

## Some Notes on Japanese Grammar

Keith Smillie

No claim is made for either originality or completeness in these notes. Most of the examples have been taken from, or have been suggested by, the references given at the end. The topics chosen are those which may benefit a person who is beginning to study Japanese and who would like a quick reference to supplement more complete and authoritative sources.

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## Word Order

Japanese is a Subject-Object-Verb language as compared with English which is a Subject-Verb-Object language.

### **Torako wa neko desu.**

Torako is a cat. (Literally, “Torako as for cat is.”)

### **Torako ga nezumi o mimashita.**

Torako saw a mouse (Literally, “Torako [subject] mouse [object] saw.”)

A sentence is made into a question by placing the particle **ka** at the end.

### **Torako ga nezumi o mimashita ka.**

Did Torako see a mouse?

## Nouns

Japanese nouns do not have gender, they may not be modified by definite or indefinite articles because none exist in Japanese, and the singular and plural forms are usually the same. In romaji the names of persons and places are capitalized as are the names of languages except English (**eigo**).

**hon** book, books, a book, the book, the books

For nouns referring to people, the suffix **-tachi** may be used to indicate the plural.

**kodomo** child, children      **kodomotachi** children

**Tanaka san tachi** Mr. Tanaka and his family or others

Japanese give the family name first followed by the given name.

**Tanaka Hiromi** Hiromi Tanaka

The suffix **-ya** means the store where the objects are sold or the person who sells them. The suffix **-ka** means a person who is an expert or specialist in the designated subject.

**hana** flower      **hanaya** flower shop, florist

**niku** meat      **nikuya** butcher shop, butcher

**shōsetsu** novel      **shōsetsuka** novelist

When referring to a clerk or shopkeeper, the honorific **san** is used.

**honya san** bookstore clerk, bookseller

Two nouns used together as a compound noun are joined by the particle **no**.

**nihongo no kurasu** Japanese language class

**apâto no biru** apartment building

### Pronouns

<b>watashi</b>	I, me	<b>watashitachi</b>	we, us
<b>anata</b>	you	<b>anatatachi</b>	you
<b>kare</b>	he, him	<b>karera</b>	they, them
<b>kanojo</b>	she, her	<b>kanojotachi</b>	they, them
<b>ano hito</b>	that person	<b>ano hitotachi</b>	those persons

Avoid using **anata** whenever possible, and use the person's name with **san** instead. Similarly, when referring to a third person, use the person's name.

**Sumisu san wa eigo o mimashita ka.**

Did you (Mr. Smith) see the movie?

**Tanaka san wa nani o kaimashita ka.**

What did she (Mrs. Tanaka) buy?

The indefinite pronouns are the following:

<b>dareka</b>	someone	<b>daremo</b>	no one
<b>doreka</b>	something	<b>doremo</b>	nothing
<b>dokaka</b>	somewhere	<b>dokomo</b>	nowhere
<b>nanika</b>	something	<b>nanimo</b>	nothing
<b>ikuraka</b>	some, a little	<b>ikuramo</b>	not much
<b>nandemo</b>	anything	<b>nannimo</b>	nothing

The negative indefinite pronouns take a negative verb.

**Dareka kimashita.**

Someone came.

**Daremo kimasen deshita.**

No one came.

The one reflexive pronoun is **jibun** (myself, yourself, etc.).

**Jibun de hatarakimasu.**

I am working by myself.

There are no relative pronouns in Japanese, and the relative clause precedes the word it modifies.

**Asoko ni suwatte iru wakai josei wa musume desu.**

That young lady sitting over there is my daughter.

## Demonstratives and Interrogatives

The demonstrative and interrogative words, which are either pronouns, adjectives or adverbs, may be divided into four groups depending on the prefix:

- ko-** Something near the speaker.
- so-** Something nearer the listener than the speaker.
- a-** Something at a distance from both speaker and listener.
- do-** Question

<b>kore</b>	this one	<b>sore</b>	that one	<b>are</b>	that one	<b>dore</b>	which one
<b>kono</b>	this	<b>sono</b>	that	<b>ano</b>	that	<b>dono</b>	which
<b>konna</b>	this kind of	<b>sonna</b>	that kind of	<b>anna</b>	that kind of	<b>donna</b>	what kind of
<b>kô</b>	in this manner	<b>sô</b>	in that manner	<b>â</b>	in that manner	<b>dô</b>	in which way
<b>koko</b>	here	<b>soko</b>	there	<b>asoko</b>	over there	<b>doko</b>	where
<b>kochira</b>	this way	<b>sochira</b>	that way	<b>achira</b>	that way	<b>dochira</b>	which way

Other interrogative pronouns are the following:

- dare** who
- nan, nani** what
- nannin** how many people
- ikura** how much
- ikutsu** how many
- itsu** when
- dôshite** why

## Particles

**wa** Topic

**Yôko san wa daigakuin no gakusei desu.**

Yôko is a graduate student. (Literally, “As for Yôko, she is a graduate student.”)

**ga** Subject

**Watashi wa sushi ga suki desu.**

I like sushi. (Literally, As for me, sushi is likeable.”)

**o** Direct object

**Torako wa kasasagi o mite imasu.**

Torako is looking at the magpie.

**no** Possession, noun modification, apposition

**Simon wa musume no neko desu.**

Simon is my daughter’s cat.

**Nihon no tabemono wa oishii desu.**

Japanese food is delicious.

**Tomodachi no Tanaka san wa sensei desu.**

My friend Mr. Tanaka is a teacher.

**ni** Indirect object, location, direction, specific time

**Watashi wa Tanaka san ni hon o kasimashita.**

I loaned Mr. Tanaka a book.

**Hiromi san wa Tôkyô ni imasu.**

Hiromi is in Tokyo.

**Kinô watashi wa hayaku uchi ni kaerimashita.**

Yesterday I went home early.

**gogo jûji ni**

at 10 p.m.

**nichiyôbi ni**

on Sunday

**shichigatsu ni**

in July

**1998 nen ni**

in 1998

**de** Place of action, means, total, material

**Watashi wa honya de hon o sansatsu kaimashita.**

I bought three books at the bookstore.

