't eat fish.
いきません			ikimasen	Do not go / will not go	きょうはがっ こうへいきま せん。	I am not going to school today.
たべました			tabemashita	Ate (past tense)	すしをたべま した。	I ate sushi.
いきました			ikimashita	Went (past tense)	きょうとへいき ました。	I went to Kyoto.

Japanese (Dictionary Form)	Japanese (~ ます Masu Form)	Romaji (Dictionary Form)	Romaji (~ま す Masu Form)	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
しました			shimashita	Did (past tense)	しゅくだいをし ました。	I did homework.
たべません でした			tabemasen deshita	Did not eat (past negative)	すしをたべま せませんでした。	I did not eat sushi.
いきません でした			ikimasen deshita	Did not go (past negative)	がっこうへい きませんでした。 た。	I did not go to school.

The ~ます (**masu**) form is the cornerstone of polite verb usage in Japanese, serving as the standard ending for verbs in the present or future tense. For travelers, mastering this form is not merely a grammatical detail but a social necessity. Using the plain or dictionary forms of verbs with strangers would be considered impolite. The ~masu form acts as a default polite filter for all verbal actions, ensuring that every request, statement, or inquiry is delivered with appropriate respect. This adherence to polite language is highly valued in Japanese society and significantly contributes to positive interactions and smooth navigation of social situations.

A crucial semantic distinction in Japanese verbs of existence lies in the use of あります (**arimasu**) and います (**imasu**). あります (**arimasu**) is used for inanimate objects and plants, indicating their presence or existence. For example, one would say ここにペンがあります (There is a pen here). Conversely, います (**imasu**) is reserved for animate beings, such as people and animals. For instance, あそこにねがいます (There is a cat over there) is the correct usage. Misusing these verbs, such as saying ひとがあります instead of ひとがいます (There is a person), would sound unnatural or incorrect. For travelers, understanding and applying this distinction is fundamental for accurately describing the presence of things and people, preventing confusion and ensuring clear and effective communication.

V. Question Words & Adverbs

This section lists crucial question words for constructing inquiries and essential adverbs for adding detail to sentences, enabling more dynamic and nuanced conversations for travelers.

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
なん	nan	What	これはなんですか。	What is this?
なに	nani	What	きのうなにをしましたか。	What did you do yesterday?
だれ	dare	Who	あのひとはだれですか。	Who is that person over there?
どなた	donata	Who (polite)	あのかたはどなたですか。	Who is that person (polite)?
どこ	doko	Where	えきはどこですか。	Where is the station?
どちら	dochira	Where (polite) / Which (of two)	トイレはどちらですか。	Where is the toilet?

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
いつ	itsu	When	パーティーはいつですか。	When is the party?
どうして	doushite	Why	どうしてがっこうへいきませんでしたか。	Why didn't you go to school?
なぜ	naze	Why (more formal/direct)	なぜですか。	Why is that?
どうやって	douyatte	How, in what way	えきまでどうやっていきますか。	How do I get to the station?
いくら	ikura	How much (money)	これはいくらですか。	How much is this?
どれ	dore	Which (of three or more items)	あなたのかばんはどれですか。	Which is your bag?
とても	totemo	Very	このラーメンはとてもおいしいです。	This ramen is very delicious.
あまり	amari	(Not) very	このまちはあまりしずかではありません。	This town is not very quiet.
もっと	motto	More	もっとゆっくりはなしてください。	Please speak more slowly.
もういちど	mou ichido	One more time	もういちどいってください。	Please say it again.
ゆっくり	yukkuri	Slowly	ゆっくりはなしてください。	Please speak slowly.
たぶん	tabun	Probably, maybe	たぶんあめがふります。	It will probably rain.
いつも	itsumo	Always	わたしはいつもコーヒーをのみます。	I always drink coffee.
すこし	sukoshi	A little (amount)	すこしにほんごがわかります。	I understand a little Japanese.
ときどき	tokidoki	Sometimes	ときどきえいがをみます。	Sometimes I watch movies.
パーティー	paathii	Party	パーティーはいつですか。	When is the party?
たんじょうび	tanjoubi	Birthday	たんじょうびはいつですか。	When is your birthday?
びょうき	byouki	Sick	びょうきだったからです。	Because I was sick.
まで	made	Until, to	えきまでどうやっていきますか。	How do I get to the station?
でんしゃ	densha	Train	でんしゃでいきます。	I will go by train.
はし	hashi	Chopsticks	はしでたべます。	I eat with chopsticks.