**Tanaka san wa basu de kaisha ni ikimasu.**

Mr. Tanaka goes to the office by bus.

**Ashita eiga ni futari de ikimasu.**

Tomorrow the two of us are going to a movie.

**Têburu wa ki de dekite imasu.**

The table is made of wood.

**e** Direction

**Nihon e ikimasu ka**

Are you going to Japan?

**kara** Origin, starting time

**Ano hito wa Nihon kara kimashita.**

He is from Japan.

**Depâtô wa jûji kara desu.**

The department store opens at 10:00 o'clock.

**made** Target time

**Depâtô wa rokuji made desu.**

The department store closes at 6:00 o'clock.

**Depâtô wa jûji kara rokuji made desu.**

The department store is open from 10:00 o'clock until 6:00 o'clock.

**mo** Also, both ... and, neither ... nor

**Watashi wa ocha ga suki desu. Kohii mo suki desu.**

I like tea. I also like coffee.

**Ocha mo kohii mo nomimasu.**

I drink both tea and coffee.

**Ocha mo kohii mo nomimasen.**

I drink neither tea nor coffee.

**to** Complete listing (and), involvement

**Sono gakusei wa pen to enpitsu o motte imasu.**

That student has a pen and a pencil.

**Watashi wa yoku tomodachi to hirugohan o tabemasu.**

I often have lunch with my friends.

**ya** Partial listing (and)

**Watashitachi wa Kyôto ya Ôsaka (nado) e ikimashita.**  
We went to Kyoto, Osaka, etc.

**ga** but

**Tanaka san wa kimasu ga, Watanabe san wa kimasen.**  
Mr. Tanaka is coming, but Mr. Watanabe isn't.

**ka** Enumeration (or)

**Ocha ka kôhî ikaga desu ka.**  
How about tea or coffee?

**kara** Reason

**Isogashii kara, eiga ni ikimasen deshita.**  
Because I was busy, I didn't go to the movie.

**nagara** Simultaneous action

**Aruki nagara, mondai ni tsuite kangaemashita.**  
While walking, I thought about the problem.

**ka** Question marker

**Gakusei desu ka.**  
Are you a student?

**ne** Confirmation

**Gakusei desu ne.**  
You are a student, aren't you?

**yo** Emphasis

**Gakusei desu yo.**  
So you're a student!

## Verbs

### Introduction

Japanese verbs do not have different forms for person, number or gender. Verbs are listed in what is known as the "dictionary" or "plain" form. All Japanese verbs, except for two irregular verbs, can be divided into two groups or conjugations which differ only in the way in which they

form their stems and infinitives. The stem may change or have a suffix added to show tense, mood and politeness.

Type I or Group 1 verbs are all verbs whose dictionary form does not end in **-eru** or **-iru**, together with a few which have these endings. The stem is formed by dropping the final **-u**; the infinitive is formed by adding **-i** to the stem. Type I verbs are also called consonant or c-stem verbs or **u-stem** or **u-dropping** verbs.

<i>Dictionary</i>	<i>Stem</i>	<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	
<b>kaku</b>	<b>kak-</b>	<b>kaki-</b>	to write	
<b>iku</b>	<b>ik-</b>	<b>iki-</b>	to go	* Verbs ending in <b>-au</b> , <b>-iu</b> and <b>-ou</b>
<b>yomu</b>	<b>yom-</b>	<b>yomi-</b>	to read	are considered to be c-stem verbs
<b>matsu</b>	<b>mat-</b>	<b>machi-</b>	to wait	as they formerly ended in <b>-awa</b> ,
<b>hanasu</b>	<b>hanas-</b>	<b>hanashi-</b>	to speak	<b>-iwa</b> and <b>-owa</b> , respectively.
<b>omou</b> *	<b>omo-</b>	<b>omoi-</b>	to believe	

Type II or Group 2 verbs, a much smaller group than the first, are most of the verbs which end in **-eru** or **-iru** in the dictionary form. The stem is formed by dropping the final **-ru**; the infinitive is the same as the stem. Type II verbs are also called vowel or v-stem verbs or **ru-dropping** verbs.

<i>Dictionary</i>	<i>Stem</i>	<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>hajimeru</b>	<b>hajime-</b>	<b>hajime-</b>	to begin
<b>miru</b>	<b>mi-</b>	<b>mi-</b>	to see, to look at
<b>taberu</b>	<b>tabe-</b>	<b>tabe-</b>	to eat

The two irregular verbs, sometimes known as Type III or Group 3 verbs, are **kuru** and **suru**.

<i>Dictionary</i>	<i>Stem</i>	<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>kuru</b>	<b>ki-</b>	<b>ki-</b>	to come
<b>suru</b>	<b>shi-</b>	<b>shi-</b>	to do

### Present and past polite forms

To form the present polite form add **-masu** to the infinitive for the positive and **-masen** for the negative. For the past polite form add **-mashita** to the infinitive for the positive and **-masen deshita** for the negative.

**Tokidoki eiga o mimasu.**

I sometimes watch movies.

**Takahashi san wa sakana o tabemasen.**

Ms. Takahashi doesn't eat fish.

**Mainichi kanji no benkyô o shimashita ga, sugu wasuremashita.**

I studied kanji every day, but I soon forgot them.



**Ichi-jikan machimashita ga, tomodachi wa kimasen deshita.**

I waited an hour, but my friend didn't come.

### Expressing "to be"

The meaning "is" or "are" may be expressed by the copula **desu**, and by the verbs **arimasu** and **imasu**. The copula **desu** is used when one thing is, or equals, another; **arimasu** refers to the existence of inanimate objects (including plants, which don't move about); and **imasu** refers to the existence of animate objects. The negative of **desu** is **dewa arimasen** or **ja arimasen** or **dewa nai desu** or **ja nai desu**. When describing the location of something, **ni arimasu** can often be replaced by **desu**. The verb **arimasu** can often be translated as "there is", "are" or "have".

**Koko wa Yokahama eki desu.**

This is Yokahama station.

**Kissaten wa ginkô to yûbinkyoku no aida ni arimasu.**

The coffee shop is between the bank and the post office.

**Watanabe san wa doko ni imasu ka.**

Where's Mr. Watanabe?

**Ginkô wa doko ni arimasu ka.**

Where's the bank?

**Amerikajin dewa arimasen. Igrisujin desu.**

I'm not American. I'm English.

In situations demanding a high degree of courtesy, e.g., a sales clerk in a department store talking to a customer, the speaker is likely to use the formal and humble **gozaimasu** instead of **arimasu** and **irasshaimasu** instead of **iru**.

**Kono hoteru ni wa, fakkusu ga arimasu ka. Hai, gozaimasu.**

Do you have a fax in this hotel? Yes, we do.

**Sumimasen, kono sêtâ wa ikura desu ka. Sore wa kyû-sen en de gozaimasu.**

Excuse me, how much is this sweater? It's ¥9,000.

**Moshi, moshi. Tanaka san wa irasshaimasu ka.**

Hello. Is Mr. Tanaka there?

### Uses of **deshô**

The word **deshô**, which comes from **desu**, when used in a question followed by **ka**, is the equivalent of "I wonder...". When used with a rising intonation, it is asking for agreement so it is similar to **ne** but softer and less direct. Used with a falling intonation, the sentence is often translated using "probably", "must be" or "almost certainly". Also **deshô** may be used in place of **desu** for extra politeness.

**Kore wa nan desu ka. Kore wa nan deshô ka.**

What's this? I wonder what this is?

**Are wa Watanabe san no uchi deshô.** [Rising intonation]

That's Mr. Watanabe's house, right?

**Hokkaidô wa ima samui deshô.** [Falling intonation]

It's probably cold in Hokkaido now.

**Sumimasen ga, Tanaka san deshô ka.**

Excuse me, but would you be Mr. Tanaka?

### Present and past plain forms

The plain form of verbs are used with immediate family and close friends and associates. The polite forms are more appropriate for general use. However, the plain forms function in various ways in a sentence other than as the main verb and so must be learned.

The plain form of the present tense is the dictionary form. For the negative add **-nai** to the stem for v-stem verbs, and **-anai** for c-stem verbs except for those verbs ending in **-au**, **-iu** and **-ou** where **-wanai** is added. The plain negatives of **kuru** and **suru** are **konai** and **shinai**, respectively. Also the plain negative of **aru** is **nai**.

**Tokidoki eiga o miru.**

I sometimes watch movies.

**Takahashi san wa sakana o tabenai.**

Ms. Takahashi doesn't eat fish.

**Kotae wa nai deshô.**

There isn't an answer, is there?

To form the plain past tense for v-stem verbs add **-ta** to the stem. For c-stem verbs use the appropriate change in the following list:

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

The plain past tense of **kuru** and **suru** are **kita** and **shita**, respectively.

To form the negative of the plain past test, add **-nakatta** to the stem of v-stem verbs and

**-anakatta** to the stem of c-stem verbs.

**taberu tabenakatta** didn't eat  
**yomu yomanakatta** didn't read

As long as the verb at the end of a sentence is in the polite form, any verbs in the middle can be in the plain form without affecting the overall tone. This means that the plain form can be used when sentences are joined with **kedo**, for example, or when they finish with **deshô**.

**Taiiku no sensei wa ii hito da kedo, chotto hen desu ne.**

The physical education teacher is nice, but he's a bit strange, isn't he!

**Takahashi san wa eigo ga wakaru deshô ka.**

I wonder if Ms. Takahashi understands English?

**Ani wa ikanai kedo, watashi wa ikimasu.**

My older brother is not coming, but I am.

**Kyô wa kinyôbi da to omotta kedo, chigaimasu ne.**

I thought it was Friday today, but it isn't, is it!

To give a reason for something, use either **kara** after the plain form of the verb or an **-i** adjective.

**Shinkansen de itta kara, jikan ga amari kakarimasen deshita.**

We went by Shinkansen, so it didn't take very long.

**Shitsumon ga mada ôi kara, mô ichido setsumei shimashô .**

There are still a lot of questions, so let me explain again.

To express an opinion, use the phrase **to omoimasu** at the end of a sentence and put all verbs in the plain form. To express what someone else is thinking, use **omotte imasu**. The verb **kangaeru** also means "to think" but implies "to consider" whereas **omou** implies opinion or feeling.

**Takahashi san wa kimasen. Takahashi san wa konai to omoimasu.**

Ms. Takahashi is not coming. I don't think Ms. Takahashi is coming.

**Maiku san wa, Nihon wa ii kuni da to omotte imasu.**

Mike thinks that Japan is a great country.

**Chiimu no koto o kangaete imashita.**

I was thinking about the team.

The noun **tsumori** means "intention", so the sentence ending **tsumori desu** after the plain form of the verb can usually be translated as "intend to" or "mean to do".

**Sore wa mondai desu ne. Dô suru tsumori desu ka.**

That's a problem, isn't it? What do you intend to do?

**Donna kuruma o kau tsumori desu ka.**

What kind of car do you intend to buy?

To express being able to do something, add **koto ga dekimasu** to the plain form of the verb. The plain past tense followed by **koto ga arimasu ka** is equivalent to "Have you ever ...".

**Maiku san wa kanji o kaku koto ga dekimasu ka. (Maiku san wa kanji o kakemasu ka.)**

Mike, can you write kanji characters?

**Nihongo o hanasu koto ga dekimasu ka. (Nihongo ga hanasemasu ka.)**

Can you speak Japanese?

**Sashimi o tabeta koto ga arimasu ka.**

Have you ever eaten raw fish?

A sentence in the plain form ending in **no desu** or **n' desu** indicates that the speaker is explaining something, asking for an explanation, or giving emphasis.

**Iroirona mondai ga arimasu ne. Dô suru n' desu ka.**

There are all sorts of problems, aren't there? What are you going to do?

**Nani o shite iru n' desu ka.**

What are you doing?

**Totemo takai n' desu yo. Dakara kawanai n' desu.**

It's really expensive! That's why I'm not buying it

To quote someone, follow the quotation by **to iimasu** (or whatever tense and form is appropriate). To say what someone has said without making a quotation, use **to iimasu** but put what was said into the plain form. It's common to omit **da** when reporting on questions. The verb **iimasu** may be used to ask how to say something in English or Japanese.