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
ごはん	gohan	Meal	レストランでごはんをたべました。	I ate a meal at the restaurant.
としょかん	toshokan	Library	としょかんでべんきょうします。	I study at the library.
エアコン	eakon	Air conditioner	エアコンをつけました。	I turned on the air conditioner.
つけました	tsukemashita	Turned on	エアコンをつけました。	I turned on the air conditioner.
みせ	mise	Shop	みせはいつですか。	When is the shop?
デパート	depaato	Department store	デパートでかいものをしました。	I did shopping at the department store.
ひこうき	hikouki	Plane	ひこうきでいきます。	I will go by plane.

Unlike English, where question words typically appear at the beginning of a sentence, Japanese question words usually remain in the position where the answer would naturally be, with the question particle か (**ka**) placed at the very end. For example, to ask "When is the party?", one would say パーティーは いつ ですか (**Paathii wa itsu desu ka**), which literally translates to "The party is when?". This structural difference is fundamental for both forming grammatically correct questions and comprehending questions posed by Japanese speakers. Understanding this "end-weighted" structure is a key element for effective two-way communication, preventing common errors that English speakers might make by trying to front-load the question word.

The particle で (**de**) is a versatile tool that serves multiple crucial functions for travelers. It can indicate the means or method by which an action is performed, such as in バスで いきます (**Basu de ikimasu**) (I go by bus). This allows travelers to specify their mode of transportation or the tools they use (e.g., はしで たべます - I eat with chopsticks). Additionally, de marks the location where an action takes place, distinct from the particle に (ni) which indicates existence or destination. For example, レストランで ごはんを たべました (**Resutoran de gohan o tabemashita**) means "I ate a meal at the restaurant". This dual functionality makes de a highly practical particle for adding essential details to descriptions of daily activities and inquiries, enabling more precise and comprehensive communication.

VI. Katakana Corner: Common Loanwords (Easy Wins!)

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
ホテル	hoteru	Hotel	わたしのホテルはここです。	My hotel is here.
バス	basu	Bus	バスでいきます。	I will go by bus.
タクシー	takushii	Taxi	タクシーでいきます。	I will go by taxi.
コーヒー	koohii	Coffee	コーヒーをのみます。	I drink coffee.

Japanese	Romaji	English	Example Sentence	Example Sentence Translation
ビール	biiru	Beer	ビールをひとつください。	One beer, please.
トイレ	toire	Toilet	トイレはどこですか。	Where is the toilet?
カメラ	kamera	Camera	あたらしいカメラがほしいです。	I want a new camera.
テレビ	terebi	TV	テレビをみます。	I watch TV.
ジュース	juusu	Juice	ジュースをのみます。	I drink juice.
アイスクリーム	aisukuriimu	Ice cream	アイスクリームがほしいです。	I want ice cream.
アイス	aisu	Ice / Ice cream	アイスをください。	Please give me ice cream.
メニュー	menyuu	Menu	メニューをください。	Please give me a menu.
サンドウィッチ	sandowitchi	Sandwich	サンドウィッチを食べます。	I eat a sandwich.
チケット	chiketto	Ticket	チケットをかいしました。	I bought a ticket.
ガイド	gaido	Guide	ガイドブックがありますか。	Do you have a guide book?
プレゼント	purezento	Present / Gift	プレゼントをかいしました。	I bought a present.
レストラン	resutoran	Restaurant	レストランはあそこです。	The restaurant is over there.
スーパー	suupaa	Supermarket	スーパーへいきます。	I will go to the supermarket.
アプリ	apuri	App	このアプリはべんりです。	This app is convenient.
パーティー	paathii	Party	パーティーはいつですか。	When is the party?
フォーク	fooku	Fork	フォークをください。	Please give me a fork.
サラダ	sarada	Salad	サラダをおねがいします。	Salad, please.
オレンジジュース	orenji juusu	Orange juice	オレンジジュースをみつつください。	Three orange juices, please.
テニス	tenisu	Tennis	テニスをします。	I play tennis.
エアコン	eakon	Air conditioner	エアコンをつけました。	I turned on the air conditioner.
デパート	depaato	Department store	デパートでかいものをしました。	I did shopping at the department store.