**Maiku san wa, "Hayaku hashiru koto ga dekimasen," to iimashita.**

Mike said, "I can't run fast".

**Maiku san wa, "Ashita yakyû o shimasu," to iimashita.**

Mike said, "I'm playing baseball tomorrow".

**Maiku san wa, ashita yakyû o suru to iimashita.**

Mike said he's playing baseball tomorrow.

**Watashi wa Amerikajin ka to kikimashita.**

He asked if I was American.

**"Autumn" wa Nihongo de nan to iimasu ka. "Aki" to iimasu.**

How do you say "autumn" in Japanese? It's "aki".

### **The gerund or -te form**

The **-te** form of a verb which does not have a tense or mood combines with other verb forms. It may be formed from the plain past tense by changing the ending **-ta** to **-te**.

When the **-te** form is used to link two sentences where it may be translated as "and", the verb at the end of the sentence shows the overall tense of the sentence.

**Doyôbi no asa ni Tôkyô e ikimahita. Atarashii sûtsumu o kaimashita.**

On Saturday morning I went to Tokyo. I bought a new suit.

**Doyôbi no asa ni Tôkyô e itte, atarashii sûtsumu o kaimashita.**

On Saturday morning I went to Tokyo, and bought a new suit

To ask permission to do something, add **mo ii desu ka** to the **-te** form. To ask if it's alright not to do something, change the negative **-nai** form to **-nakute** and then add **mo ii desu ka**.

**Sumimasen ga, koko ni suwatte mo ii desu ka. Ii desu. Dôzo.**

Excuse me, but is it alright if I sit here? Yes, please go ahead.

**Kore o zenbu tabenakute mo ii desu ka. Hai, (tabenakute mo) ii desu yo.**

Is it alright if I don't eat all of this? Yes, it's alright (if you don't eat it).

The same form may be used to give permission.

**Namae to jûsho o kakanakute mo ii desu.**

It's alright not to write your name and address.

To refuse permission, use the **-te** form of the verb followed by **wa ikemasen**.

**Sono heya ni haitte wa ikemasen.**

You musn't go into that room.

### **Progressive tense**

To describe an event that is presently happening or not happening, use the appropriate form of the verb **iru** or **imasu** after the **-te** form.

**Tomoko san wa ima nani o shite imasu ka.**

What is Tomoko doing at the moment?

**Sono kaisha de mô hataraitte imasen. Ima ginkô de hataraitte imasu.**

I don't work at that company any more. Now I am working at a bank.

**Ima eigo o benkyô shite imasen.**

I am not studying English now.

The past progressive is formed by using the **-te** formed followed by the past or the past negative.

**Torako ga isu no ue de nete imashita.**

Torako was sleeping on the chair.

**Kinô no ban watashi wa terebi o mite imasen deshita.**

I wasn't watching television last night.

#### **Desiderative form**

To express one's own wish to do something, add **-tai** to the infinitive followed by **desu**. Verbs ending in **-tai** are like **-i** adjectives, and so have a negative form ending in **-taku arimasen** and a past form ending in **-takatta desu**. To express a desire for a thing, use the **-i** adjective **hoshii**.

**Ocha ga nomitai.**

I would like some tea.

**Kinô yasumi o toritakatta kedo, taihen isogashikute, toru koto ga dekimasen deshita.**

I wanted to take yesterday off, but I couldn't because I was extremely busy.

**Kanojo wa, bôifurendo ga hoshii to iimashita.**

She said she wants a boyfriend.

#### **Passive form**

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

**Torako wa nezumi o tabemashita.**

Torako ate the mouse.

**Nezumi wa Torako ni taberaremashita.**

The mouse was eaten by Torako.

**Nezumi wa Torako ni taberaremasen deshita.**

The mouse was not eaten by Torako.

**Torako wa nezumi to asobimashita.**

Torako played with the mouse.

**Nezumi wa Torako ni asobaremashita.**

The mouse was played with by Torako.

### Causative form

Add **-saseru**, **-sasemasu** to the stem of v-stem verbs (**-sasenai**, **-sasemasen** for the negative), and add **-aseru**, **-aemasu** to the stem of c-stem verbs (**-asenai**, **-aemasen** for the negative).

**Torako o daidokoro no têberu kara orisasemashita.**

I made Torako get off the kitchen table.

### Conditional form

Drop the final **-u** from the plain form of the verb and add **-eba**. To form the negative, drop the **-i** from the negative plain form and add **-kereba**. With **-i** adjectives, drop the final **-i** and add **-kereba**; with negatives, drop the final **-i** from **nai** and add **-kereba**.

**Moshi dekireba, kotoshi gaikoku e ikitai n' desu.**

If I can, I want to go abroad this year.

**Jisho o tsukawanakereba, kono Nihongo no shukudai ga dekimasen.**

If I don't use a dictionary, I can't do this Japanese homework.

**Ashita tenki ga yokereba, dokoka e ikimashô ka.**

If the weather's nice tomorrow, shall we go somewhere?

**Takaku nakereba, kaimasu.**

If it's not too expensive, I'll buy it.

The expression **-nakereba narimasen**, where **naru** is the verb "to become", means literally "if you don't..., it's no good" or in other words "you must" or "you have to". The negative "don't have to ..." is expressed with **-nakute mo ii desu**.

**Jiko shôkai wa Nihongo de nakereba narimasen.**

Your self-introduction must be in Japanese.

**Kyô owaranakute mo ii desu.**

You don't have to finish it today.

### Giving and receiving

There are several verbs to expressing giving and receiving depending on the relative status of the giver and receiver and the direction of the action:

<b>ageru</b>	Give
<b>sashiageru</b>	Give to superiors
<b>yaru</b>	Give (informal)
<b>kureru</b>	Give to speaker
<b>kudasaru</b>	Give to speaker from superior
<b>morau</b>	Receive
<b>itadaku</b>	Receive from superiors

**Watashi wa Hû-san ni hon o agemashita.**

I gave Hugh a book.

**Watashi wa sensei ni hon o sashiagemashita.**

I gave the teacher a book.

**Watashi wa Torako ni omocha o yarimashita.**

I gave Torako the toy.

**Hû-san wa watashi ni hon o kuremashita.**

Hugh gave me the book.

**Sensei wa watashi ni hon o kudasaimashita.**

The teacher gave me a book.

**Watashi wa Hû-san ni hon o moraimashita.**

I received the book from Hugh.

**Watashi wa sensei ni hon o itadakimashita.**

I received a book from the teacher.

### **Starting an action**

To express starting an action, use the stem of the verb expressing the action followed by the appropriate form of the verb **hajimeru**:

**Senshû hon o yomihajimemashita.**

I started reading the book last week.

### **Nominalization**

Verbs may be made into nouns, or gerunds to use the English expression, by following the plain form with **no** or **koto**, although **no** cannot be used in the predicate.

**Watashi wa yomu no ga suki desu.**

I like reading.

**Miru koto wa shinjiru koto desu.**

Seeing is believing.

## **Adjectives**

Japanese adjectives are either verbal adjectives or adjectival nouns. Those in the first group, in their dictionary form, end only in **-ai**, **-ii**, **-oi**, or **-ui**, and are therefore sometimes called **-i** adjectives. Those in the second group have noun-like characteristics and when they modify nouns have the suffix **-na** and are sometimes called **-na** adjectives.

An **-i** adjective can modify a following noun.



**Watashi wa chiisai neko o katte imasu.**

I have a small cat.

The stem of an **-i** adjective is formed by dropping the final **-i**, so that, for example, the stem of **chisai** is **chisai-**. An **-i** adjective may be conjugated to give different tenses:

Present:	<b>[stem] + -i</b>	Negative past:	<b>[stem] + -kunakatta</b>
Past:	<b>[stem] + -katta</b>	Gerund:	<b>[stem] + -kute</b>
Negative:	<b>[stem] + -kunai</b>		

The associated verb is in the present tense.

**Kono hon wa omoshiroi desu.**

This book is interesting.

**Ano hon mo omoshirokatta desu.**

That book was interesting too.

**Kyô wa samukunai desu.**

Today it's not cold.

**Kinô mo samukunakatta desu.**

Yesterday it wasn't cold either.

**Kono hon wa omoshirokute tanoshii desu.**

This book is interesting and enjoyable.

The **-na** adjectives can be used as predicates or as noun modifiers.

**Ano hito wa yûmei desu.**

He is famous.

**Kôen wa shizuka dewa arimasen deshita.**

The park wasn't quiet.

**Shizukana heya ga hoshii desu.**

I want a quiet room.

The following colour words may be used alone as adjectives:

<b>akai</b>	red	<b>kiroi</b>	yellow
<b>aoi</b>	blue, green	<b>kuroi</b>	black
<b>chairoi</b>	brown	<b>shiroi</b>	white

When these words are used as nouns, the final **i** is dropped:

**Kuruma wa akai desu.**

The car is red.

**Aka was ii iro desu.**

Red is a nice colour.

The following colour words are nouns and must be followed with **no**:

<b>chairo no</b>	brown	<b>midoriro no</b>	green
<b>giniro no</b>	silver	<b>murasaki no</b>	purple
<b>haiiro no</b>	gray	<b>nezumiro no</b>	gray
<b>kiiro no</b>	yellow	<b>orenji no</b>	orange
<b>kiniro no</b>	gold		

### Describing Nouns

Nouns may be modified in various ways. However as there are no relative pronouns for constructing relative clauses, the relative clause ending with the plain form of the verb comes before the word it modifies.

**Haruko wa me ga kirei desu.**

Haruko has beautiful eyes.

**Haruko wa goshujin ga isha desu.**

Haruko's husband is a medical doctor.

**Haruko wa onaka ga sukimashita.**

Haruko was hungry.

**Haruko wa eigo ga dekimasu.**

Haruko knows English. (Haruko is good at English.)

**Watashi wa me ga kireina Haruko o mimasu.**

I am looking at Haruko with the beautiful eyes.

**Ano hito wa goshujin ga isha no Haruko desu.**

That person over there is Haruko whose husband is a medical doctor.

**Ano hito wa onaka ga suitea Haruko desu.**

That person over there is Haruko who is hungry.

**Ano hito wa eigo ga dekiru no Haruko desu.**

That person over there is Haruko who can speak English.

## Adverbs

To form an adverb from an **-i** adjective, add **-ku** to the stem.

<b>yasui</b>	cheap	<b>yasuku</b>	cheaply
<b>hayai</b>	quick	<b>hayaku</b>	quickly
<b>ii</b>	good	<b>yoku</b>	well [Irregular]

**Kinô no ban Torako wa yoku nemashita.**

Torako slept well last night.

To form an adverb from a **-na** adjective, use **ni** after the adjective.

<b>shizuka</b>	quiet	<b>shizuka ni</b>	quietly
<b>kantan</b>	simple	<b>kantan ni</b>	simply

**Torako wa shizuka ni arukimasu.**

Torako walks quietly.

Of course, there are many adverbs which are not derived from verbs.

<b>kinô</b>	yesterday	<b>amari</b>	not much	<b>sukoshi</b>	a little
<b>kyô</b>	today	<b>bakkari</b>	only	<b>tabun</b>	perhaps
<b>ashita</b>	tomorrow	<b>chotto</b>	a little	<b>taihen</b>	very
<b>mainichi</b>	every day	<b>ikaga</b>	how	<b>takusan</b>	a lot
<b>maiasa</b>	every morning	<b>itsumo</b>	always	<b>tokidoki</b>	sometimes
<b>ima</b>	now	<b>mata</b>	again	<b>totemo</b>	very
<b>yagate</b>	soon	<b>mô</b>	more	<b>yukkuri</b>	slowly
<b>sugu</b>	immediately	<b>motto</b>	more	<b>zenzen</b>	at all (with neg. verbs)
<b>mada</b>	yet, still	<b>nakanaka</b>	completely		

## Comparisons

**Kanada wa Nihon yori ôkii desu.**

Canada is larger than Japan.

**Nihon yori Kanada wa ôkii desu.**

Canada is larger than Japan.

**Nihon yori Kanada no hô ga ôkii desu.**

Canada is larger than Japan.

**Nihon wa Kanada hodo ôkikunai desu.**

Japan is not as large as Canada.

**Kanada to Nihon to dewa dochira ga ôkii desu ka.**  
Which is larger, Canada or Japan?

**Torako wa neko no naka de ichiban kawaii desu.**  
Torako is the most beautiful of all cats.

**Torako wa Edomonton de ichiban kawaii desu.**  
Torako is the most beautiful (cat) in Edmonton.

**Nezumi to inu to dewa dochira ga kawaii desu ka.**  
Which are the more attractive, mice or dogs?

**Mae no rei wa baka deshita ne.**  
The last example was silly, wasn't it?

### Numbers

0	<b>rei (zero)</b>						
1	<b>ichi</b>	10	<b>jû</b>	100	<b>hyaku</b>	1000	<b>sen</b>
2	<b>ni</b>	20	<b>nijû</b>	200	<b>nihyaku</b>	2000	<b>nisen</b>
3	<b>san</b>	30	<b>sanjû</b>	300	<b>sanbyaku</b>	3000	<b>sanzen</b>
4	<b>shi/yon</b>	40	<b>yonjû</b>	400	<b>yonhyaku</b>	4000	<b>yonsen</b>
5	<b>go</b>	50	<b>gojû</b>	500	<b>gohyaku</b>	5000	<b>gosen</b>
6	<b>roku</b>	60	<b>rokujû</b>	600	<b>roppyaku</b>	6000	<b>rokusen</b>
7	<b>shichi/nana</b>	70	<b>nanajû</b>	700	<b>nanahyaku</b>	7000	<b>nanasen</b>
8	<b>hachi</b>	80	<b>hachijû</b>	800	<b>happyaku</b>	8000	<b>hassen</b>
9	<b>ku/kyû</b>	90	<b>kyûjû</b>	900	<b>kyûhyaku</b>	9000	<b>kyûsen</b>
10,000			<b>man/ichiman</b>				
100,000			<b>jûman</b>				
1,000,000			<b>hyakuman</b>				
10,000,000			<b>senman/issenman</b>				
100,000,000			<b>oku/ichioku</b>				
1,000,000,000			<b>jûoku</b>				

The ordinal numbers are formed by adding **banme** to the cardinal numbers.

**ichibanme** first    **nibanme** second

### Specific Time

1 o'clock	<b>ichiji</b>	1 minute	<b>ippun</b>
2 o'clock	<b>niji</b>	2 minutes	<b>nifun</b>

3 o'clock	<b>sanji</b>	3 minutes	<b>sanpun</b>
4 o'clock	<b>yoji</b>	4 minutes	<b>yonpun</b>
5 o'clock	<b>goji</b>	5 minutes	<b>gofun</b>
6 o'clock	<b>rokuji</b>	6 minutes	<b>roppun</b>
7 o'clock	<b>shichiji</b>	7 minutes	<b>nanafun</b>
8 o'clock	<b>hachiji</b>	8 minutes	<b>happun</b>
9 o'clock	<b>kuji</b>	9 minutes	<b>kyûfun</b>
10 o'clock	<b>jûji</b>	10 minutes	<b>juppun</b>
11 o'clock	<b>jûichiji</b>		
12 o'clock	<b>jûniji</b>		

<b>han</b>	half	<b>Goji han desu.</b>	It's 5:30.
<b>sugi</b>	after	<b>Jûji jûgofun sugi desu.</b>	It's 10:15.
<b>mae</b>	before	<b>Jûji jûgofun mae desu.</b>	It's a quarter to ten.

<b>gozen</b>	a.m.	<b>Gozen hachiji desu.</b>	It's 8 a.m.
<b>gogo</b>	p.m.	<b>Gogo jûji desu.</b>	It's 10 p.m.

### Relative Time

<b>ototo</b>	day before yesterday	<b>sensenshû</b>	week before last
<b>kinô</b>	yesterday	<b>senshû</b>	last week
<b>kyô</b>	today	<b>konshû</b>	this week
<b>ashita</b>	tomorrow	<b>raishû</b>	next week
<b>asatte</b>	day after tomorrow	<b>saraishû</b>	week after next
<b>asa</b>	morning	<b>sensengetsu</b>	month before last
<b>hiru</b>	noon	<b>sengetsu</b>	last month
<b>gogo</b>	afternoon	<b>kongetsu</b>	this month
<b>yûgata</b>	evening	<b>raigetsu</b>	next month
		<b>saraigetsu</b>	month after next
<b>ototoshi</b>	year before last		
<b>kyonen</b>	last year		
<b>kotoshi</b>	this year		
<b>rainen</b>	next year		
<b>sarainen</b>	year after next		

### Counters

	<i>General</i>	<i>People</i>	<i>Stamps</i>	<i>Pencils</i>	<i>Books</i>	<i>Cats</i>	<i>Floors</i>
1	<b>hitotsu</b>	<b>hitori</b>	<b>ichimai</b>	<b>ippon</b>	<b>issatsu</b>	<b>ippiki</b>	<b>ikkai</b>
2	<b>futatsu</b>	<b>futari</b>	<b>nimai</b>	<b>nihon</b>	<b>nisatsu</b>	<b>nihiki</b>	<b>nikai</b>
3	<b>mittsu</b>	<b>sannin</b>	<b>sanmai</b>	<b>sanbon</b>	<b>sansatsu</b>	<b>sanbiki</b>	<b>sangai</b>
4	<b>yottsu</b>	<b>yonin</b>	<b>yomai</b>	<b>yonhon</b>	<b>yonsatsu</b>	<b>yonhiki</b>	<b>yonkai</b>
5	<b>itsutsu</b>	<b>gonin</b>	<b>gomai</b>	<b>gohon</b>	<b>gosatsu</b>	<b>gohiki</b>	<b>gokai</b>

6	<b>muttsu</b>	<b>rokunin</b>	<b>rokumai</b>	<b>roppon</b>	<b>rokusatsu</b>	<b>roppiki</b>	<b>rokai</b>
7	<b>nanatsu</b>	<b>nananin</b>	<b>nanamai</b>	<b>nanahon</b>	<b>nanasatsu</b>	<b>nanahiki</b>	<b>nanakai</b>
8	<b>yattsu</b>	<b>hachinin</b>	<b>hachimai</b>	<b>happon</b>	<b>hassatsu</b>	<b>happiki</b>	<b>hakkai</b>
9	<b>kokonotsu</b>	<b>kyûnin</b>	<b>kyûmai</b>	<b>kyûhon</b>	<b>kyûsatsu</b>	<b>kyûhiki</b>	<b>kyûkai</b>
10	<b>tô</b>	<b>jûnin</b>	<b>jûmai</b>	<b>juppon</b>	<b>jussatsu</b>	<b>jupiki</b>	<b>jukkai</b>
?	<b>ikutsu</b>	<b>nannin</b>	<b>nanmai</b>	<b>nanbon</b>	<b>nansatsu</b>	<b>nanbiki</b>	<b>nankai</b>

## Calendar

1st	<b>tsuitachi</b>	11th	<b>jûichinichi</b>	21st	<b>nijûichinichi</b>
2nd	<b>futsuka</b>	12th	<b>jûninichi</b>	22nd	<b>nijûninichi</b>
3rd	<b>mikka</b>	13th	<b>jûsannichi</b>	23rd	<b>nijûsannichi</b>
4th	<b>yokka</b>	14th	<b>jûyokka</b>	24th	<b>nijûyokka</b>
5th	<b>itsuka</b>	15th	<b>jûgonichi</b>	25th	<b>nijûgonichi</b>
6th	<b>muika</b>	16th	<b>jûrokunichi</b>	26th	<b>nijûrokunichi</b>
7th	<b>nanoka</b>	17th	<b>jûshichinichi</b>	27th	<b>nijûshichinichi</b>
8th	<b>yôka</b>	18th	<b>jûhachinichi</b>	28th	<b>nijûhachinichi</b>
9th	<b>kokonoka</b>	19th	<b>jûkunichi</b>	29th	<b>nijûkunichi</b>
10th	<b>tôka</b>	20th	<b>hatsuka</b>	30th	<b>sanjûnichi</b>
				31st	<b>sanjûichinichi</b>

Monday	<b>getsuyôbi</b>	January	<b>ichigatsu</b>
Tuesday	<b>kayôbi</b>	February	<b>nigatsu</b>
Wednesday	<b>suiyôbi</b>	March	<b>sangatsu</b>
Thursday	<b>mokuyôbi</b>	April	<b>shigatsu</b>
Friday	<b>kinyôbi</b>	May	<b>gogatsu</b>
Saturday	<b>doyôbi</b>	June	<b>rokugatsu</b>
Sunday	<b>nichiyôbi</b>	July	<b>shichigatsu</b>
		August	<b>hachigatsu</b>
		September	<b>kugatsu</b>
		October	<b>jûgatsu</b>
		November	<b>jûichigatsu</b>
		December	<b>jûnigatsu</b>

**haru** spring    **natsu** summer    **aki** autumn    **fuyu** winter

## Family

Japanese use different words for members of their own family and for members of someone else's family:

<i>Relation</i>	<i>My family</i>	<i>Your family</i>
grandmother	<b>sobo</b>	<b>obâsan</b>
grandfather	<b>sofu</b>	<b>ojîsan</b>
mother	<b>haha</b>	<b>okâsan</b>

father	<b>chichi</b>	<b>otôsan</b>
wife	<b>kanai</b>	<b>okusan</b>
husband	<b>shujin</b>	<b>goshujin</b>
daughter	<b>musume</b>	<b>musumesan</b>
son	<b>musuko</b>	<b>musukosan</b>
older sister	<b>ane</b>	<b>onêsan</b>
younger sister	<b>imôto</b>	<b>imôtosan</b>
older brother	<b>ani</b>	<b>oniisan</b>
younger brother	<b>otôto</b>	<b>otôtosan</b>
aunt	<b>oba</b>	<b>obasan</b>
uncle	<b>oji</b>	<b>ojisan</b>
niece	<b>mei</b>	<b>meigosan</b>
nephew	<b>oi</b>	<b>oigosan</b>
cousin	<b>itoko</b>	<b>itoko</b>
child	<b>kodomo</b>	<b>kodomosan</b>
grandchild	<b>mago</b>	<b>omagosan</b>
family	<b>kazoku</b>	<b>gokazoku</b>
sibling	<b>kyôdai</b>	<b>gokyôdai</b>

The adjective **giri no** means related by marriage:

**giri no musuko** son-in-law

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## Appendix. A few verbs

<i>Dictionary</i>	<i>-masu form</i>	<i>-te form</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>ageru</b>	<b>agemasu</b>	<b>agete</b>	give, raise
<b>akeru</b>	<b>akemasu</b>	<b>akete</b>	open
<b>aru</b>	<b>arimasu</b>	<b>atte</b>	be, exist, have
<b>asobu</b>	<b>asobimasu</b>	<b>asonde</b>	play
<b>au</b>	<b>aimasu</b>	<b>atte</b>	meet
<b>chigau</b>	<b>chigaimasu</b>	<b>chigatte</b>	differ, be mistaken
<b>da</b>	<b>desu</b>	<b>de</b>	be (copula)
<b>dekakeru</b>	<b>dekakemasu</b>	<b>dekakete</b>	go out
<b>dekiru</b>	<b>dekimasu</b>	<b>dekite</b>	can, be able, made of
<b>deru</b>	<b>demasu</b>	<b>dete</b>	go out, appear
<b>fururu</b>	<b>furimasu</b>	<b>futte</b>	fall (rain, snow)
<b>gozaru</b>	<b>gozaimasu</b>	<b>gozatte</b>	be, exist, have (formal)
<b>hairu</b>	<b>hairimasu</b>	<b>haitte</b>	go in, enter
<b>hajimaru</b>	<b>hajimarimasu</b>	<b>hajimatte</b>	begin
<b>hanasu</b>	<b>hanashimasu</b>	<b>hanashite</b>	speak, talk
<b>hashiru</b>	<b>hashirimasu</b>	<b>hashitte</b>	run
<b>hataraku</b>	<b>hatarakimasu</b>	<b>hataraitte</b>	work
<b>iku</b>	<b>ikimasu</b>	<b>itte</b>	go
<b>ikiru</b>	<b>ikimasu</b>	<b>ikite</b>	live, become alive
<b>irassharu</b>	<b>irasshaimasu</b>	<b>irasshatte</b>	go, come, be (formal)
<b>ireru</b>	<b>iremasu</b>	<b>irete</b>	put in
<b>iru</b>	<b>imasu</b>	<b>ite</b>	be, exist
<b>itadaku</b>	<b>itadakimasu</b>	<b>itadaitte</b>	receive (polite)
<b>iu</b>	<b>iimasu</b>	<b>itte</b>	say, relate
<b>kaeru</b>	<b>kareimasu</b>	<b>kaette</b>	return
<b>kakaru</b>	<b>kakarimasu</b>	<b>kakatte</b>	take (time)
<b>kakeru</b>	<b>kakemasu</b>	<b>kakete</b>	telephone
<b>kaku</b>	<b>kakimasu</b>	<b>kaite</b>	write
<b>kangaeru</b>	<b>kangaemasu</b>	<b>kangaete</b>	think about, consider
<b>kariru</b>	<b>karimasu</b>	<b>karite</b>	borrow, rent
<b>kasu</b>	<b>kashimasu</b>	<b>kashite</b>	lend
<b>kau</b>	<b>kaimasu</b>	<b>katte</b>	buy, possess (animals)
<b>kayou</b>	<b>kayoimasu</b>	<b>kayotte</b>	commute
<b>kiku</b>	<b>kikimasu</b>	<b>kiite</b>	hear, ask
<b>kimeru</b>	<b>kimemasu</b>	<b>kimete</b>	decide, fix, choose
<b>kudasaru</b>	<b>kudasaimasu</b>	<b>kudasatte</b>	give to speaker (polite)
<b>kudaru</b>	<b>kudarimasu</b>	<b>kudatte</b>	descend, go down
<b>kuraberu</b>	<b>kurabemasu</b>	<b>kurabete</b>	compare
<b>kureru</b>	<b>kuremasu</b>	<b>kurete</b>	give to speaker
<b>kuru</b>	<b>kimasu</b>	<b>kite</b>	come
<b>magaru</b>	<b>magarimasu</b>	<b>magatte</b>	turn
<b>matsu</b>	<b>machimasu</b>	<b>matte</b>	wait
<b>miru</b>	<b>mimasu</b>	<b>mite</b>	see, watch



<b>morau</b>	<b>moraimasu</b>	<b>moratte</b>	receive
<b>motsu</b>	<b>mochimasu</b>	<b>motte</b>	have, hold
<b>mukeru</b>	<b>mukemasu</b>	<b>mukete</b>	turn
<b>naru</b>	<b>narimasu</b>	<b>natte</b>	become, get
<b>neru</b>	<b>nemasu</b>	<b>nete</b>	go to bed, sleep
<b>noboru</b>	<b>noborimasu</b>	<b>nobotte</b>	rise, go up, climb
<b>nomu</b>	<b>nomimasu</b>	<b>nonde</b>	drink
<b>nuru</b>	<b>nurimasu</b>	<b>nutte</b>	paint
<b>okiru</b>	<b>okimasu</b>	<b>okite</b>	get up, wake up
<b>omou</b>	<b>omoimasu</b>	<b>omotte</b>	think
<b>oriru</b>	<b>orimasu</b>	<b>orite</b>	get off
<b>oshieru</b>	<b>oshiemasu</b>	<b>oshiete</b>	teach, tell
<b>owaru</b>	<b>owarimasu</b>	<b>owatte</b>	end, finish
<b>oyogu</b>	<b>oyogimasu</b>	<b>oyoide</b>	swim
<b>sagasu</b>	<b>sagashimasu</b>	<b>sagashite</b>	look for
<b>saku</b>	<b>sakimasu</b>	<b>saite</b>	bloom
<b>sashiageru</b>	<b>sashiagemasu</b>	<b>sashiagete</b>	give (polite)
<b>shimeru</b>	<b>shimemasu</b>	<b>shimete</b>	close
<b>shinjiru</b>	<b>shinjimasu</b>	<b>shinjite</b>	believe
<b>shinu</b>	<b>shinimasu</b>	<b>shinde</b>	die
<b>sumu</b>	<b>sumimasu</b>	<b>sunde</b>	live
<b>suru</b>	<b>shimasu</b>	<b>shite</b>	do
<b>suwaru</b>	<b>suwarimasu</b>	<b>suwatte</b>	sit down
<b>taberu</b>	<b>tabemasu</b>	<b>tabete</b>	eat
<b>tobu</b>	<b>tobimasu</b>	<b>tonde</b>	fly, jump
<b>tomaru</b>	<b>tomarimasu</b>	<b>tomatte</b>	stay overnight, stop, halt
<b>toru</b>	<b>torimasu</b>	<b>totte</b>	get, win
<b>tsukareru</b>	<b>tsukaremasu</b>	<b>tsukarete</b>	become tired
<b>tsukau</b>	<b>tsukaimasu</b>	<b>tsukatte</b>	use
<b>tsukuru</b>	<b>tsukurimasu</b>	<b>tsukutte</b>	make
<b>tsutomeru</b>	<b>tsutomemasu</b>	<b>tsutomete</b>	be employed
<b>ugoku</b>	<b>ugokimasu</b>	<b>ugoite</b>	move, change
<b>umu</b>	<b>umimasu</b>	<b>unde</b>	give birth, produce
<b>uru</b>	<b>urimasu</b>	<b>utte</b>	sell
<b>wakaru</b>	<b>wakarimasu</b>	<b>wakatte</b>	understand
<b>wasureru</b>	<b>wasuremasu</b>	<b>wasurete</b>	forget
<b>yaru</b>	<b>yarimasu</b>	<b>yatte</b>	give (informal)
<b>yasumu</b>	<b>yasumimasu</b>	<b>yasunde</b>	rest
<b>yobu</b>	<b>yobimasu</b>	<b>yonde</b>	call
<b>yomu</b>	<b>yomimasu</b>	<b>yonde</b>	read